



PFCC 
**POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME
COMMISSIONER FOR ESSEX**

Annual Report 2019-2020

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The purpose of the Narrative Report is to provide information on the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner and the Force, its main objectives and strategies and the principal risks it faces.

POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Foreword from the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner

At the time of writing this report, our county, our country and indeed the entire world is in the grips of a global pandemic. This challenge is demanding more from policing. As a key emergency service, Essex Police are currently heavily involved in managing the response to COVID-19 through their role in the Essex Resilience Forum and through their vital role in enforcing law and order, promoting community safety and reassuring the public at this turbulent time.

It is often during crises that we get to see the true strength of the organisations that we have built. In Essex, we have supported significant increases in funding to enable the Chief Constable to recruit more officers and this has seen the force grow at its fastest rate in a generation. This increased strength has enabled the force to provide more visible patrols, more reassurance and to respond more effectively to the emerging challenges we have seen over the last few weeks and months.

The huge impact COVID-19 has had on our society has also required a response that is as equally broad and all-encompassing. This has meant collaboration and joint working. It has meant shared responsibility and coordination. In Essex, we have put a significant amount of effort into building strong, sustainable partnerships. We recognised a long time ago that the challenges policing faced, such as youth violence, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, could not be solved by the police alone, so partnerships, collaboration and joint working have been embraced. The strength of those relationships have been tested during the COVID-19 pandemic and have proven to be incredibly

strong. This is a huge strength and a reflection of the hard work invested in the partnerships over the last few years.

Over the last year, Essex Police has grown as a force and will continue to grow in the coming years until it is stronger and larger than it has ever been before. As set out in this report, the growth this year has included the introduction of Town Centre Teams that provide a strong, visible and recognisable presence within town centres across Essex. These teams have further strengthened the connection between local communities and the police, that has been a focus of our work over the last few years. It is anticipated that once these teams and the overall growth in officer numbers is embedded and starting to have an impact on crime figures, this will translate through to greater confidence in policing. We will continue to watch this closely.

This increased visibility has been supported by many councils across the county who have invested in better, more visible community safety activity. This partnership approach has improved visibility and delivered a reduction of 11.2% in anti-social behaviour year-on-year. This is the fourth year in a row that we have achieved a reduction in anti-social behaviour and this closely corresponds to the inclusion of anti-social behaviour as a priority within the Police and Crime Plan 2016-2020.

As with all areas across the country, Essex has experienced an increase in overall crime. In Essex, we have seen a 5.4% increase in overall crime; a much smaller increase than in many other areas in the country. This increase has, in part, been driven by an increase in levels of violent crime across the country, as well as a continued increase in the reporting of domestic abuse.

To tackle the rise in violent crime, specifically, violence fuelled by drug and gang activity, we have continued to

invest in our violence and vulnerability programme. As set out later in this document, this long-term programme is investing in a wide range of interventions to help keep young people and the vulnerable away from a life of crime and help those who have started down this path to get out. Essex was one of the first counties to establish a specialist unit looking at this work and the fact this model has now been replicated across the country indicates the value that it is seen to provide.

Working together with partners, Essex Police have continued to develop their approach to tackling crime in our county. Extra officers and stronger partnership working are helping to increase the capacity of the force, while specialist teams are helping the force face the challenges of new and developing forms of crime.

I would like to thank all the officers, staff and partners who have worked together over the year to help create the safe and secure communities we all want to live in. I would also like to thank BJ Harrington and his senior team for their continued strong leadership and the positive impact they are having in Essex.

Roger Hirst

PFCC
POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME
COMMISSIONER FOR ESSEX



CHIEF CONSTABLE'S REPORT

Essex Police has continued building on the successes of the previous year and, in the full 2019/20 financial year, more than 460 officers joined our force.

I have been really proud to see outstanding work from officers and staff alike to strive to help people, keep them safe and catch criminals, while supporting each other and maintaining the trust of the public. These key objectives in our Force Plan are clearly understood by the workforce as evidenced by our staff survey results. Alongside our supporting behaviours, this has resulted in a further reduction of offences, including robbery, burglary, theft of and theft from vehicles, theft offences and anti-social behaviour.

A dedicated team of our detectives from the Serious Crime Directorate have undertaken the UK's largest ever homicide investigation, Operation Melrose. On October 23 2019, the bodies of 39 Vietnamese people were found in the back of a lorry in Grays. The complex investigation spans across a number of countries and involves close working with key partners, including the National Crime Agency, Crown Prosecution Service, Thurrock Council, the Home Office and law enforcement and government agencies in Vietnam, Ireland, Belgium and France. It is only through this holistic partnership approach that we will effectively prosecute those responsible, disrupt the organised crime networks involved in these types of offences and protect existing and future victims. To date, six individuals have been arrested and charged and one individual has pleaded guilty to 39 counts of manslaughter.

Essex Police continues to effectively and efficiently manage our response to the COVID-19 pandemic, working with partners across the county, both in local government, blue-light services and the health sector, to operate a co-ordinated approach to ensuring people



stay home, protect the NHS and save lives. Our response includes a dedicated command structure which ensures our entire workforce, from officers to support staff, are working to protect and serve during these challenging times, are effectively resourced and are carrying out their policing duties in a way that protects their health and wellbeing, as well as that of the local community. Our force has successfully adopted the nationally recommended approach of explaining and engaging with our residents around the new legislation and guidelines and officers use enforcement as a very last resort. As a result, our relations and interactions with the people of Essex remain positive.

The work of our Operation Raptor teams in leading the activity to tackle gangs and county line drug activity continues to see success. In the last year, our teams have seized nearly £780,000 of drugs and arrested 428 people involved in drug supply.

We have also seen success with Operation Sceptre, our drive to tackle serious violence and knife-related crime.

In the last year, we have seized nearly 500 knives, carried out nearly 700 arrests and over 2,000 hours of targeted patrols.

We are progressing with our recruitment activity to attract new officers, staff and volunteers from all of the communities in Essex. The more than 460 new officers who have joined in the last year include new constables and officers recruited directly into our detective programme (Investigate First), transferees, re-joiners and Police Now graduates. In 2019/20, Essex Police had an officer establishment of 3,218 FTEs increasing to 3,369 for 2020/21 in line with government plans to uplift officer numbers nationally. In June 2019, 73 officers, our largest intake in the modern history of Essex Police, formally passed out after swearing their oaths to protect and serve the county. We continue to build on the success of our recruitment campaigns and, since December 2019, every week we continue to receive in excess of 50 applications from those wanting to be part of the Essex Police family.

Building on the success of The 5,500 Conversations Tour in 2018/19, I and the Chief Officer team started The Next Conversation Tour in February 2020 to continue the force's engagement strategy for officers, staff and Specials. We held six events (out of the original 13 planned), travelling to various locations across the county, and reaching more than 500 officers, staff and Specials. The purpose of the tour was to provide an opportunity for our people to discuss key strategic objectives, as outlined in our Force Plan, with each other and the Chief Officer Group, and to embed the force's values and behaviours. We also held a dedicated session at each event about being an advocate for Essex Police to support our recruitment programme. The feedback across the six events was overwhelmingly positive, with nearly 90% of participants responding to say that they were motivated to become an ambassador for the force, as a result of the tour.



Part of that leadership includes ensuring the organisation looks after its people and I am extremely proud of the services we provide to officers and staff who are affected by the nature of the work they do, especially where there continues to be an increase in the numbers of officers assaulted while on duty.

Our Occupational Health referral waiting list has been dramatically reduced and our managers are better equipped to support their staff back to work after ill-health or injury.

Our collaboration activity with both Kent Police and Essex County Fire and Rescue Service is in a good place and we are seeing on-going benefits from efficiencies, including agreed joint working processes and co-location. The work by our estates professionals to consolidate the buildings we

own so we can invest more money back into policing and make sure we are fit for the future has seen us progressing with plans to maximise the use of those buildings.

Work is already well underway on the £5.7m refurbishment of Chelmsford police station which will create an open plan modern environment fit for the needs of policing both now and in the future.

Our collaborative work has also seen us go live with a new approach to procurement across the Seven Forces (Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Kent, Norfolk and Suffolk). Procurement services have been collaborated to a single 7F Procurement function, which is the first full Seven Force function to go live across the eastern region. As a partnership of seven forces, we have

created the second largest contracting body in police procurement nationally. This provides greater economies of scale and better presence and 'buying power' for value for money contracts in the marketplace. The 7F Procurement vision is to enable the delivery of an effective police service and provide support for victims of crime in the eastern region by procuring and managing a high quality, value for money supply chain.

We continue to use technology to improve our effectiveness and efficiency and our service level offer to the public. We have now successfully moved over to the new national Single Online Home website (SOH) which has enabled us to increase the online services we offer to the public. SOH is taking us further along our journey to manage our demand and prioritise those crimes which cause the most threat, harm and risk. Some of the new functionality the website now offers includes: the ability to increase the type of transactions the public can carry out online; providing nationally consistent advice to the public around general themes, such as staying safe; and online services, which recognise the location of the member of the public using them. As part of the modernisation of the IT infrastructure, we are in the early stages of rolling out the Office 365 digital platform across the force, which will transform the way we work. We have already seen improved email performance. This new platform will put us on the front foot when it comes to collaborative working with a modern and secure system and enhance our agile working capability.

**Ben-Julian Harrington,
Chief Constable**





LOCAL, VISIBLE AND ACCESSIBLE POLICING

Our public want to see more officers in their communities. They want a closer relationship between themselves and officers and they want reassurance that when they need the police they will be there. We also know that public confidence and local, visible policing has a powerful preventative impact on crime. This is especially true where officers can work proactively with local communities to resolve issues caused by persistent offenders and stop those on the edge of criminality stepping into a criminal lifestyle.

Within the 2016-2020 Police and Crime Plan, we set out to improve the Local, Visible and Accessible nature of policing in Essex at a time when local policing numbers had seen a significant reduction across the country.

More officers in our communities

Working hard with central government and partners locally, we were able to recruit over 368 additional officers over the last two years, bringing the total number of officers to over 3,200. These officers were largely paid for through increases in the policing precept. While increasing tax is always a difficult choice to make, the support shown by the public and illustrated through our regular public engagements, public surveys and the support of the Police, Fire and Crime Panel shows that in Essex this was the right choice.

Twenty-two Town Centre Teams were introduced to towns across Essex in July 2019



12 Sergeants 58 constables

The officers recruited over the last two years have already started making an impact. Over the last year, Essex Police has strengthened its local policing teams across the county, bolstered its community policing teams and introduced new Town Centre Teams. These extra officers are providing



a more local and visible presence in our communities and are linking in well with their Community Safety Partnerships to identify and proactively deal with issues important to the local communities.

Twenty-two Town Centre Teams were introduced to towns across Essex in July 2019 and include 12 sergeants and 58 constables. These highly visible officers are targeted at Town Centres where we know that proactive, visible activity can have a big positive impact on crime and anti-social behaviour, as well as increasing public confidence. Town Centres are also key priorities for partners and communities as well as being a focus for street-based violence and vulnerability, so these extra officers are able to make a big difference, working with partners in a highly visible way.

The uplift in officers has also allowed us to establish a new Business Crime Team, which will work closely with the Town Centre Teams, to work with business to create

greater resilience within the business community in Essex, prevent crime and protect and safeguard the vulnerable. The development of this team has gone hand in hand with the development of a Crime Against Business Strategy, the first in the country to be developed in partnership with businesses. The strategy has been built together with the Business Crime Strategic Board, chaired by the Essex Chamber of Commerce.

The additional officers has also resulted in the continued growth of the Rural Engagement Team, an increase in officers to tackle gangs and serious violence, roads policing and the introduction of Children and Young People Officers.

In September, the government also announced an uplift of 20,000 extra officers, so over the 2020/21 financial year this means we will be recruiting a further 151 officers. These extra officers are only the first wave of new officers coming to Essex as part of the 20,000 national uplift. Once all of the





Supporting Officers to be more visible in communities

Local officers are better equipped than ever before, helping them to be out in their communities for longer per shift and more effective in how they work. All front-line officers now have a smart phone or tablet. In 2019/2020, this has saved over 125,158 hours of frontline officer time. This has a financial value of over £3.2 million and is the equivalent of over 13,000 nine-hour shifts. During the year, increased functionality has also been developed allowing officers to take interviews, undertake vehicle checks and record Stop and Search activity. This programme will continue to deliver value as officers are supported to do more while out in the communities and are freed from having to spend time in stations undertaking paperwork.

Strengthening community relations

As set out in the Public Engagement Strategy, local District Commanders have continued to develop and refine the public engagement in their areas as they have found what works for their specific communities. This has resulted in a wide range of creative activities ranging from online engagement, youth advisory boards, coffee with cops and innovative partnerships with local media.

The impact of this engagement programme has been shown through the Public Perception and User Experience Survey. This independent assessment of public perception indicates that the public have a growing perception that the police understand community issues. The year-on-year increase indicates an improved ability for the police to be able to listen and understand the public's concerns. While a huge amount of work is currently underway, the survey results show that further work is required to translate this improved level of understanding into action and demonstrate to the public that their views matter. Ultimately, this will be shown through increased levels of confidence in Essex Police which continues to remain stubbornly low. Further work is being planned for 2020/21 including the implantation of a new communications strategy and a clearer engagement focus across the force with a view to further enhancing the understanding of the work of Essex Police and the successes that they have, in turn positively increasing public perception of their work.

20,000 have been recruited, we are anticipating that Essex Police will be well over 3,600 officers making it bigger and stronger than it has ever been before.

It is anticipated that these extra officers will lead to a reduction in overall crime, which has increased by 5.4%, and result in improved level of public confidence.

While the increase in overall crime in Essex is lower than in many other areas of the country, we know we need to do more and will be keeping a close eye on these metrics as we see the full impact of increased officer numbers start to be reflected.

THE COMMUNITY ARE THE POLICE AND THE POLICE ARE THE COMMUNITY

The growth in the Essex Police Special Constabulary has been a huge achievement over the last few years, especially when so many of our Specials have taken the opportunity presented by our substantial regular officer recruitment programme to switch from being a Special to being a Regular Officer.

Essex Police now have the joint fastest growth alongside West Midlands Police Force and the second largest Special Constabulary in the country, second only to the London Metropolitan Police Force. There are over 500 Specials with a growth rate of 9% per year. This is against a national reduction in Specials of 9% during the 2018/19 year.

The growth in the Specials has been supported by the Employer Supported Policing Scheme which encourages employers to release staff to undertake Special duties and the Community Specials Scheme which partners with

Parish and Town Councils to identify and secure Specials to work in villages and towns across the county. These have proved to be very popular and have significant potential for further growth in the future. During 2019/20, Specials contributed a total of 195,813 hours which is an increase of 37,707 hours (increase of 23.8%) from the previous year. The hours worked by the Special Constabulary across this period is equivalent to having an additional 110 full-time officers, who would attract an annual salary cost of £5.7m.

Volunteering has also been boosted across the force with increased participation in Active Citizens, Police Support Volunteers and Police Cadets. There are now over 150 Active Citizens/Police Support Volunteers and 400 cadets, 80 cadet leaders and 13 Units across the country. There has also been a continued growth in number of organisations signed up to our Community Safety Accreditation Scheme, with 545 people from 46 accredited organisations having delegated police powers to tackle lower level incidents such as anti-social behaviour (ASB). This is by far the biggest scheme of its kind in the country.

Working in partnership

At a community level, Community Safety Partnerships (CSP) have a vital role in developing multi-agency responses to issues such as anti-social behaviour, drug or alcohol misuse and re-offending. As a result of the increased investment in Community Policing, more policing resources have been made available to CSPs. Each CSP continues to engage with their local community to develop and prioritise their areas of focus and develop creative solutions to improving community safety in their locality.

Over the last few years, we have found that effective multi-agency working improves the services provided and the impact these teams can have within their communities.

Community Safety Hubs have been rolled out across the county since 2016, though often with important local variations to ensure they work in the specific community. Co-located Community Safety Hubs are now up and working in Tendring, Colchester, Chelmsford & Maldon, Braintree & Uttlesford, Southend, Castle Point & Rochford, Basildon, Epping Forest & Brentwood. Even where partners

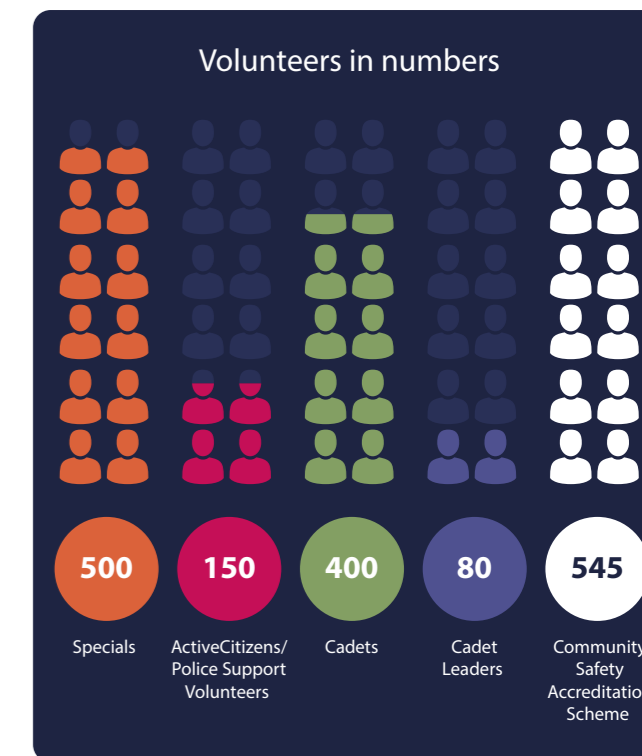
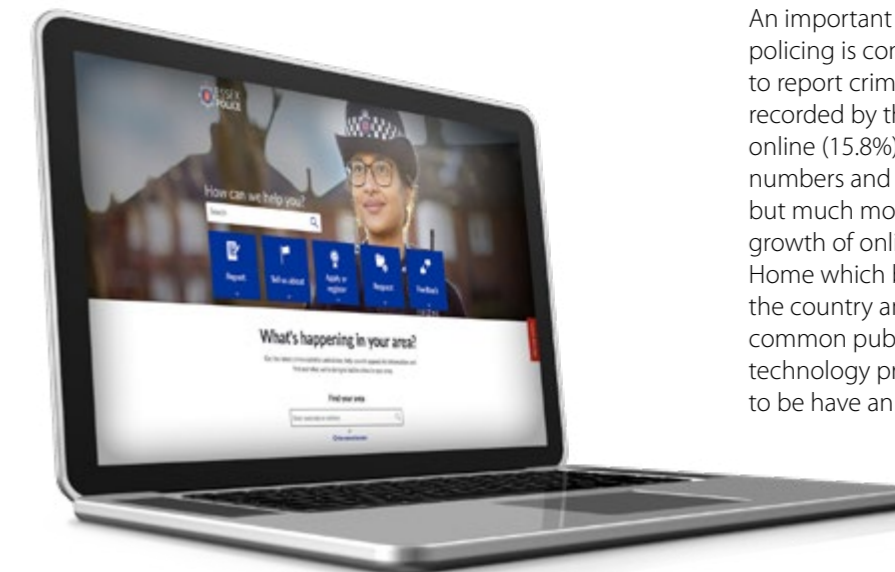
aren't physically co-located, closer working relationships have been embedded and prioritised within each Policing District with distinct benefits, and as a result include joint tasking and close operational coordination.

Making it easier to contact the police

101 continues to be a challenge nationally and, while significant progress is being made in Essex, there is still more to do. At the beginning of the year, we improved our call handling systems which has allowed us to better manage the way we actively monitor 101 services. We can now pinpoint areas of stress on the system, including those points where people are choosing to leave the queue.

In the period 2019/20, the Force Control Room received over 292,000 101 calls and over 350,000 999 calls. While this is a slight reduction on the previous year for 101 (4%), emergency / 999 calls rose by more than 10%.

From this, 39% of 101 calls were answered on time (3% less than last year) and nearly 23% were abandoned (3% increase). In contrast, for 999 calls, there was an increase of nearly 10% (up to nearly 83%) answered within the time limit and a reduction to less than 2% being abandoned.



An important element of improving the public's access to policing is continuing to encourage members of the public to report crime online. In June 2019, 13,488 crimes were recorded by the force and 2,130 of these were recorded online (15.8%). This shows an increase both in absolute numbers and as a percentage of the total number of calls, but much more is possible. A key element of the continued growth of online reporting is the launch of Single Online Home which brings together several forces around the country and provides increased functionality and a common public facing platform. As with any large-scale technology programme, it will take time for the change to be have an effect, for new functionality to become

available and for the full benefits of the system to be realised. However, it is an important step towards a significantly improved service.

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Anti-social behaviour (ASB) is falling in Essex and has been since 2016. During 2019/20, there were 41,262 incidents compared to 46,441 in 2018/19 and 49,329 in 2017/18. Since 2016/17, there has been a 20.9% (10,908 fewer incidents) reduction in anti-social behaviour across the country. These numbers are significant. In October 2019, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services undertook an independent review of Essex Police and found their crime data reporting to be outstanding, showing that the public can have confidence in the reported crime data. This improvement in crime data reporting may have impacted overall ASB numbers, as crimes previously categorised as ASB are now correctly being categorised as a crime, but it also provides reassurance that the data reported is accurate.



Since 2016/17, there has been a **20.9% reduction** in anti-social behaviour across the country



Anti-social behaviour is defined as “any behaviour where the victim is suffering harassment, alarm, distress, nuisance or annoyance”. Responsibility for tackling anti-social behaviour sits with local councils and Essex Police. Between 40% and 50% of ASB incidents are attended by police with 8% being assessed as high risk.

ASB is split into three categories; environmental, nuisance and personal. While Essex has a very low amount of personal ASB issues compared with the national average (8.9% compared with 21.1%), it has a much higher proportion of environmental ASB (18.9% compared to 6.5%). This is in line with other largely rural counties which have a large geographic area.

In Essex Police, Community Policing Teams lead on managing and tackling ASB and in rural areas this is also supported by the Rural Engagement Team.

HMICFRS assessed Essex Police as Good at dealing with ASB in 2016, 2017 and 2019. Over the last two years, significant investment has been made into Community Policing Teams as extra officers recruited as a result of the increase in the Police Precept have largely been focused on building capacity in these teams. As set out in the Local, Visible and Accessible section earlier in this document, these teams have been further supported by the introduction of Town Centre Teams.

Expert advice is provided to Community Policing Teams by three ASB Officers who advise on proactive tactics and guidance, as well as training and briefings on changes to legislation and the assisting with Criminal Behaviour Orders (CBOs) and ASB Injunctions.

The expansion of the Police Support Volunteers, Active Citizen Scheme and Volunteer Police Cadets across Essex has also enabled the local Community Policing Teams to increase their visible patrols, build stronger links with the community and provide reassurance where required.

Community Safety Partnerships

All 14 districts or unitary councils in Essex have a Community Safety Partnership (CSP), either on their own or shared with a neighbouring council. All CSPs in Essex have identified ASB as a local priority.

Within these partnerships, agencies including the council, Social Housing providers and Fire and Rescue Service work together to proactively identify persistent cases and resolve them through a range of measures. The most successful response to ASB currently being used is the use



of Community Protection Warning / Notices. These are used throughout Essex and can lead to a full Criminal Behaviour Order being gained through the courts.

While the number of ASB incidents has reduced and our public perception survey shows that the public believe that police better understand the issues that affect the community, the public's perception that the policing respond effectively to ASB has not improved. This indicates that there is still more to do for the public to feel the difference the reduction of ASB incidents is having in their communities.

Restorative Justice

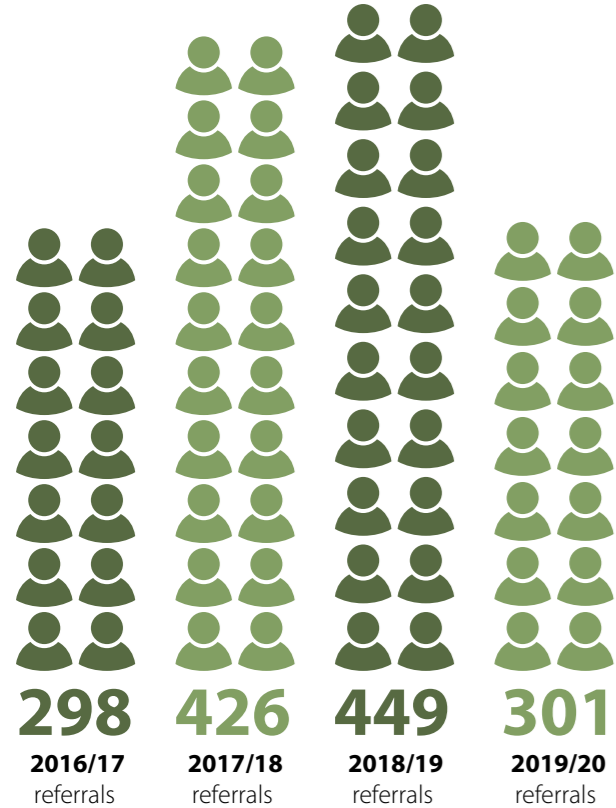
A successful and growing approach to tackling anti-social behaviour and reducing reoffending, is through Restorative Justice. This is a voluntary process where parties come together to discuss the incident and have the opportunity to ask questions. For victims, this is a chance to explain the impact the crime has had on them. For the offenders, it provides an opportunity to make amends (such as a potential apology) and to find a mutually agreed, positive way forward for both parties.

This type of activity has proven to be very effective in resolving often prolonged and difficult problems for individuals and communities.

In Essex, we recruited a full-time coordinator in 2016 and a full-time admin assistant in 2020 to help build capacity within the team. Utilising a pool of around 40 volunteers, our Restorative Justice Team now manage over 300 referrals per year, a reduction of just under 150 since 2018/19, but an increase from 2016/17. The cases they manage range from neighbour disputes, community concerns around street drinking or prostitution to some of the most serious cases that happen in our community, such as murder or sexual assault.

Satisfaction levels from those people who have participated in the programme is 93% with 78% of participants stating the programme had a positive impact on them and 100% of people would choose to use the programme again.

Referrals to the Restorative Justice Team



Sharing best practice and promoting what works

While the response to local anti-social behaviour is managed at a local level, sharing what works across the county is an effective way of tackling these incidents.

Early Intervention – The Essex Police Youth Justice Team is focused on diverting those who participate in minor criminal behaviour towards agencies that can provide an early intervention for behaviour that is causing harm. The interventions being used across Essex can range from Acceptable Behaviour Contracts, referral to Restorative Justice, verbal or written warnings and encouraging young people into diversionary activity.

Coercive and Developmental Interventions – This method of intervention is a way of prohibiting or modifying certain behaviours by using tactics such as Community Protection Notices, Community Protection Warnings and Criminal Behaviour Orders. These are actively used in Essex with a high degree of success. For wider community issues, Community Safety Partnerships are actively using Dispersal Powers, Gang Injunctions, Closure Orders and License Conditions.

While these interventions direct certain behaviours, using them in conjunction or alongside developmental interventions, such as referrals to Restorative Justice or the Youth Offending Service, or referring to parenting support has proven to be popular across the county.

Situational Interventions – These types of interventions focus on reducing the opportunity for offending to take place and have been shown to be effective at a community level where patterns of behaviour are causing a problem. The specific nature of the intervention will depend on the individual circumstances, but examples of what this can involve include:

- The Licensing Team working with pubs and clubs to remove glasses or bottles, closing problematic premises and ensuring taxis are available when venues close.
- The Designing Out Crime Team working with Councils and developers to create safer environments via the national Secured By Design Accreditation Scheme.
- Working in partnership with charities such as Street Pastors to provide pastoral care in high risk anti-social behaviour hot spots.
- High visibility patrols in certain hot spots and the use of Dispersal Powers.
- Working in partnership to put in place Public Spaces Protection Orders and taking positive action where these are breached.
- The development of Neighbourhood Watch, Farm Watch and Watch Schemes countywide.



BREAKING THE CYCLE OF DOMESTIC ABUSE



The number of domestic abuse incidents recorded in Essex and nationally has grown consistently over the last decade. Over the last year, we have seen a 2.2% increase. This longer-term trend is the result of more victims being willing to come forward and report incidents, greater confidence that reported incidents will be dealt with sensitively and appropriately and the introduction of new legislation.

Domestic abuse is defined as: "Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to: psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional."

Work carried out between August 2018 and August 2019 showed that during this period there was a 36.7% increase in reported domestic abuse cases. When analysed, 27.1% of this increase was driven by improvements in accuracy of our crime data and changes to the way stalking and harassment are counted, while 9.6% were seen as a genuine rise in reported incidents.

The increased visibility and accuracy of how we record domestic abuse is an important step in understanding and then tackling these offences. If we don't know the true volume and nature of incidents, we can't prevent it.

While the number of recorded cases of domestic abuse increased, the number of cases solved decreased by 3.6% over the same period. This indicates that while significant progress is being made in making these incidents visible, much more needs to be done to find ways to prevent these crimes happening in the first place, and improving our response once they are reported.

The Operation ENCOMPASS pilot in Thurrock was launched in January 2020. This is a referral pathway enabling Essex Police to directly inform schools that a child has been present, or ordinarily resides at an address, where a medium risk domestic abuse incident has occurred. The aim is to reduce the harmful adverse impact of Domestic Abuse on children, and protect their emotional wellbeing.

The benefits of the pilot are already being corroborated by schools engaged in the pilot. Essex Police has agreed, with the Southend, Essex, Thurrock (SET) children's boards, social services and education partners, to launch Operation ENCOMPASS with schools around the county across the 2020/21 school year.

Tackling Domestic Abuse is a complex task and one that requires a strong multi-agency approach. In Essex, this multi-agency approach is led by the Southend, Essex and Thurrock Domestic Abuse Board (SETDAB). This is chaired by the Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, Jane Gardner. The SETDAB is currently consulting on a refresh of its strategy, but during the 2019/20 financial year its priorities included:

- Young people enjoy healthy relationships
- Victims (Adults and Children) and those at risk of experiencing domestic abuse feel and are safe
- Victims (Adults and Children) are able to recover and move on to live independently
- Perpetrators are prevented from causing physical and emotional harm
- Communities have a greater awareness of what an abusive relationship is and how to report it and, as a consequence, feel safer

Early consultation suggests that partners and stakeholders feel these priorities still reflect the required outcomes for the partnership and are likely to be retained for the updated strategy.

In September 2019, to coincide with the new legislation and guidance around stalking, SETDAB launched a Stalking Awareness Media Campaign which has helped to drive awareness and build public understanding of the support available for victims or those in fear of becoming victims.

Essex Police also work closely with other agencies through the County's MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) meetings where individual, high-risk cases are considered and managed. Through these arrangements, all the agencies involved produce a coordinated action plan

to improve timely risk identification and safety planning for victims and their families. The MARACs across the county will also focus on perpetrator actions and Southend and Essex MARACs have recruited dedicated perpetrator caseworkers to progress referrals and contact suitable candidates for behaviour change support.

Due to the success of these arrangements, there is a conscious effort by all the partners involved to increase the number of cases referred. This has resulted in a significant increase in referrals, rising from 115 between Jan 2018 and June 2018 to 186 during the same period in 2019.



The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner also commissions the Essex Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) Service which offers specialist support for those assessed to be at high-risk from domestic abuse.

While significant work is undertaken at a multi-agency level, when an incident happens it is the Local Policing

Teams who respond, make an initial risk assessment and undertake to safeguard the victim. The Local Policing Team are also responsible for targeting the most prolific domestic abuse offenders. Given the vital role these team have in breaking the cycle of domestic abuse, there has been a significant investment in them over the last two years. As part of the additional officers recruited as a result of the increase in the policing precept, there has been a significant uplift of officers (over 53 Officers) in Local Policing Teams and it is anticipated that these additional resources will make a positive impact both on investigations and safeguarding.

In each of the three Local Policing Areas, there is also a dedicated specialist team. These Domestic Abuse Investigation Teams are responsible for the management and investigation of all high and medium risk Domestic Abuse crimes and undertake safeguarding of the medium risk victims. The recent uplift also added 21 specialist investigators to these teams, further boosting our capacity to successfully investigate and safeguard victims of Domestic Abuse and their families.

Using a risk-based approach to domestic abuse allows the right level of resources to be focused on the right cases and helps the victims at the most risk get the right level of support. The Central Referral Unit, based within Public Protection Command, is responsible for safeguarding high-risk victims of domestic abuse with the most acute victims being allocated a dedicated Safeguarding Officer. These officers review individual cases and, where appropriate, help bring agencies together to provide a specific response. These plans are then fed to Local Policing Teams to ensure cases are well managed.

These multi-agency safeguarding hubs or multi-agency risk assessment teams look at a case in its entirety, including family breakdown and any safeguarding issues with children or adults within the family.

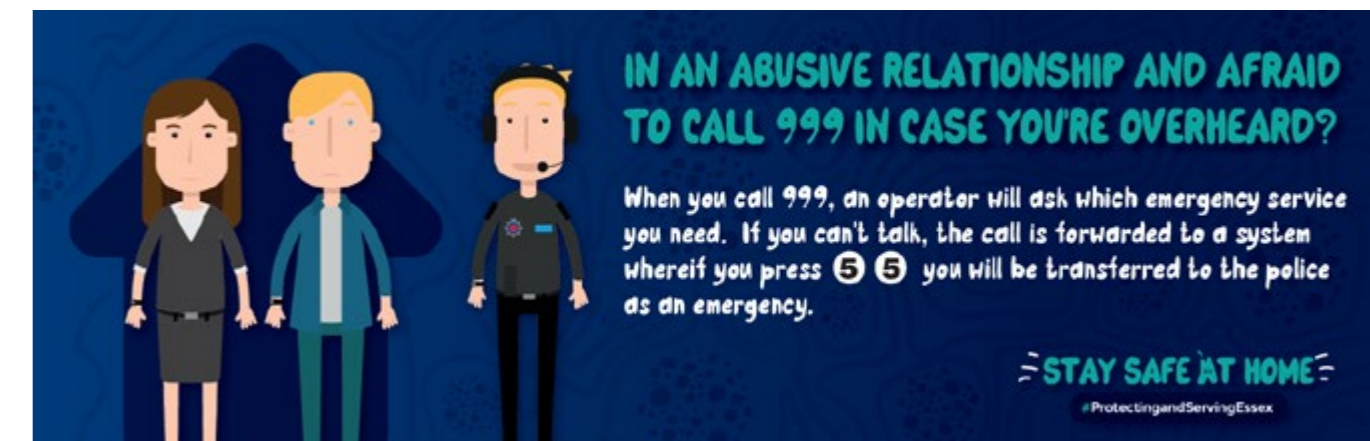
Due to a significant investment over recent years, all frontline officers now have access to Body Worn Video. While this technology was introduced to help bring offenders to justice across all crime types, early data indicates that it might have a positive impact when officers are investigating cases of domestic abuse. BWV are now used for all domestic abuse cases and officers must view the full domestic abuse footage prior to interviewing the suspect and consider showing the suspect the actual footage captured of the incident. A review of all Domestic Abuse cases interviewed in custody in August 2019 showed that where BWV was used there was a 20% increase in the number of cases resulting in a charge or caution.

The review of BMV has also led to the identification of how cases could be handled differently to improve outcomes for victims. One example of this is ensuring that the victim has enough time to consider their position before accepting a decision not to proceed with a case.

Evidence shows that given enough time to consider their situation, victims are more likely to support an investigation.

Recent legislation, changes to Home Office Counting Rules and a package of changes introduced by the Crown Prosecution Service and National Police Chiefs' Council have had a significant impact on how forces deal with Domestic Abuse and stalking and harassment. This increased focus is having a positive impact on those affected by these crimes. To ensure that officers adapt to these changes, force-wide training has been undertaken by all police staff and officers who may encounter members of the public at risk of stalking and harassment.

Once the government's current Domestic Abuse Bill is passed, the significant changes to legislation will continue and new powers and a greater emphasis will be put on tackling domestic abuse. In particular, the introduction of a statutory definition of Domestic Abuse and a Domestic Abuse Commissioner is likely to change the national response to domestic abuse for the better.



REVERSING THE TREND IN SERIOUS VIOLENCE

Violent crime and serious violent crime is an area of national focus and something that we all see reported by media across the country. It is rising nationally and in Essex. A number of factors are driving the rising crime levels, most notably perhaps the increase in gang activity, the criminal drugs market and associated violence. Homicide is the most serious form of violence and in October 2019 there was the tragic incident where 39 Vietnamese nationals were discovered in a lorry trailer in Grays. It soon became apparent that this crime had international links and Essex Police have worked tirelessly, across multiple agencies and nations to both identify these victims and to bring the offenders to justice and disrupt the associated human trafficking.

While violent crime is widely reported to concern knife crime, robbery and night-time economy (NTE) violence, it also comes from gang, organised crime groups (OCG) and domestic abuse (DA) related violence. While gangs and organised crime and domestic abuse have their own focussed chapters in this report, it should be noted that approximately one third of serious violence is driven through domestic abuse related incidents – showing just what an impact domestic abuse has on police resources and on victims of crime in Essex.

To combat the growing use of knives and violence, Essex Police, along with partners from across the county, have used a coordinated range of measures to tackle the root causes of this increase. Together, they have increased their work with schools and colleges, used targeted Stop and Search more frequently and taken an innovative approach to the long-term causes of violence and vulnerability. The work of the Violence and Vulnerability Unit is detailed in the section on Targeting Gangs and Organised Crime, but has a strong relationship to how we look to reverse the trend in serious violence.



Knife Crime

Figures from the Office for National Statistics show that Knife crime in England and Wales increased by 7% to 45,627 offences in the year to December 2019. Home Office figures show that regionally the levels of knife crime offences vary considerably, with London and the major conurbations being the centres of activity. The National Statistics include selected offences in which a knife or sharp instrument has been used. In Essex, there were 998 of the selected offences recorded in 2019, 2.2% of the national total. This figure represents a 44.4% increase for Essex on the previous year. These selected offences include the most serious offences involving a knife or sharp instrument including violence with injury and robbery.

These are rare events, with just 54 offences per 100,000 population in the year to December 2019.

A key approach to knife crime in Essex is Operation SCEPTRE. This is a national operation, endorsed by the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) focused on the increase in knife crime in the country. Essex Police participate in the national Op SCEPTRE weeks of action. Op SCEPTRE (Essex) is the Essex Police operation, focused on those who carry and use bladed weapons in Essex. The overarching intention of the operation is the protection of and preservation of life by targeting the criminal supply, possession and use of knives within Essex. Op SCEPTRE has had notable successes in Essex, including during the National Op Sceptre Week of Action – 73 weapons sweeps, 243 knives recovered, 89 engagement events, 22 test purchase operations.

Robbery

While robbery offences have increased in recent years, some Local Policing Areas have actually seen a decrease, including Braintree, Maldon and Rochford. In the 12 months to February 2020, this saw an actual decrease overall of 31.8% in robbery of business property and a 4% reduction in robbery of personal property.

Night Time Economy (NTE)

Overall, Essex is showing a modest reduction in NTE related offending, largely driven by a significant reduction in the South Local Policing Area (LPA). However, looking in more detail at Violence with Injury investigations (considering offences which occurred within designated NTE areas and between relevant times), a general downward trend across Essex (-12.8%) can be seen. However, against this backdrop of a decline in overall NTE violence, the level of serious violent crimes committed in NTE is rising across the county. There have been disproportionate rises in Rape and Robbery of personal property in the NTE areas and is something that has become a focus for the force to address.

Sexual Violence

The PFCC continues to address key issues around sexual abuse; making support accessible and creating innovative new ways to make support available for those who need it; developing a first-of-its-kind partnership strategy to address sexual violence and abuse; attracting additional government investment in local specialist support services; and investing more to ensure those support agencies have the resources they need to deliver help to those who need it.

The PFCC re-commissioned the local Synergy Rape Crisis Partnership to continue to provide specialist support services to all victims of sexual abuse. This support is provided regardless of when the abuse occurred, their age, gender, or whether they have reported to the Police. This support includes practical help, therapy, advocacy and counselling. The PFCC for Essex was also successful in bidding to become one of only five areas across the country to receive devolved Rape Support Funding allowing the investment of an additional £275k Home Office funding into the local support service.

The PFCC's office has led the development and publication of the Essex Sexual Abuse Strategy which identifies five priority areas for partners to respond to; prevent abuse, support victims, bring perpetrators to justice, improve the criminal justice response and raise awareness of abuse. Through this strategy, the Essex Sexual Abuse Strategic Partnership will focus activity around these key themes ensuring there is progress on the overarching aim to reduce the volume and impact of sexual violence and abuse in Essex.



PROTECTING CHILDREN
AND VULNERABLE PEOPLE
FROM HARM

Protecting some of the most vulnerable in our society will always be a priority to policing and to partners, and this is an area where we come together to both protect and prevent harm to vulnerable people in Essex. This is also a broad area covering everything from victim support across the county, to multi-agency safeguarding and prevention.

Indeed, as this report is being drafted, we are in a situation socially where we have never been, isolating as a means to protect ourselves from a Coronavirus that targets all. In this isolation, we are trying to ensure – across all agencies – that the most vulnerable in our society are protected. This is a daunting task in a period of social upheaval, but one that we are determined to succeed in, and ranges across the board, from ensuring children in families on low incomes who would have received school meals are being adequately fed, to using the experiences of nations that have already been in a ‘lockdown’ state regarding the impact of domestic abuse and what interventions are likely to be most effective at this time.

Over the last three years, recorded crime in areas of abuse against vulnerable people in Essex, and nationally, has increased significantly. In the 12 months to February 2020, the force achieved nearly 100 more Child Abuse outcomes than in the previous 12 months, but also saw an increase in demand, recording an increase of over 50% in offences during the same period.

This puts significant strain on the resources in place to address this and has an impact across policing, as the responsibility for responding to, investigating and safeguarding these offences rests with a number of teams within Crime and Public Protection (C&PP), Local Policing Areas (LPAs), Operational Policing Command (OPC) and the Serious Crime Directorate (SCD).

Sadly, we have seen significant increases in rape offences recorded over the past five years, from under 100 in March 2015 to over 150 in March 2019. To address this, and add focus on working with the CPS to progress prosecutions, an independent multi-agency Rape Scrutiny Panel has been convened, which will meet quarterly and is chaired by ACC Rachel Nolan from Essex Police. Panels are themed with partner agencies invited to identify cases within the theme

they believe should be scrutinised, and the learning and improvement shared. Essex Police have also developed and implemented a Rape Prevention Strategy. The force’s five-year plan formalises activity to prevent rape and serious sexual offending. Preventing crime is not a single agency endeavour and this strategy highlights the partnership approach required to tackle repeat victimisation, repeat offending and builds on the current partnership frameworks to encourage accurate sharing of data, pooling of resources and expertise to deliver a coordinated evidence-based approach in tackling and preventing rape.

As mentioned in the section focussing on reversing the trend in serious violence, Essex has also launched the Synergy Essex First Responder project, starting as a pilot in January 2019. The project ensures that every victim of rape in Essex will speak to an Independent Sexual Violence Advocate (ISVA) within 24 hours of reporting. Essex was the first force in the UK to offer this level of service with the ambition that this will decrease the number of victims that disengage and provide enhanced support for victims through the Criminal Justice System.

Between January and June 2019, there were 425 referrals altogether, and the force are continuing to monitor the impact of this through to court proceedings. Further work has also been undertaken to support the voluntary sector’s role in this area, with a joint training package being developed and rolled out between Essex Police and CARA (Centre for Action on Rape and Abuse in Essex) focusing on what to do if a person has been the victim of a sexual offence. Welcomed by the voluntary sector, some of the first to take this up were volunteers on the SOS bus in Colchester and Chelmsford, with nearly 40 going through the training programme. Since the successful launch of the pilot, the PFCC has made the required funding available to Synergy Essex to ensure this service is available as part of our standard offer to victims.

Leading the way in innovative ways to support and protect young people, the Dot.com project was launched in Essex in June 2019, and received a national launch in January 2020.

Essex Police worked with teachers and pupils at a primary school in South Ockenden in Essex, to identify the biggest risks facing young people and develop an online programme that helps them:

- Spot dangerous situations
- Tell their teacher if something is worrying them
- Feel confident about exploring the internet, in safety

The result, the creation of Dot Com, is an acknowledgement by the Police in Essex and by local teachers that we must all work together to protect young people and to tackle exploitation in all its forms before it takes place. The digital resource is available to all schools and over 1,000 schools from all over the UK have come forward in the space of just one month to find out how they can do more to protect children from online exploitation by county lines drugs gangs. Working with IT company 2Simple, work is ongoing to create a mobile app version of the platform.

A project to support older children has also been developed between the force and the University of Essex. The Catalyst project looks at police data around child sexual exploitation and the University are in the process of mapping where patterns and trends occur relating to teenage rape offences. The anonymised data is fed into a secure online platform to allow mapping, charts, graphs and key findings to be explored and has the ability to overlay other external data to inform and manage interventions most effectively where trends are identified.

Mental Health

Mental health incidents are an area where policing is often required to provide support. In Essex, this is mostly provided by the Local Policing Teams (LPTs) who respond to them as part of their core business. Across the force, there are seven Mental Health Single Points of Contact (SPOCs) who are aligned geographically with their LPAs. There are 14 Mental Health in-patient establishments, which are a mixture of public and private units.

In addition, there is a Mental Health Street Triage Team, which provides an immediate joint screening assessment and support to those who may be experiencing a major mental health crisis. This team consists of a police staff supervisor, six PCs, 25 Special Constables, one clinical lead nurse, three and a half clinical nurses and ten clinical bank nurses. They provide an improved response to people in crisis and help reduce demand on resources by avoiding S.136 (where possible) by providing an alternative framework of treatment and care. The force continue to develop initiatives in this area, for example, the SIM (Serenity Integrated Mentoring) project, in which a police officer is embedded in an NHS mental health team, continues in the North and Mid CCG area of the county. By the end of the first year, the eight service users on the project saved £111,000 on mental health in-patient stays and £43,700 on missing person searches.

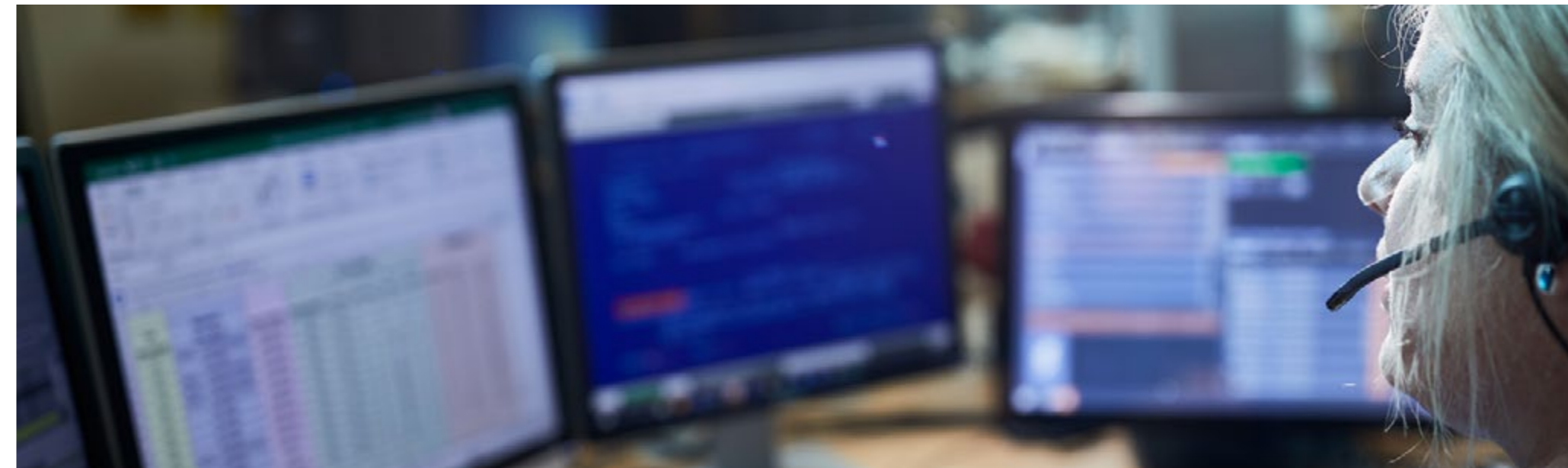
Southend High Intensity Focus Team (SHIFT Project) is a 12-month collaborative pilot funded by Public Health England to address demand created by high intensity users (HIU) across policing and health services and is based on

focused early intervention to tackle key strategic demand drivers of mental health and vulnerability. This complex demand is projected to continue to increase over the next four years with mental health incidents in particular accounting for 40% overall force demand. The SHIFT Project launched on 1st August 2019 with two mental health nurses recruited and co-located within the Community Safety Hub. An evidence based approach aligned to the principles of Serenity Integrated Management (SIM) which has been credited with achieving a 40% reduction in demand created by HIU with bespoke training delivered by the National SIM lead. The approach focused on identifying high intensity users and then working with those individuals to address their complex patterns of behaviour, formulating bespoke clinical crisis care plans to encourage service users to better self-manage their behaviour, de-escalate situations and utilise coping mechanisms. While service users’ testimonies on how the project has positively impacted on their lives will be captured, as well as the demand reductions and cost savings, quarter one results were described by the National SIM lead as some of the best he had ever seen.

Significant savings and reductions in demand will see this project expanded to the Castle Point and Rochford districts with an ambition to implement the model across Essex.

POLIT

The Police Online Investigation Team (POLIT) continue to see an increase in cases where indecent images of children (IIOC) are being created and/or shared online. The United Nations reports that approximately 750,000 people are looking at IIOC at any one time, with 1,000,000 children featured in online child abuse material. In Essex, demand for POLIT continues to grow. In 2016, POLIT investigated 151 crimes; this number grew to 294 in 2019, an increase of 44%. In response to this in 2019/20, five additional posts were created to form a Proactive Team. This team investigate IIOC crimes reported to Essex Police from non-traditional sources. Since its inception, the team have investigated 83 crimes, executing 78 search warrants and safeguarding 73 children. In 2020/21, a further five officers will join the Proactive Team to continue to respond to this ever-increasing crime.



TACKLING GANGS AND ORGANISED CRIME



Gangs and organised crime can cause significant harm to our communities, exploit the vulnerable and increase levels of violence within society. In Essex, the fight to tackle organised crime happens at a national, regional and county level with strong proactive enforcement activity. At the same time, a countywide multi-agency programme has been established with government and partner funding to reduce the risk of young and vulnerable people being exploited by gangs.

This two-pronged approach of enforcement and complimentary support for the vulnerable groups at risk of exploitation is bringing the county together to address this growing problem.

While the National Crime Agency leads on the enforcement at a national level, Essex Police works hard with its regional partners to identify, manage and disrupt organised crime groups across the county and within Essex.

In response to this growing national problem, the Essex Violence and Vulnerability Unit has been established with members seconded from Essex Police, the Youth Service, Prison Service and County Council. Working closely with strategic partners, £3.584m Home Office funding has been brought into Essex in 2018/19 and 2019/20.

The Essex Violence and Vulnerability (V&V) partnership and the V&V Unit work to reduce serious violence and safeguard those being exploited and at risk of exploitation through gangs and county lines. Following the development in 2018 of the Essex Violence and Vulnerability (V&V) Framework, work continues at pace to develop the approach to violence and vulnerability across the county.

Work includes activities to address county lines; gang-related crime including serious youth crime and drug-related crime; child criminal exploitation through gangs; child sexual exploitation through gangs; the cuckooing of vulnerable adults; and the extent of school exclusions and their link to violence and vulnerability.

As well as causing violence within our communities, gangs exploit vulnerable people. County line gangs, in particular, use an operating model where young and vulnerable people are used to transport and sell drugs. This often starts

by gang members grooming vulnerable people, buying them gifts, becoming their friends and then trapping them with debt, violence and fear.

This exploitation is used by county line gangs as they move into new areas. Often moving out from a large city such as Liverpool or Manchester to smaller rural areas, where they can move in on local drug gangs. The resulting conflict fuels violence within those communities.

The use of exploited young or vulnerable people means that a lot of the visible gang members in county line gangs are children and young people. The people are often

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2019/20

themselves exploited and on the receiving end of some of the most serious violence or threats of violence, either from drug users and rival networks robbing them of cash, or from within their own network as punishment for failing to collect debts. This also creates a cycle where those people being exploited are drawn into a situation where they commit acts of violence themselves. It is these local drug dealers who are themselves the most common cohort to be involved in serious violence either during the course of trying to rob a drug line or as retribution after the fact, or as a consequence of an unpaid drugs debt.



A notable success over the last year has been the disruption of the C17 Gang in Thurrock where injunctions were used to limit their behaviour and activities. The gang had been operating in the Grays and Lakeside area and caused violent and drug-related activity to reach unprecedented levels. The gang was known to be exploiting young people and the vulnerable, getting them to run drugs and carry cash. Using the injunctions, Essex Police were able to secure orders banning them from wearing hoodies and face coverings, making violent drill rap music and associating together online.

Other successful enforcement operations targeted other organised crime gangs across the county with a range of tactics. These have resulted in several successful prosecutions and the recovery of significant amounts of the proceeds of crime.

To help prevent gang activity, there is also a strong and concerted effort to work together at a district level to coordinate prevention activity. In Harlow, significant work has been undertaken with schools, partners and the council to prevent and pursue gang activity in the district, to protect the community from gang activity, to provide and share specialist expertise and raise awareness and understanding of gangs within the community.

Other areas of focus and success have included developing a co-ordinated and consistent training offer – supporting the development of the workforce across Essex. This training has included supporting frontline workers to ‘spot the signs’ through to practitioner development relating to stronger approaches to safeguarding. This work is closely aligned with children and adult safeguarding colleagues across Southend, Essex and Thurrock. The approach includes online learning, face-to-face delivery and conference style events.

We have also worked directly with over 600 children and young people to develop our understanding of the issues – working with and being informed by the voice of communities, discussing their feelings of safety and vulnerability. This forms part of a wider piece of work, to understand the experiences and perspectives of young people, including young people in prison who are or have

been gang members; youth assemblies and groups; and engaging with groups with particular needs, including learning disabilities. These insights have and continue to help us to develop and deliver programmes which respond to the needs identified.

Building on this, we are looking at delivering programmes of work at ‘reachable’ moments – in hospital and prison settings. The work in HMP Chelmsford, with young men, looking to address their offending behaviour through the written word and music is now being nominated for a Koestler award. The ability to have the time, in the ‘right’ place, with a vulnerable cohort, has proved to be successful. This includes the Youth Service project in

Basildon Hospital, where two skilled youth workers have been embedded in a hospital setting, and where over the last eight months, they have reached out to nearly 200 children and young people (and their families) at a moment of crisis.

We were able to bring all of this together at our Perspective on Violence conference held in March 2020, which was attended by over 300 people, ranging from local partners and providers to national sector leaders and key note speakers. It is important that we all share our learning and allow an agile response to this threat if we are going to challenge the spread of violence and gang activity, and to protect some of the most vulnerable in our society.



IMPROVE SAFETY ON OUR ROADS

Working within the Safer Essex Roads Partnership (SERP), Essex Police have made a huge difference to the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads. The Roads Policing Team leads this work within the Force and is regarded both regionally and nationally as the police force with best practice in this area. The team now conduct training approved by the College of Policing to Senior Investigating Officers from across the country.

The Essex roads network includes some of the most strategically important roads in the country linking London with some of our major ports and provides a vital role for communities, businesses and the economic wellbeing of the country.

As well as promoting improved safety on our roads, the Roads Policing Team provide a strong level of support in tackling the other priorities in the Police and Crime Plan. It is now understood that those committing minor road offences are often the same people using the roads network to commit crime across the county, whether that is burglary, human trafficking and exploitation or drug-based county line activity. This is especially true around some of our strategic routes, such as the M11, A13, A12, M25 and A127.

A proactive integrated approach to roads policing is proving useful in tackling crime across the county, protecting communities and bringing offenders to justice.

As part of the 2019/20 police precept uplift investment, 21 additional officers will be added to the current Roads



Policing Team. These extra officers will improve visibility, enhance proactive enforcement activity and provide additional capacity to reduce those killed or seriously harmed on our roads.

In Essex, the team is also supported by 16 dedicated roads policing Specials Constables. Each of these officers is highly trained and provides a significant amount of hours to the team.

These officers are fully integrated into the Roads Policing Team and are provided with additional driving skills including Response, Initial Phase Pursuit and Advanced Driving. Two members of the team are also trained to ride police motorcycles. Together, this team of Specials contribute over 12,000 operational hours per year, deliver over 1500 duties and arrest over 150 people.

Through SERP, annual activities are planned and resourced which focus on those at most risk on our roads. While the number of deaths and serious injuries are reducing as a proportion of the number of people using the roads, those using motorbikes and road users between the ages of 16 and 25 remain the greatest risk groups.

Targeting these groups is a key element of the work undertaken by SERP with significant activity being undertaken in Schools and with those using motorbikes. Essex Fire and Rescue Service and Essex Police both run advance biking courses; over 1,700 riders have been involved in moped/scooter rider education days and

25,100 riders are involved in pre-driving events held within schools.

Essex continues to attract car cruise enthusiasts from across the region, attracted by the connections between London and the South East. These events are often unplanned and can be mobilised through social media within hours. Working with partners across Essex, a proactive approach is taken with officers engaging with participants and taking robust action where necessary. Essex County Fire and Rescue team also attend numerous events on behalf of the partnership, engaging with young drivers and offering road safety advice.

While many participants are simply enthusiasts and don't commit crime, there are elements at these meets who are intent on using the event to cause risk to themselves and spectators. Incidents of poor and dangerous driving also put other road users at risk. Significant work is undertaken with Local Policing Teams to tackle this offending and reduce the impact on the public.

Community Speed Watch

The Community Speed Watch programme continues to offer a valuable and sizeable contribution to roads policing across Essex. At present, 94 Community Speed Watch Groups are active, which includes 650 volunteers. Together, these teams generate 14,000 warning letters each year and provide a tough, community-based deterrent against poor driving.

In July 2019, the Harwich Community Speed Watch Group went live, following a successful pilot, with their TruCAM speed enforcement activity. This allows this group to enforce speed limits across the Tendring District using the TruCAM detection equipment. The team have all received training, accreditation and vetting and results have proved very positive.

Extra Eyes Campaign

Essex Police was one of the first forces in the country to utilise the growth in dashcam devices to gather evidence against poor drivers. The Extra Eyes Campaign encourages those using the roads to submit their dashcam footage where they spot an example of poor driving. This could be the use of mobile phones while driving, careless driving, dangerous driving or not following traffic rules. Members of the public upload and submit this evidence via the Safer Essex Roads website and a member of the Roads Policing Team reviews each piece of evidence submitted.

During 2019, positive action has been taken on over 500 incidents, including over 100 cases of using a mobile while driving and 120 cases of passing too closely to a cyclist.

Drug driving

Since the introduction, in March 2015, of driving while under the influence of drugs, the number of people caught for this offence has steadily increased. In part, this is due to the improved use of testing and the growing focus from forces on the impact that this offending can have. During 2018, a research project undertaken by SERP showed that 56% of those arrested for this offence had been arrested on one or more occasions, with the most significant group linked to previous offences of violence. This highlights the link between road offences and more general forms of criminality and the positive contribution effective roads policing can have on other forms of crime.

Towards the end of the calendar year, the number of people caught and prosecuted for drug-driving overtook drink-driving for the first time and this is a trend that we expect to see continue.



As part of the 2019/20 police precept uplift investment **21 additional officers** will be added to the current Roads Policing Team.

PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

The PFCC chairs a Performance and Resources Board that holds the Chief Constable and the force to account for the performance of the force officers and staff against the delivery of the Police and Crime Plan.

On a monthly basis, the current performance data of the papers and minutes of the Performance and Resources Board are published on the PFCC website at:

www.essex.pfcc.police.uk

The Police, Fire and Crime Panel receive a quarterly report on the progress against the seven priorities in the Police and Crime Plan.

Crime, including violent crime, has risen. This is in line with the national trend for crime increase. While some of this increase is due to the means by which Stalking and Harassment is now counted (following changes to Home Office Counting Rules in April 2018), and internal improvements that Essex Police has employed to ensure better Crime Data Accuracy (CDA), the trend is now stabilising.



Police and Crime Plan Priorities	Police Priority Indicators	12 months to March 2019	12 months to March 2020	Number Difference	% Difference	Direction of Travel
Priority 1 - More local, visible and accessible	Percentage of people who have confidence in policing in Essex (internal survey Q13b) ¹	68.0	65.2	-2.8	-	Deteriorating
	<i>Confidence Interval</i> ²	1.0	1.1			
	Confidence in the local police (CSEW) ³	50.4	45.0	-5.1	-	Deteriorating
	<i>Confidence Interval</i> ²	4.3	3.5			
	Number of all crime offences	158,689	167,266	8,577	5.4	Deteriorating
Priority 2 - Crack down on anti-social behaviour	Number of anti-social behaviour incidents	46,441	41,262	-5,179	-11.2	Improving
	Percentage of people who have confidence that the policing response to ASB is improving (internal survey Q&A) ⁴	66.1	64.0	-2.1	-	Stable
	<i>Confidence Interval</i> ²	1.1	1.1			
Priority 3 - Breaking the cycle of domestic abuse	Number of incidents of domestic abuse	41,840	42,767	927	2.2	Deteriorating
	Number of repeat incidents of domestic abuse	19,133	20,776	1,643	8.6	Deteriorating
	Percentage of domestic abuse offences solved	12.9	9.8	-3.1	-	Deteriorating
Priority 4 - Reverse the trend in serious violence	Number of homicides ⁸	14	63	49	350.0	Deteriorating
	Number of violence with injury offences (new definition from Nov 2017)	14,731	15,262	531	3.6	Deteriorating
Priority 5 - Tackle gangs and organised crime	Number of Organised Criminal Group disruptions ⁵	17	37	20	117.6	Improving
	Trafficking of drugs arrests	1,498	1,877	379	25.3	Improving
Priority 6 - Protecting children & vulnerable people	Number of child abuse outcomes ⁶	205	306	101	49.3	Improving
	Child abuse solved rate	5.4	5.5	0.1	-	Improving
Priority 7 - Improve safety on our roads	Number of driving related mobile phone crime on Essex roads	2,603	1,493	-1,127	-43.0	Improving
	Number of driving under the influence of drink and/or drugs on Essex roads	3,024	3,694	670	22.2	Deteriorating
	All people killed or seriously injured (KSI) in road collisions ⁷	835	827	-8	-1.0	Improving

Note 1 - Question from Essex Police's own confidence and perception survey (Question 13b). Results are for the period 12 months September 2019 versus the 12 months to September 2018.

Note 2 - The confidence interval is the range +/- between where the survey result may lie. This is mainly influenced by the number of people answering the survey. The more people that answer the survey, the smaller the interval range.

Note 3 - Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW): 12 months to September 2019 vs. 12 months to September 2018.

Note 4 - Question from Essex Police's own confidence and perception survey (Question 8a). Results are for the period 12 months to September 2019 versus the 12 months to September 2018. Note 5 - The number of Organised Crime Group disruptions are a comparison of January to March 2019 and January to March 2020 only due to a change in counting rules that occurred in January

2019. From January 2019, activity has been recorded rather than the number of people arrested. If there was a day of action, for example, and five people were arrested, this would formerly have counted as five disruptions, but now will count as one. The change stems from confusion over the previous guidelines, with police forces counting disruptions in different ways.

Note 6 - Solved outcomes are crimes that result in: charge or summons, caution, crimes taken into consideration, fixed penalty notice, cannabis warning or community resolution.

Note 7 - 'Killed or Seriously Injured' (KSI) refers to all people killed or seriously injured on Essex's roads, regardless of whether any criminal offences were committed. 'Causing Death/Serious injury by Dangerous/Inconsiderate Driving' offences (detailed on p.10) refers to the number of crimes of this type.

Note 8 - On Wednesday 23 October 2019 the bodies of 39 Vietnamese nationals were discovered in a lorry trailer in Grays. This tragic incident is reflected in the Homicide numbers.



ORGANISATIONAL OVERVIEW

The Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) was established by the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 (PRSRA) as a corporation sole with a separate body of Chief Constable, also as a corporation sole. Mr Roger Hirst was elected Police and Crime Commissioner on 5th May 2016 and appointed Jane Gardner as Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner.

From 1st October 2017, the PCC also took on the governance of Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, becoming the country's first Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC). The governance arrangements of the PFCC and Chief Constable are included in the joint Annual Governance Statement.



OUR LEADERSHIP AND WORKFORCE

THE ROLE OF THE PFCC

The PFCC is responsible for the totality of policing in Essex. The public accountability for the delivery and performance of the police service is placed into the hands of the PFCC on behalf of the electorate of Essex. He must therefore secure the maintenance of the police force in Essex and ensure that the police force is efficient and effective.

The PFCC is responsible for setting strategic direction and objectives of the force through the Police and Crime Plan and setting an annual budget, monitoring financial outcomes, approving a medium-term financial plan and capital programme in consultation with the Chief Constable.

The PFCC is also responsible for the scrutiny, support and challenge of overall performance of the force, including against the policing priorities to protect Essex, and holds the Chief Constable to account for the performance of the force's officers and staff.

The PFCC provides the local link between the police and communities, working to translate the legitimate desires and aspirations of the public into action. The PFCC



publishes information specified by the Secretary of State and information that he considers necessary to enable the people who live in the force area to assess the performance of the PFCC and Chief Constable. He also prepares and issues an annual report to the Police Fire and Crime Panel on performance against the objectives set within the Plan.

The PFCC has wider responsibilities than those relating solely to the police force, namely:

- Delivery of community safety and crime reduction
- Ability to bring together Community Safety Partnerships at the force level
- Allocate crime and reduction grants within Essex
- Duty to ensure that all collaboration agreements with other local policing bodies and forces deliver better value for money or enhance the effectiveness of policing capabilities and resilience
- Enhancement of the delivery of criminal justice in their area

THE ROLE OF THE CHIEF CONSTABLE

The Chief Constable has day to day responsibility for financial management of the force within the framework of the agreed budget allocation and levels of authorisation issued by the PFCC. He is accountable to the PFCC for the delivery of efficient and effective policing, management of resources and expenditure by the police force. The Chief Constable is responsible to the public and accountable to the PFCC for leading the force in a way that is consistent with the attestation made by all constables on appointment and ensuring that it acts with impartiality.

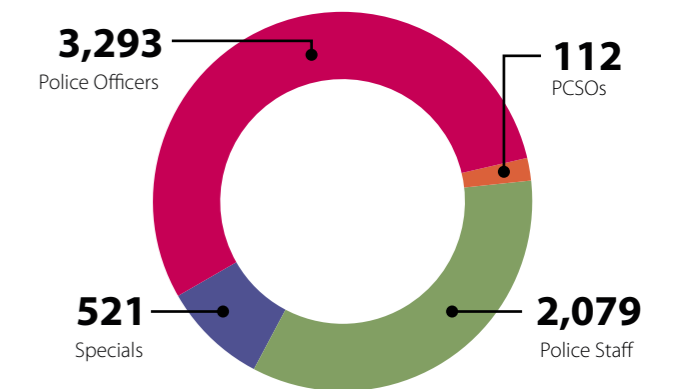
The Chief Constable supports the PFCC in the delivery of the strategy and objectives set out in the Plan, and in planning the force's budget. In agreement with the PFCC, the Chief Constable enters collaboration agreements with other Chief Constables, other policing bodies and partners that improve the efficiency or effectiveness of policing.

The respective responsibilities of the PFCC and Chief Constable as corporations sole are brought together in legal and accounting terms to form the PFCC Group.

OUR WORKFORCE

During 2019/20, our police officer strength numbers increased by 229 FTEs to 3,293 FTEs. The chart below shows the make-up of the workforce as at 31st March 2020.

Our workforce FTEs at 31st March 2020



Essex Police is growing and during the 2020/21 year the Police Officer establishment will grow by 151 additional officers; 135 of which are as a result of the government's ambition to recruit an additional 20,000 Police Officers nationally. At the end of 2019/20, the force had recruited 75 additional officers above the established budget to assist in meeting the 2020/21 target, bringing the total number of officers to 3,369 FTE by March 2021.

The growth in officer numbers is expected to continue with an additional 180 officers in 2021/22 and 135 officers in 2022/23 funded by the government's national uplift programme.

In 2020/21, there will also be investment of an additional 71 police staff to enable the recruitment and growth in police numbers and sustain a larger operational police force. This will grow the police staff establishment from 2,248 FTE to 2,319 FTE by March 2021.

The police staff FTE of 2,079 includes 18 directly employed by the PFCC.

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

In recognising the respective responsibilities of the PFCC and Chief Constable, all assets, liabilities and contracts are in the name and ownership of the PFCC, whereas most police staff along with police officers and PCSOs are employed by the Chief Constable.

An ambitious programme of transformation is underway to help prepare Essex Police to meet the demands of today and the future, involving, police estates, technology and an enhanced police operating model.

WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM

The chart below shows an analysis of the PFCC's key sources of funding in 2019/20 totalling £297.586m. The Home Office core grant paid to the PFCC accounted for 54% of the total funding. These grants and income raised by Council Tax funded the net revenue budget for 2019/20 of £297.586m.

Funding Sources 2019/20 (£m)



- Home Office Grant – **£159.78**
- Council Tax – **£124.68**
- Specific Grants – **£13.13**

Following the increase in the government's limit for precept increases to £24 for 2019/20, the PFCC increased the precept by £23.94 from £169.02 to £192.96, an increase of 14.16% in order to invest an additional £8.5m into frontline policing services.

The police grant settlement announced by the government for 2020-21 included additional funding with 76% of £750m less a £50m top-slice being allocated across forces through the Home Office Core Grant. This funding is for the first year of a three-year programme to increase police officer numbers by 20,000 nationally. The remaining 24% is to be released in arrears as additional officers are recruited.

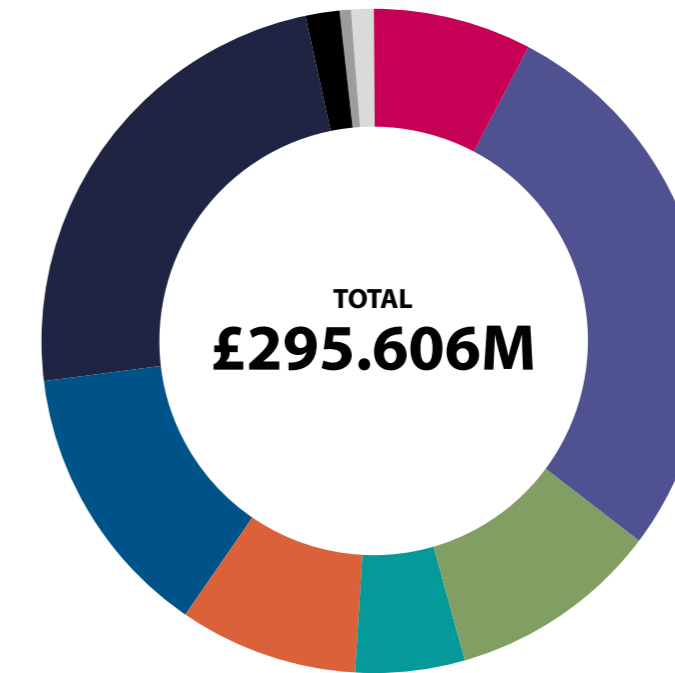
The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner has increased the police precept element of council tax by 2.94% for 2020-21, which is an additional £5.67 a year for a band D property. The government permitted increases of up to £10.

In addition to investment, Essex Police has a proven track record in making cash and efficiency savings to maximise the benefit out of every penny the force spends. In 2019/20, £4.7m of savings were delivered.



What the Money is Spent on

The graph below shows an analysis of the Group's net revenue expenditure totalling £295.606m



- Control Room and Incident Management **£23.320m**
- Local Policing **£81.950m**
- Crime and Public Protection Command **£30.729m**
- Custody and Criminal Justice **£15.535m**
- Operational Policing Command **£25.229m**
- Serious Crime Directorate **£39.992m**
- Support Services Directorate **£69.3348m**
- Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner **£4.620m**
- Central Costs **£2.135m**
- National Policing **£2.748m**

PRINCIPLE RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES

A risk management strategy is in place to identify and evaluate risk. The PFCC and the Chief Constable have risk registers.

PFCC

While the risk of the Coronavirus Pandemic and the emerging mitigations to it are constantly being updated at this time, other strategic risks are grouped into five distinct areas, three of which focus on Policing and Crime:

- **Police and Crime Plan** - established priorities of the plan are not realised;
- **Budgets** - uncertainty regarding future funding levels creates difficulties in setting and delivering balanced budgets for the PFCC's office and Essex Police;
- **Holding to Account** - the failure to deliver the Local Business Case for Joint Governance of Police and Fire & Rescue Services;

The PFCC has a number of mitigations in place, including scrutiny through governance boards; various internal and partnership projects, initiatives and commissioned services; the Internal Audit Plan, and the Commissioner's continued involvement influencing budget conversations as the Finance lead for the APCC alongside a continued public engagement plan which allows the ongoing reflection of the concerns and priorities of the residents of Essex.



Chief Constable

Below are the main strategic risks from the Chief Constable's Risk Register:

- **Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme** - Cost will continue to escalate due to the continuing delays of the national ESMCP and the Emergency Services Network in delivering a credible, comprehensive and fit for purpose communications solution.
- **Outstanding Vetting & Re-Vetting Clearance** - Outstanding vetting and re-vetting clearance delays impact on the forces ability to recruit to vacancies in a timely manner and ensure officers and staff already in posts receive at least the lowest level of vetting clearance for their role.

- **Reduced External Forensic Capacity** – One of our main providers of forensic analysis went into administration early 2018 and the increase at short notice was challenging in the forensic marketplace. This led to a cap on forensic submissions which in turn reduced the number of crimes where forensic support could be utilised.
- **Data Quality** - Inadequate data capture and recording and the creation of duplicate records may inhibit the force's ability to identify the risk factors that precede a critical incident.

The Chief Constable's risks are mitigated by additional resources in place to manage demand within Corporate Vetting, working with regional and national groups to optimise access to external forensic services, and having a data quality improvement plan.

The strategic risks are reviewed and challenged by the Joint Audit Committee on a regular basis.



2019/20 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

The Chief Constable has operational control of Police Officers, PCSOs and Police Staff (excluding OPFCC staff). The PFCC has strategic control of all assets, income, OPFCC staff and liabilities and is responsible for establishing most reserves and controlling all cashflow.

The tables overleaf show budgeted and actual net revenue expenditure, the sources of funding and the transfers from earmarked reserves and the General Reserve in a form representing the management accounting balance for the Group and for the PFCC. The management accounting balance is the form recognised in setting the PFCC budget and council tax precept for 2019/20. The Net Revenue Expenditure (NRE) excludes depreciation, pension liabilities, accumulated absences and other items which do not have an impact on the transfer to or from the General Reserve.

These charges are included and accounted for in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES) within the Core Financial Statements in accordance with proper practice.

The original net expenditure budget of £298.114m included planned contributions of £0.179m from earmarked reserves and £0.349m from general reserves. During the year, £1.610m was transferred to earmarked reserves leaving an updated budget of £296.504m and a year-end underspend of £0.897m. The underspend was transferred back to the general reserve, resulting in a net contribution to the general reserve of £0.49m.

The Expenditure and Funding Analysis reconciles the difference between the management accounting balance and the accounting balance in the CIES.

	Group				
	Original Budget	Virements	Current Budget	Actual	Variance over / (under)
	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Employees					
Police Officer pay and allowances	174,983	2,398	177,381	181,543	4,162
PCSO pay and allowances	2,951	500	3,451	3,502	51
Police staff pay and allowances	84,177	-193	83,984	80,148	-3,836
Ill-health/medical pensions	4,520	0	4,520	3,881	-639
Training	1,457	-137	1,320	1,127	-193
Other employee expenses	372	203	575	628	53
	268,460	2,771	271,231	270,829	-402
Other Service Expenditure					
Premises	11,075	-68	11,007	11,208	201
Transport	6,334	-161	6,173	6,353	180
Supplies & services	32,429	6,398	38,827	36,064	-2,763
Third party payments	5,713	2,331	8,044	10,250	2,206
	55,551	8,500	64,051	63,875	-176
Gross Operating Expenditure	324,011	11,271	335,282	334,704	-578
Income	-27,951	-12,190	-40,141	-40,194	-53
Net Cost of Services	296,060	-919	295,141	294,510	-631
Other Expenditure / (Income)					
Interest (receivable) / payable	-76	-1	-77	-181	-103
Cost of the disposal of fixed assets	30	-30	0	0	0
Capital & other adjustments	2,100	-660	1,440	1,277	-163
	2,054	-691	1,363	1,096	-266
Net Expenditure	298,114	-1,610	296,504	295,606	-897
Sources of Funding					
Police grant	-103,551	0	-103,551	-103,551	0
Formula funding grant	-56,231	0	-56,231	-56,231	0
Council tax precept	-123,134	0	-123,134	-123,134	0
Council tax support grant	-10,992	0	-10,992	-10,992	0
Council tax freeze grant	-2,133	0	-2,133	-2,133	0
Collection fund surplus	-1,545	0	-1,545	-1,545	0
	-297,586	0	-297,586	-297,586	0
(Surplus)/Deficit before Transfer to Earmarked Reserves	528	-1,610	-1,082	-1,980	-897
Transfer to/(from) Earmarked Reserves	-179	1,610	1,431	1,931	500
Transfer to/(from) the General Reserve	-349	0	-349	49	397

	PFCC		
	Current Budget	Actual	Variance over / (under)
	£0	£0	£0
Employees			
Police staff pay and allowances	1,529	1,574	45
Ill-health/medical pensions	0	0	0
Training	1,294	1,103	(191)
Other employee expenses	299	354	55
	3,122	3,031	(91)
Other Service Expenditure			
Premises	11,007	11,208	201
Transport	5,095	5,152	57
Supplies & services	37,561	35,331	(2,230)
Third party payments	8,044	8,759	715
Gross Operating Expenditure	61,707	60,450	(1,257)
Income	64,829	63,481	(1,348)
Net Cost of Services	(40,141)	(40,194)	(53)
Other Expenditure / (Income)	24,688	23,287	(1,401)
Interest (receivable) / payable	(77)	(181)	(104)
Cost of the disposal of fixed assets	0	0	0
Capital & other adjustments	1,440	1,277	(163)
	1,363	1,096	(267)
Net Expenditure	26,051	24,383	(1,668)
Sources of Funding			
Police grant	(103,551)	(103,551)	0
Formula funding grant	(56,231)	(56,231)	0
Council tax precept	(123,134)	(123,134)	0
Council tax support grant	(10,992)	(10,992)	0
Council tax freeze grant	(2,133)	(2,133)	0
Collection fund surplus	(1,545)	(1,545)	
	(297,586)	(297,586)	0
(Surplus)/Deficit before Transfer to Earmarked Reserves	(271,535)	(273,203)	(1,668)
Transfer to/(from) Earmarked Reserves	1,431	1,931	500
Transfer to/(from) the General Reserve	270,104	271,272	1,168

The transactions in the above table reflect the PFCC transactions and are included in the Group table on the previous page. The Group table also includes the Chief Constable's transactions which are included in the Chief Constable's Statement of Accounts within the Narrative Report.

The transactions in the table above relate to police staff for the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, as well as operational and service expenditure, and non-operational income.

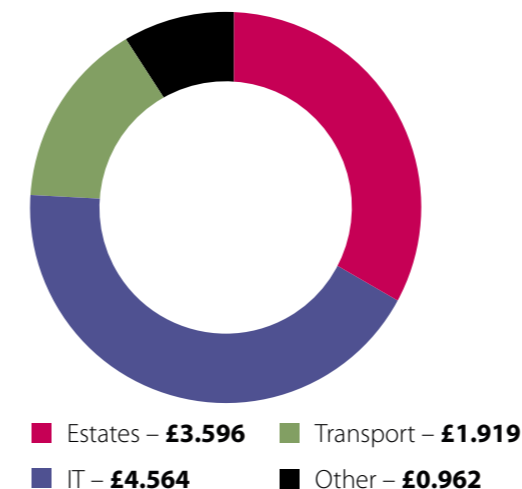
All other expenditure is included in the Chief Constable's accounts.



CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

A capital investment programme amounting to £11.811m was approved in January 2019, adjusted to £19.913m upon formal approval of prior year slippage in June 2019, to maintain the infrastructure needed to support an effective and efficient police service. By March 2020, capital approvals had been updated to £10.944m reflecting decisions to reprofile schemes into future years. £11.041m was invested during 2019/20 as shown in the chart and table below.

Capital Funding Sources 2019/20 (£m)



Capital Budget and Expenditure 2019/20

Capital Expenditure Projects	Original Payment Approvals (*)	Updated Payment Approvals	2019/20 Expenditure	Variance over / (under)
	£0	£0	£0	£0
Estates	10,167	3,641	3,596	(45)
IT	6,521	3,981	4,564	583
Transport	2,531	2,247	1,919	(328)
Other	694	1,075	962	(113)
Total	19,913	10,944	11,041	97

* Adjusted to include approved 2018/19 approvals slippage

Estates

Of a total spend of £3.596m, £1.141m related to the estates strategy with the remainder spent on the maintenance and refurbishment of the estate.

IT

Investment in IT of £4.564m included expenditure on:

- £2.143m for the annual refresh programme, including replacement of servers, printers, docking stations, desktop and laptop computers along with the wider IT infrastructure and telephony network;

- £0.915m on mobile technology, allowing officers the freedom and agility to provide services to the public at the point of contact without the need to return to the police station in order to update systems and submit paperwork; and

- £0.835m on Airwave Radio replacement.

Transport

Investment in Transport of £1.919m for the fleet replacement programme.

Other

This includes investment in Tasers, both replacement of existing units and an uplift in the number of units (£0.324m), body armour replacement (£0.218m), automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) equipment (£0.130m) and the remaining spend on other specialist equipment.



CAPITAL FUNDING

Capital investment is funded from four main sources; primarily from capital receipts, government grants and contributions and revenue contributions. If capital investment exceeds these available resources, borrowing is an option for funding this spend, providing the force can demonstrate that it is complying with the Prudential Code of Practice which requires any borrowing to be affordable, prudent and sustainable. There was not a need to borrow to finance 2019/20 capital investment, however it is anticipated that there will be a need to borrow from 2020/21 onwards to fund future investment plans.

Capital income during 2019/20, totalling £6.812m, was from the following sources:

Capital Funding Sources 2019/20 (£m)



- Capital grant and other contributions – **£1.310**
- Capital receipts – **£4.171**
- Revenue contribution – **£1.331**

Capital Funding Sources	Original Income Forecast	Updated Income Forecast	Actuals in 2019/20	Variance (over)/under
	£0	£0	£0	£0
Capital grant and other contributions	(956)	(1,168)	(1,310)	(142)
Capital receipts	(16,951)	(4,171)	(4,171)	0
Revenue contribution	(1,600)	(1,331)	(1,331)	0
Total	(19,507)	(6,670)	(6,812)	(142)

* Adjusted to include approved 2018/19 approvals slippage

The under achievement of capital receipts against the original forecast is due to a significant proportion of planned sales being reprofiled into future years.

The year started with a surplus in the capital reserve of £7.324m and at the end of March 2020 the capital reserve was in surplus by £3.095m

Future capital expenditure is planned to increase over the coming years as investment in estates and IT takes place with capital expenditure forecast to be in excess of £90m over the next five years, with indicative borrowing of £48m over the same period. At present, it is not clear what impact the current global COVID-19 pandemic will have on these investment plans or the level of capital receipts that will be available to part fund them.

RESERVES

Our revenue reserves are key to the financial strategy of the force, ensuring that we have some resilience to cope with unpredictable financial pressures and long-term financial commitments. Specific earmarked reserves are held to manage known financial liabilities and possible risks.



The main elements of the PFCC's reserve strategy are:

- To establish and maintain a General Reserve position of 3% of net revenue expenditure over the medium term;
- The PFCC will apply a prudent approach to reserves; and
- Earmarked Reserves will be created and held for significant events, change programmes and related costs. This includes transformation and saving programmes.

General Reserve

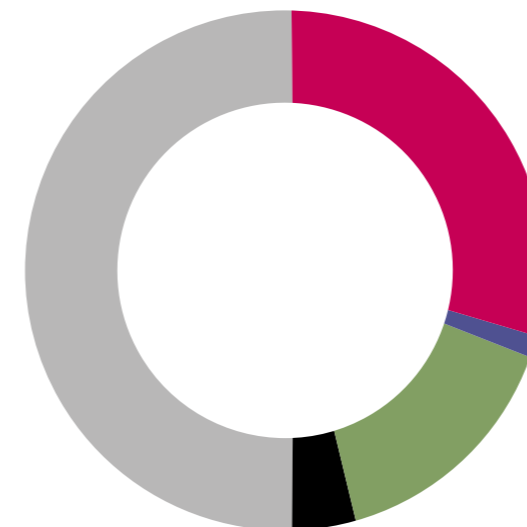
The General Reserve is held to provide a working balance to protect the force against unexpected cost pressures. This is particularly critical during uncertain times such as the COVID-19 pandemic where the force faces financial pressures in responding to the crisis and uncertainties around future funding. There are plans to draw on the general reserves and earmarked reserves in 2020/21 to manage the financial impact of responding to COVID-19.

The balance on the General Reserve at 1st April 2019 was £9.226m and there was a planned withdrawal when the budget was set of £0.348m. For 2019/20, a contribution was made of £0.397m from the year's underspend resulting in a net increase of £0.049m to a balance of £9.275m at 31st March 2020 (3.1% of the 2019/20 budgeted net expenditure).

Earmarked Reserves

The PFCC's earmarked reserves total £9.460m (including a £2m Future Capital Funding Reserve) at 31st March 2020 and are analysed in the chart below alongside the general reserve:

Useable Reserves as at 31st March 2020 (£m)



- Operational Reserves **£5.599**
- Restructure Reserves **£0.230**
- Reserves help by Essex Police but managed by third party revenues **£2.864**
- Carry Forward Reserves **£0.767**
- General Reserves **£9.275**

PENSION LIABILITIES

Accounting standards require that the total future liabilities for the cost of pension payments to past and present police officers and police staff are fully reflected in the Balance Sheet. Accordingly, the Balance Sheet figures included within the accounts (see note 42) includes net liabilities of £150.015m (2018/19 £181.756m) for police staff and £2,862.600m (2018/19 £3,067.043m) for police officers.

The statutory arrangements for funding the police officer deficit and the PFCC's arrangements for funding the police staff deficit, however, mean that the financial position of the PFCC remains sound.

TREASURY MANAGEMENT

The PFCC invests surplus funds in accordance with the Treasury Management Strategy, which is agreed each year. The 2019/20 strategy set out a clear set of investment parameters in order to minimise the risk of financial loss. In summary, these parameters were:

- i) Country Limits: UK financial institutions (meeting specified credit rating criteria)
- ii) Monetary limits as follows:
 - a. Debt Management Office – up to 100% of total investment portfolio
 - b. UK local authorities – up to £5m per authority
 - c. Lloyds Bank – up to £5m limit (nominated banker)
 - d. Money market funds (revised criteria enacted during 2019/20 as per approved recommendations set out in half-year outturn report) -investments in each MMF are limited to 10% of total investments at any time, with overall exposure to MMFs as a whole, limited to 50% of total investments held at any one time

All other financial institutions – higher of £1m or 5% of total investment portfolio.
- iii) Durational limits: maximum duration 12 months if a fixed term deal (no time limit if cash is instantly accessible)

The PFCC had liquid investments totalling £8.6m and short-term investments totalling £5.5m as at 31st March 2020. These figures exclude additional investments in respect of monies held on behalf of third parties. During 2019/20, the PFCC earned investment income of £0.191m, representing an average return of 0.73%.

The PFCC undertook one instance of short-term external borrowing during 2019/20. The PFCC has, however, inherited internal borrowings from the former Essex Police Authority, the outstanding balance of which equated to £6.065m as at the 31st March 2020. This arises from occasions in previous years when the practice was to utilise surplus cash balances to finance the capital programme in lieu of borrowing these funds externally from financial institutions. If the practice had been to borrow funds externally, the investments at 31st March 2020 would have been higher, and they would be offset by an equivalent amount of external debt.

Cash Flow

	2018/19	2019/20
	£0	£0
Current Assets		
Short term investments	8,520	5,500
Liquid investments	8,484	8,600
Total current assets	17,004	14,100

The main factors affecting cash in the future are:

- i. Acquisitions and disposals relating to the capital programme
- ii. The value of reserve balances
- iii. Grants and contributions unapplied
- iv. The value of loans raised
- v. Equipment and costs in relation to operations linked to the outbreak of COVID-19, although the ongoing impact of this remains uncertain at the current point in time.

EXPLANATION OF ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS

OPFCC GRANT EXPENDITURE

The PFCC deploys a mix of funding approaches for commissioned activity; from formal, multi-year contracts to small, one-off grants. This recognises the benefits that each approach can deliver; formal contracts give long-term certainty to providers to enable services to plan and invest in delivery, while grants provide flexibility and enable small groups to undertake activity or try new approaches that may not immediately be able to robustly demonstrate outcomes.

The PFCC's Community Safety Fund (CSF) provides core funding in the form of community safety grants to statutory and voluntary organisations for activities that meet locally identified priorities aligned to the Police and Crime Plan. The PFCC has maintained funding levels for core grants in 2019/20, recognising the importance of local partnerships and organisations to the effective delivery of the areas of focus within the Police and Crime Plan.

In 2019/20, the PFCC allocated £0.31m to Community Safety Partnerships in Essex, using a funding formula based on population, crime level and deprivation. As in previous years, a little over 12% of this funding to CSPs was top-sliced for the central Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) fund to remove the unpredictability and significant financial pressures on individual CSPs associated with DHRs. The PFCC has received universally positive feedback about this approach and is therefore continuing to support and invest in this system.

From the 2019/20 Community Safety Fund (CSF), the PFCC also provided £0.444m of funding to Youth Offending Services (YOS) and £0.503m to the Drug and Alcohol Teams (DAAT) across Southend, Essex & Thurrock.

The PFCC successfully bid for £0.45m of Home Office Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) funding over three years (2017-20) to pilot new approaches to working with perpetrators of domestic abuse to prevent re-offending or an escalation of offending behaviour. This funding concludes in 2019/20, but the PFCC has committed ongoing funding, and drawn on partner contributions, to continue the provision of some elements of this programme, namely the Goodman youth work project and direct perpetrator work through The Change Project.

The Ministry of Justice provides an annual grant to the PFCC to commission or deliver support services for victims of crime across Essex. In addition to the £2.1m grant received from the Ministry of Justice, the PFCC supplemented the budget with an additional £0.17m from the CSF. Through this funding, the PFCC ensures that victims have access to the entitlements as laid out in the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime.

The PFCC also successfully applied for additional funding in 2019/20;

- £0.27m devolved Rape Support Funding from the Ministry of Justice which we have allocated to our countywide sexual abuse support service, and
- £1.5m Home Office Funding to support our Violence and Vulnerability work, including funding for seconded staff to support the work of the Violence and Vulnerability Unit, youth workers based in A&E departments to offer support to young people, and funding for local Behavioural Attendance Partnerships to prevent young people being drawn into or becoming further involved in county lines

2019/20 was the first full year of the PFCC's new countywide domestic abuse support service contract, co-commissioned with Essex County Council and delivered by a consortia of local, specialist domestic abuse charities; Next Chapter, Changing Pathways and SoS Domestic Abuse Projects.

The PFCC also recommissioned the countywide sexual abuse contract, combining therapeutic support, independent sexual violence advisors, counselling, and advocacy for all victims of sexual violence, abuse and exploitation regardless of their age, gender, or when the offence occurred.

The PFCC continued to use the Community Safety Development Fund (CSDF) to support local community organisations that positively impact on the priorities within the Police and Crime Plan. In 2019/20, the CSDF allocated £0.3m to around 35 projects, including Southend YMCA, Bar n Bus, Alpha Vesta, and Justice & Care.

The table below shows the amount of grant funding allocated during 2019/20 and the related grant over/underspend.

	Budget	Allocated	Over/ (Under spend)
	£000	£000	£000
Community Safety Fund	2,296	2,164	(132)
Community Safety Development Fund	340	295	(45)
Victims' Fund	2,904	2,892	(12)
Violence & Vulnerability Fund	2,125	2,047	(78)
Total	7,665	7,398	(267)

EQUALITY ACT 2010

Under the Public Sector Equality Duty, the Service must have due regard to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people of different protected characteristic groups.

The Police Fire and Crime Commissioner's objectives, published in-line with The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) of the Equality Act 2010, are:

- Scrutinise the work of Essex Police and Essex County Fire and Rescue Service (ECFRS) against their obligations in the Equality Act 2010 and their own equality objectives. In the case of ECFRS this will also include performance against the Equality Framework for Fire and Rescue Services and in the case of Essex Police this will include a focus on Stop and Search activity.
- Improve our understanding and connection with communities so everyone has equal opportunity to express their views on policing and fire and rescue services in Essex.
- Develop and deliver engagement programmes that provide the opportunity for all people across Essex to provide their input in key strategic documents, including the Police and Crime Plan, and Fire and Rescue Plan. To provide a particular focus on engagement with young people and people from BAME communities.
- Ensure that key strategic decisions consider the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty and provide clear evidence of what has been considered and contributed to the final decision. Where necessary undertake a full Equality Impact Assessment.
- Monitor the effectiveness of our commissioned services in reaching all protected groups and how they are proactively supporting the three objectives within the Equality Act 2010.

Essex Police has a separate Equality and Diversity Strategy which was launched in 2020. Their objectives, published in-line with The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) of the Equality Act 2010, are:

- Improve inclusive culture and increase awareness and understanding of diversity and quality through delivery of mandatory training, equality data analysis, equality and health impact assessment, and effective community engagement.
- Adopt and advance the NPCC Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Strategy 2018-2025 and accompanying toolkits.

- Narrow the disparity between protected groups and non-protected groups in respect of the use of police powers such as stops, searches and the use of force. Improve the experience of policing services without reducing the legitimate use of police powers to protect communities.
- Increase satisfaction and confidence amongst protected groups, wider communities and victims of crime. Tackle hate crime and address any complaints and concerns raised.
- Attract, recruit, progress and retain a more diverse workforce that better reflects our communities to improve confidence in Essex Police.



