



Essex County Council

Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel

14:00	Thursday, 28 September 2023	Committee Room 1 County Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH
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For information about the meeting please ask for:

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		Pages
1	Membership, Apologies and Declarations of Interest	5 - 5
2	Minutes To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 20 July 2023.	6 - 12
3	Questions to the Chairman from members of the Public The Chairman to respond to any questions relevant to the business of the Panel from members of the public. Please note that members of the public wishing to ask a question must email democratic.services@essex.gov.uk by noon on the day before the meeting and that questions must relate to an item on the agenda for the meeting.	
4	Balanced Appointment Objective Report Report EPFCP/22/23	13 - 14
5	Essex County Fire and Rescue Service Annual Report and Statement of Assurance 2022/23 Report EPFCP/23/23	15 - 44

6	Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Annual Report 2022/23 Report EPFCP/24/23	45 - 79
7	2024/25 Budget Report EPFCP/25/23	80 - 87
8	Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's Decisions Report Report EPFCP/26/23	88 - 94
9	The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner to update the Panel on any ongoing issues	
10	National Association of Police, Fire and Crime Panels Update	
11	Forward Work Plan Report EPFCP/27/23	95 - 96
12	Dates of Future Meetings Report EPFCP/28/23	97 - 97
13	Date of Next Meeting To note that the next meeting will be held on Thursday 7 December 2023.	
14	Urgent Business To consider any matter which in the opinion of the Chairman should be considered in public by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) as a matter of urgency.	

Exempt Items

(During consideration of these items the meeting is not likely to be open to the press and public)

The following items of business have not been published on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information falling within Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. Members are asked to consider whether or not the press and public should be excluded during the consideration of these items. If so it will be necessary for the meeting to pass a formal resolution:

That the press and public are excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the remaining items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information falling within Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, the specific paragraph(s) of Schedule 12A engaged being set out in the report or appendix relating to that item of business.

15

Urgent Exempt Business

To consider in private any other matter which in the opinion of the Chairman should be considered by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) as a matter of urgency.

Agenda item 1

Committee: Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel

Enquiries to: Sophie Campion, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Membership, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest

Recommendations:

To note

1. Membership as shown below
2. Apologies and substitutions
3. Declarations of interest to be made by Members in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct

Membership

(Quorum: 7)

Councillor A Hedley
Councillor M Cunningham
Councillor B Aspinell
Councillor R Savage
Councillor D Eley
Councillor M Lilley
Councillor S Patel
Councillor R Playle
Councillor M Garnett
Councillor S Burwood
Councillor L Newport
Councillor J Courtenay
Councillor G Placey
Councillor G Collins
Councillor M Sutton
John Gili-Ross
Sheila Murphy
Councillor J Deakin
Councillor A McGurran

Representing

Basildon Borough Council
Braintree District Council
Brentwood Borough Council
Castle Point Borough Council
Chelmsford City Council
Colchester City Council
Epping Forest District Council
Essex County Council
Harlow District Council
Maldon District Council
Rochford District Council
Southend-on-Sea City Council
Tendring District Council
Thurrock Council
Uttlesford District Council
Independent Member
Independent Member
Co-opted Member for Balanced Appointment
Co-opted Member for Balanced Appointment

Minutes of the meeting of the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel, held in Committee Room 1 at County Hall, Chelmsford on Thursday 20 July 2023

Present:

Councillor

Anthony Hedley
Mary Cunningham
Donna Eley
Michael Lilley
Ross Playle
Mike Garnett
Simon Burwood
James Courtenay
Gary Collins
Maggie Sutton
Aidan McGurran

Representing

Basildon Borough Council
Braintree District Council
Chelmsford City Council
Colchester City Council
Essex County Council
Harlow District Council
Maldon District Council
Southend-on-Sea City Council
Thurrock Council
Uttlesford District Council
Co-opted Member for Balanced Appointment

Co-opted Independent Members

John Gili-Ross (Chairman)

Also in attendance

Gemma Bint	Democratic Services Officer
Pippa Brent-Isherwood	Chief Executive, Office of the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (OPFCC)
Moira Bruin	Deputy Chief Fire Officer
Sophie Campion	Senior Democratic Services Officer, Secretary to the Panel
Jane Gardner	Deputy Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
Roger Hirst	Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC)
Andy Prophet	Deputy Chief Constable
Emma Tombs	Democratic Services Manager

1 Membership, Apologies and Declarations of Interest

The report of the Membership, Apologies and Declarations was received.

1. The membership of the Panel was noted, including a change to the membership which had taken place since the last meeting:
 - Cllr Barry Aspinell had been appointed by Brentwood Borough Council to replace Cllr Keith Barber.
2. The following apologies were noted:
 - Cllr Gina Placey, Tendring District Council
 - Cllr Lisa Newport, Rochford District Council
 - Cllr Barry Aspinell, Brentwood Borough Council
 - Cllr Smutri Patel, Epping Forest District Council
 - Sheila Murphy, Co-opted independent member

3. The following declarations were made by Members:
 - For the purposes of transparency Councillor Simon Burwood advised that his daughter was currently a serving Essex police officer. Councillor Burwood participated fully in the meeting.

2 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3 Questions to the Chairman from members of the Public

There were none.

4 Balanced Appointment Objective Report

The Panel received report EPFCP/17/23 to review the composition of the Panel following the appointment of members by the constituent councils for the municipal year 2023-24.

Resolved:

- That officers request one nomination each from the Essex Labour Group and the Essex Conservative Group.
- That a further report to the Panel be made as soon as these nominations have been received so the nominees identified can be co-opted to the Panel.

5 Fire and Rescue Plan Performance Measures – Quarter 4 2022/23

The Panel received report EPFCP/18/23 which provided an overview of the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service's progress in delivering the priorities set out in the Fire and Rescue Plan 2020 – 2024 during Quarter 4 of 2022/23.

The Commissioner introduced the report, drawing attention to some of the highlights including the success of the dynamic deployment approach, the number of road and water safety events held and the fall in staff sickness. The Commissioner also highlighted the areas for continued focus which included global availability across the county, the increase in the number of road traffic collisions attended and the slight increase in staff turnover.

During the discussion, the Panel asked questions and sought clarification on the following issues:

- The issues relating to fires from e-vehicles and how they were dealt with were explained, including the hazards linked to charging them. It was explained that currently the recording of incidents did not separate electric vehicles from others, but as this was an area of public interest as an emerging risk, there were likely to be changes in reporting nationally.

- The Commissioner advised that the road and water safety events that had been held were targeted towards particular at risk sites and targeted audiences. They had been well attended within the targeted groups. Some of the Vision Zero days of action were purposefully not pre-announced.
- In terms of queries relating to Speedwatch, it was explained that Speedwatch had been brought under the Safer Essex Roads Partnership, it was hosted by the Fire and Rescue Service, with input from other organisations. The responsibility was shared between the organisations to sign off approved areas and training.
- It was confirmed that in relation to questions around the use of Tru-Cam speed cameras, that enforcement was a policing power which the Chief Constable could delegate to individuals that were community safety accredited. There was a distinction between volunteers undertaking exercises to educate the public and trained individuals undertaking the enforcement aspects.
- With respect to the success of the work of the Tri-services officer in Maldon and whether this was being rolled out to other areas, the Commissioner explained that it had worked well in that area and a similar model was being rolled out in Uttlesford. This would be a step by step process and worked best in rural areas where 'safe and well' visits and prevention work could be targeted to more isolated areas.
- The Commissioner clarified that, in response to a previous suggestion by the Panel regarding the highlighting of current pilot schemes, material pilot programs would be flagged to the Panel via the decisions report on a case by case basis.
- It was confirmed that injuries sustained whilst on duty were reported and monitored appropriately. Any accidents on duty that occurred were scrutinised via the Health and Safety department and where applicable reported to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). Learning was taken from the incident report and due care and attention given to ensure that it did not happen again.
- The way in which Freedom of Information requests were dealt with was explained to the Panel and it was confirmed that all responses were published on the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service website after they had been sent to the person making the request.
- The reasons for the low performance figure relating to coverage at Braintree station were outlined. This was mainly due to a number of fire fighters leaving at the same time and it had taken time to recruit to those posts and the subsequent up-skilling and training of those individuals to become fully competent in the specific roles. On-call liaison officers had been moved to Braintree to assist in the interim period. Despite the availability at that particular station being affected, there were contingencies in place for responding to incidents in that area.
- In respect of complaints received, the most common factor was around the driving of the tenders, other areas included recruitment, false alarms and occasionally door to door visits.
- In response to a question regarding what contingencies were in place to respond to any sudden increases in fires due to hot weather, it was

reported that the service had coped extremely well the previous year with the challenging number of fires due to the hot weather. The service had not had to declare a critical incident, and it was considered to have been well managed with the support and effort from the fire fighters and management team. There had been learning from the last year which enabled the service to better prepare for future issues and the Commissioner outlined the various resources, training and welfare equipment which had been put in place as a result of that learning.

- A question was raised regarding a recent incident involving a tender at the Orsett Fire Station catching fire and the effects of that on the service. In response it was explained that the area would be covered through the dynamic deployment structure. The crew were operating out of Grays station with a replacement tender, while the Orsett station damage was made good. There were business continuity plans in place for each station if the station or tender became unavailable and those plans had been invoked to ensure there was no interruption in service in that area.
- With regard to staff sickness rates, it was acknowledged that the pattern compared to the previous year was not a usual pattern and whilst there wasn't a detailed explanation available, it was noted that it was plausible that this could be related to Covid related sickness reporting the previous year which had not been an issue this year.
- With reference to page 24 of the agenda pack and station coverage being lower than the target, it was explained that the amber arrows generally showed that the percentage movement was within the usual tolerance level. Most of the targets were aspirational and where the service would like to be, as opposed to an average. If there were concerns regarding coverage this would be managed through the dynamic deployment structure.
- The Commissioner outlined what was being done to deal with the increase in unwanted fire signals, in particular working with premises which had repeated issues.
- It was explained that the issues relating to some types of portable barbeques had been raised nationally.

The Commissioner agreed to give consideration to the following issues:

- Clarity to be provided regarding Speedwatch volunteer involvement in educating people within 20mph limits and zones, approved areas and training, via a reminder in the Community Speed Watch monthly report.
- Whether information from the Performance Report, such as page 23 of the agenda pack, could be provided in a format that the service would be happy for it to be circulated to local residents.

Resolved:

That the Panel received and noted the report.

6 Review of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's Constitution

The Panel received report EPFCP/19/23 inviting comments from the Police, Fire and Crime Panel on the contents of the Commissioner's updated Constitution prior to its adoption.

The Commissioner explained that this was the biennial review of the PFCC Constitution. The changes had been summarised and mainly related to new legislation, guidance issued relating to governance and scrutiny and changes to terms of reference.

The Panel had highlighted a few minor administrative issues for consideration in finalising the constitution, but did not have any recommendations with regard to any material issues. The Commissioner confirmed that references to the European Parliament remained in the constitution as the law had not yet been changed. He had also noted a point made regarding the referencing of unitary councils, which were not currently listed in the legislation, and confirmed that he would raise this at a national level.

Resolved:

That following review of the proposed updated Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's Constitution, there were no recommendations on its content and the updated Constitution was noted.

7 Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's Decisions Reports

The Panel received report EPFCP/20/23 which provided information about financial and strategic decisions made by the PFCC.

The Commissioner drew the Panel's attention to a new section in the appendices of the decision report headed 'Decisions previously reported and published since the last meeting of the Police, Fire and Crime Panel'. In future, decisions would be listed here that had still been confidential when they were originally reported to the Panel, but which had since been published.

Resolved:

That the Panel received and noted the report.

8 The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner to update the Panel on any ongoing issues

The Commissioner provided the Panel with a verbal update on ongoing issues including;

- Achievement of the target for the Police growth programme, backed by the Police uplift programme
- Police Pay Award

- Annual Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Conference held in June 2023
- Launch of the Anti-Social Behaviour Hotspot pilots
- Fire and Rescue Service new control system
- Grant launches including; the Safer Streets Fund and Violence and Vulnerability community grants

An ongoing issue which had been raised and discussed at the last few meetings of the Panel was Road Safety and the prevention work being done to bring down the number of killed and seriously injured on Essex roads. In relation to that, the Chairman reported that he had recently attended an event in his capacity as Chairman of the National Association of Police, Fire and Crime Panels. The event related to a particular road safety campaign and some learning which had resulted from an incident involving young drivers. The Commissioner was asked whether he would consider how learning from campaigns such as this could feed into the prevention work on road safety.

It was noted that there had been some opportunities in the past for Panel Members to undertake site visits to help develop their understanding of the services, particularly in relation to understanding how aspects of the Commissioner's priorities were being delivered. Visits had included the Police Control Room and Resolution Centre and the Chairman had recently visited the National Police Air Services base in Essex. The Panel welcomed future opportunities to undertake further visits.

The Commissioner agreed to give consideration to the following issues:

- An opportunity for Panel Members to visit the control room for the Fire and Rescue Service, as had previously been done for the Police control room.
- Providing the Panel with more information on the Anti-Social Behaviour Hotspot pilot areas and consider opportunities for Panel Members to visit the areas.
- How to bring to the attention of the Safer Essex Roads Partnership, the learning from road safety campaigns that could feed into future work to enhance the safety of Essex roads.

Resolved:

That the verbal report was noted.

9 National Association of Police, Fire and Crime Panels Update

The Panel received a verbal update from the Chairman of the Panel, which included an update on a vacancy in the Executive Committee and a meeting with the Home Office.

Resolved:

That the verbal report was noted.

10 Forward Work Plan

The Panel received report EPFCP/21/23 setting out the planned business of the Panel.

Resolved:

That the Panel received and noted the Forward Work Plan.

11 Date of Next Meeting

The Panel noted that the next meeting would take place on Thursday 28 September 2023 at 2:00pm.

There being no urgent business, the meeting closed at 4:02pm.

Report title: Co-option of Members to achieve the Balanced Appointment Objective	
Report to: Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel	
Report author: Emma Tombs, Democratic Services Manager	
Date: 28 September 2023	For: Decision
Enquiries to: Emma Tombs, Democratic Services Manager emma.tombs@essex.gov.uk	
County Divisions affected: All Essex	

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To update the Panel on the proposed nominees received from the Essex Labour Group and Essex Conservative Group for the balanced appointment co-options to the Panel and recommendation that the Panel make the necessary appointments.

2. Background

- 2.1 Schedule 6 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 sets out the composition of the Panel, which includes the 'balanced appointment objective'.

31. (5) The "balanced appointment objective" referred to in this paragraph is the objective that local authority members of a police and crime panel (when taken together)—

 - (a) represent all parts of the relevant police area;*
 - (b) represent the political make-up of—*
 - (i) the relevant local authority, or*
 - (ii) the relevant local authorities (when taken together)*
 - (c) have the skills, knowledge and experience necessary for the police and crime panel to discharge its functions effectively.*
- 2.2 At its meeting of 20 July 2023, the Panel received a report advising that the political composition of the Panel did not reflect the overall political composition of the fifteen constituent councils within the County. This was due to changes resulting from the elections held in May 2023.
- 2.3 The report set out that for the balanced appointment objective to be better achieved, the composition of the Panel would need to include one further Labour member and one further Conservative member over and above those members already appointed by the constituent councils.
- 2.4 The Panel therefore resolved:

- *That officers request one nomination each from the Essex Labour Group and the Essex Conservative Group.*
- *That a further report to the Panel be made as soon as these nominations have been received so the nominees identified can be co-opted to the Panel.*

3. Activity since the 20 July 2023 meeting

- 3.1 As agreed by the Panel, the Essex Labour Group and the Essex Conservative Group were each invited to put forward their respective nominees. These were confirmed as:

Labour – Councillor Aidan McGurran (A member of ECC)

Conservative – Councillor Frankie Ricci (A member of Braintree DC)

- 3.2 The co-options for 2023 represents a change from the previous position which was for an additional Labour member and Liberal Democrat member. The current co-optees are Cllr Aidan McGurran (Labour) and Cllr Jude Deakin (Liberal Democrat) and they have remained in place during this review process. However, if the Panel agrees to co-opt the nominees identified in this report, the current Liberal Democrat co-optee, Cllr Jude Deakin, will cease to be a member of the Panel.

- 3.3 Permission was previously sought in 2022 from the Home Office to make co-options. A response was subsequently received from the Home Office confirming that the Panel was able to make this adjustment each year, as required, without further formal application to the Minister.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 That the co-opted members of the panel to achieve the balanced appointment objective are with immediate effect Councillor Aidan McGurran (Labour) and Councillor Frankie Ricci (Conservative)
- 4.2 That the co-options remain in place until co-options for the 2024-25 year are made.
- 4.3 Note that Cllr Jude Deakin has ceased to be a member of the Panel.

Agenda Item 5
EPFCP/23/23

Report title: Essex County Fire and Rescue Service Annual Report and Statement of Assurance 2022-2023	
Report to: Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel	
Report author: Roger Hirst (Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority)	
Date: 28 September 2023	For: Review
Enquiries to: Darren Horsman (Strategic Head of Policy and Public Engagement) Telephone: 07967 821067 Email: darren.horsman@essex.police.uk	
County Divisions affected: All Essex	

1. Purpose of report

This report provides the Panel with the draft Essex County Fire and Rescue Service Annual Report and Statement of Assurance 2022-2023. The draft report is attached at Annex A.

The Police, Fire and Crime Panel has a statutory duty to review and provide feedback on the draft Statement of Assurance.

2. Recommendation

That Panel members note the draft Annual Report and Statement of Assurance for 2022 - 2023 and either endorse this version or provide comment on the content.

3. Overview

The Fire and Rescue National Framework sets out the priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities in connection with the discharge of their functions. Every fire and rescue authority must publish an annual statement of assurance of compliance with the Framework. For PFCCFRAs such as Essex, this statement is subject to scrutiny by the Police, Fire and Crime Panel and is called the 'Fire and Rescue Statement of Assurance'.

The statement outlines the way in which the Authority and its fire and rescue service has had regard – in the period covered by the document – to the National Framework, the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) and to any strategic plan prepared by the Authority for that period. In the case of this report, this includes the Fire and Rescue Plan 2019 - 2024.

The Authority must also provide assurance to their community and to government on financial, governance and operational matters. The preparation of this document therefore follows the development of the Statement of Accounts for the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service and includes further information to help our communities understand the work undertaken by the fire and rescue service and its performance during 2022 - 2023. Due to national backlogs in auditing services, the Statement of Accounts has not been audited yet. However, it is highly unlikely that there would be any material change to the core financial position of the service or the narrative section that would impact this annual report.

For the second year, the Panel ran a workshop for members to see an early draft of the document and provide feedback. The table below shows the feedback provided by the Panel and the response from the Authority:

Page number	Comment / suggested change	Comment / action
Double page spread of photos (after cover page)	Add captions to photos	Done
Pages 2 to 4 (now pages 42 – 44)	Move governance section to the end. The flow of the document was discussed, and the Panel felt it would serve the readers / public better to move straight into the Commissioner's and Chief Fire Officer's reports.	Done. Governance section moved. Contents page updated accordingly.
Page 5 Fire and Rescue Statement	Second column, third paragraph erroneously refers to the financial year 2020/21.	Changed to reference 2022/23
Page 5 Fire and Rescue Statement	Add the Commissioner's signature.	This will be added once the report is formally approved, prior to publication
Page 10 – 16 CFO's Report	Move the Chief Fire Officer's Report from 6 pages (3 spreads) to 4 pages (2 spreads).	Could only be achieved by reducing the font size, and this

		would not meet accessibility best practice.
Page 16 CFO report	Update language re “prep for next summer.”	Done
Page 24 People section	Make the People Strategy diagram bigger	Done
Page 40 Finance section	“Publication” – typo	Corrected
Back page	Discussion regarding electric scooters, electric cars etc. Suggested adding a safety message into the document.	Done. Back page advert changed from Firestoppers to e-bike safety. NB: Firestoppers was the advert for the Statement of Assurance / Annual Report 2021-2022, so has received coverage.

The report presented to the Police, Fire and Crime Panel today is a draft, but does already incorporate feedback from the Panel. The Panel can either endorse this version or provide additional feedback. If the Panel provides further feedback, a final version will be shared with the Panel before publication.

4. Appendices

Annex A – Draft Annual Report and Statement of Assurance 2022 - 2023



Annual Report and Statement of Assurance 2022 - 2023



Essex Therapy Dogs supporting Firebreak

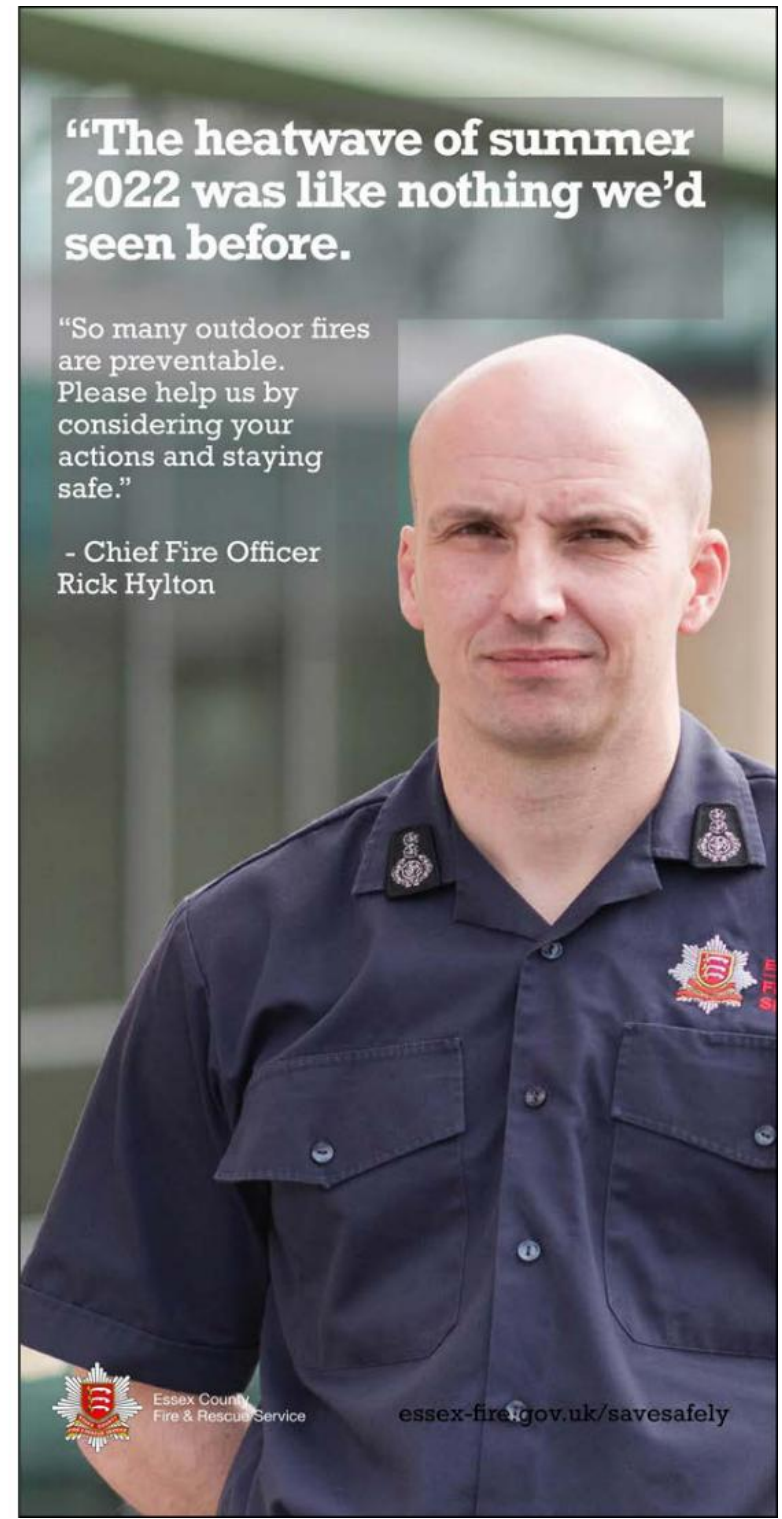


#WeAreEssexFire

Education Officer giving fire and police education messages



Control colleagues celebrating International Control Room Week



“The heatwave of summer 2022 was like nothing we’d seen before.

“So many outdoor fires are preventable. Please help us by considering your actions and staying safe.”

- Chief Fire Officer Rick Hylton



essex-fire.gov.uk/savesafely



Summer 2022 field fire



Fire Cadets



Celebrating Pride month



Firebreak with young adults

Welcome to our Statement of Assurance and the Annual Report for Essex County Fire and Rescue Service.

The report covers the financial year 2022-2023 and includes highlights of the year, how we spent your money, performance against our targets and how we are working to improve our services to our communities.

It incorporates the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority’s Statement of Assurance.

Under the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England, Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authorities must provide annual assurance on financial, governance and operational matters.



Contents

Fire and Rescue Statement	5
Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner’s Report	6
CFO Review of the Year	10
Our Service	18
Our Strategic Priorities	20
Performance against our IRMP	22
People	24
Prevention	28
Protection	32
Response	34
Technology	38
Finance	40
Governance	42
Statutory responsibilities	46
Feedback and recognition	50

Fire and Rescue Statement

The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England sets out a requirement for the fire and rescue authorities to publish a statement of assurance.

It says the statement should:

“... outline the way in which the authority and its fire and rescue service has had regard – in the period covered by the document – to this National Framework, the Integrated Risk Management Plan and to any strategic plan (e.g. the Fire and Rescue Plan) prepared by the authority for that period.

The authority must also provide assurance to their community and to government on financial, governance and operational matters. For Police Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authorities (PCC FRA), this statement is subject to scrutiny by the Police, Fire and Crime Panel.

The name of this statement differs across governance models. In the case of PCC FRAs it is called the ‘Fire and Rescue Statement’.”

2022/23 Fire and Rescue Statement of Assurance

Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority (EPFCCFRA) is satisfied that its business during the financial year 2021 - 2022 was conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards and that public money was properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

The Authority is further satisfied that the requirements of the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England have been met.

Signed:

Roger Hirst
Police Fire and Crime Commissioner





Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's Report Roger Hirst

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service has had a busy year across all its prevention, protection, and response services. The summer heatwave caused a significant surge in fires and one of the busiest periods in recent memory. The Service responded well and was able to maintain its service levels while supporting colleagues across the Eastern Region.

During this period of high demand, it was the ability to work together which made a real difference, from staff members stepping into contingency roles, to local farmers creating firebreaks and the ambulance service providing extra support to crews, it was a true team effort.

The impact of the hot summer is reflected in the overall rise of incidents attended during the year. A total of 17,568 incidents compared to 15,426 in 2021-2022.

This includes a significant increase in the number of actual fires which rose from 3,727 in 2021-2022 to 5,229 during 2022-2023. There was also a significant increase in false alarms with 7,089 during the year compared to 6,457 in 2021-2022.

It was also of significant concern that the number of accidental dwelling fires increased from the 718 we had across Essex in 2021-2022 to 783 in 2022-

2023. While this is still below the level seen in 2019-2020 and earlier, it shows the need to increase our efforts around prevention. The fact that four people lost their lives during the year further makes this need even more urgent.

Each life lost is a tragedy and leaves an indelible mark on families, neighbours, and whole communities. Speaking to firefighters who have attended these tragic events, you get a real sense of how preventable some of these incidents are. From a lack of working smoke alarms to personal or environmental issues that unnecessarily increased the risk to that person; these are things we can collectively do something about.

We know that factors such as being less mobile, living alone, drinking, smoking, having poor hearing or suffering from mental health issues can significantly increase the chance of dying in a fire. The Service has done excellent work examining the causes of historical fatal fires and identifying what happened and what could be done about it. This has helped to inform the work we can do with partners to reduce

the risk to the most vulnerable in our communities and, together, prevent these tragic cases from happening. Unsurprisingly, it identified that a lack of data sharing between agencies means that information highlighting individuals at risk is not shared and appropriate action taken. Improving this situation must be a priority for all agencies involved. Although we are making progress, when hearing directly from those who attend these tragic incidents, it is clear we need to work faster and with more urgency.

As well as collaborating with our partners in health and local councils to encourage them to share data, we are also working directly with communities to reduce risk and prevent fires. A key aspect of this strategy is through delivery of our Home Safety Visits. It is reassuring that over the last year we have been able to deliver 8,470 visits to some of the most vulnerable people in our communities. This is a significant increase from the 6,223 visits the Service undertook in 2021-2022 and above the 7,718 visits undertaken in 2019-2020 prior to the Covid pandemic.

It is during these visits that we can fit smoke alarms, including sensory alarms for people with hearing difficulties, and most importantly spot the signs that somebody is at increased risk and needs additional support.

The more visits we do, the more we can target these to those most at risk of fire and dying of fire. The more people we can protect, the fewer people will die in our community.



My ambition, which I know the Chief Fire Officer shares, is to significantly increase both the overall number of visits and our ability to target the visits we do at the most vulnerable in our society.

Another key area where we can make a real difference is through the growth and development of our protection services. Through this area we work with the owners of high-risk buildings to address the issues that residents face.

Where necessary this involves us taking enforcement action and while our preference will always be to work with owners to address any issues that are highlighted, our primary focus will always be on the safety of our communities.

As a country we have learnt some incredibly difficult lessons through the Grenfell tragedy and the subsequent Inquiry that followed. We must now do all we can with what we have learnt to keep our communities safe.

Together with the Chief Fire Officer and the entire Service we are committed to increasing our capacity and ability in this vital area and making sure that we work hard with building owners to drive down risk and keep our residents safe.

Over the last year we have reviewed our risk-based inspection process which is an evidence-based approach to selecting properties on a year-by-year basis to audit across the county.

This has led to a reallocation of visits and new targets to ensure our resources are used to make the most impact. In 2022-2023 we undertook 1,974 risk-based inspections which is an increase on the previous year of 1,157.

One of the significant challenges faced by the Service is that the number of trained fire inspectors nationally, is far below the number required. This shortfall has resulted in the Service investing in training and developing our inspectors in-house. We intend to increase this training to provide a strong pipeline of talented well-trained inspectors.



His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service (HMICFRS) highlighted our protection service as an area where we need to improve.

As a result, we have secured additional funding for the Service to invest and grow this programme. This investment is alongside additional investment in training and the modernisations of the Service's systems.

Over the last year, like the rest of the country, we have had to maintain a difficult balance between the need for additional investment and the well reported challenges faced by our residents due to the cost-of-living crisis.

While this may have started due to the war in Ukraine and the subsequent impact on fuel prices, it is having a real impact across our communities in Essex.

Despite these challenges the public continue to strongly support investment in Essex County Fire and Rescue Service and we were able to secure investment in the service to help mitigate the cost of necessary and measured increases in staff costs, inflationary pressures on fuel, services and insurance while also continuing to invest in the development and progression of our service.

This investment by the public is making a difference and the Service is improving year on year. Since I became involved with them in 2017, the culture has improved significantly, as reflected in our recent HMICFRS inspection. The way the Service responded to Covid was exemplary and the recent response to the high demand in the summer was exceptional. But most importantly we see every day a Service where staff, firefighters and communities are working hard together to improve our response, to drive forward our prevention activity and build the best fire and rescue service in the country.

I would like to recognise the efforts made across the Service and by partners in driving forward this change and thank them all for their contribution. I would also like to thank Rick Hylton, our Chief Fire Officer, and his senior team for the leadership and aspiration for the Service.





Chief Fire Officer Review of the Year Rick Hylton

I am pleased to share with you our Statement of Assurance and Annual Report. I want to use it to explain how we are keeping you safe, protecting our communities and managing our budgets and spending.

Our mission is to make Essex a safe place to live, work and travel. All of us share a common goal in that we want to be one of the best fire and rescue services in the country. By continually raising our standards and improving what we do, we are providing the best protection we can to keep you safe.

The economic situation within the year created financial pressures on both our pay and non-pay budgets from inflation and pay costs. We have also been investing in improving our Service. Moving forwards, it was key for us to secure a budget for 2023/24 that would enable us to fund this and continue with our investments.

Thanks to support from the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and our lobbying of central government we have seen our central grant funding increased in line with inflation. Alongside this, our Council Tax precept has been raised, increasing our funding by around £2.3 million. Combine that with being able to deliver £1.1 million in efficiency savings in the 2023/24 budget, this means we have

set a balanced budget that will keep people safe, improve our services and further invest in our people and equipment.

This report outlines our key financial issues and shows we continue to drive change, reduce risk, invest in prevention and protection, and provide a first-class emergency service, with our people at the centre of all we do.

We are good at understanding fires and other risks

In July 2022, we were inspected as part of an inspection programme for all UK fire and rescue services. His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) published its report into our effectiveness, efficiency and how well we look after our people.

We were assessed on how effective we are at prevention work, protecting against and responding to fire and other risks, whether we provide value for money and how well we look after our people and ensure fairness and diversity.



People Awards 2023 winners

Although the report said we required improvement across the three areas of assessment, it recognised that we are good at understanding fire and other risks. One area highlighted was our improvement in promoting the right values and culture to our people.

This was graded as inadequate in an earlier inspection. We still have a long way to go but I am pleased that the work we are doing to embed and promote the right values and culture has been recognised. A key part of this has been adopting and embedding our Core Code of Ethics which support our Service values, culture and behaviours.

It's important to remember these reports are always a snapshot in time, and when reading the report, I thought it was a fair reflection and importantly highlighted the areas of improvement we are already getting on with. I am confident that when we are inspected again, we'll be able to demonstrate we have continued our progress towards providing you with the best service we possibly can.

Our People

Our people are the heart of our Service, and they are our greatest asset. This year we have continued to attract and recruit new talent.

We opened wholetime firefighter recruitment in October 2022 and continue to have a high number of people who want to join our Service. Between April 2022 and March 2023, we received more than 2,800 applications, welcoming 34 new wholetime firefighters, 91 new on-call firefighters, seven new Control operators and 51 new employees in our support teams.

We have held four passing out parades for wholetime firefighters and control room staff, events for our on-call firefighters, and our annual staff awards where we celebrated the achievements of well over 100 colleagues.

Thirty-two of our staff members were also recognised for 20 and 30 years plus dedication to the community at our long service and good conduct awards. Awards were also given based on achievements in ethics, values, and behaviour.

Our Service Headquarters was the venue for three collaborative events and conferences involving all our blue light partners to mark International Women's Day, International Men's Day and International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Intersexism and Transphobia.

I also awarded Chief Fire Officer Commendations to on-call firefighters from Epping Fire Station, Green Watch from Rayleigh Weir Fire Station and Station Manager Syd Barratt.

We received a national award in the Excellence in Fire and Emergency Awards 2022 for our work towards inclusion for LGBTQ+ staff.

Firefighter Matt Hill won the Most Influential LGBTQ+ Individual in Fire Award and Donna Bentley, our Head of Safeguarding, was shortlisted for the Most Influential Woman in Fire.

Alongside this, two dedicated colleagues from our Service were recognised in the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Honours list.



Matt Hill: Most Influential LGBTQ+ Individual in Fire – Excellence in Fire and Emergency Awards 2022

Join us

essex-fire.gov.uk/pink

Roger Pickett, a former firefighter who recently retired after 44 years' service and created the Essex Fire Museum. Derek Whitbread, an on-call firefighter who has served Epping for 47 years, received the British Empire Medal.

Station Manager Terry Jewell was awarded an MBE by His Majesty the King in the New Year 2023 Honours list for his services to International Search and Rescue in his 30 years plus career as a firefighter.



Terry in New Zealand. Picture from BBC online

Our gender pay gap has decreased over the last year, but we recognise we do have an average gender pay gap of 1.02%.

The UK fire and rescue service as a sector is still largely male dominated. At our Service, three-quarters of our overall workforce is male. So, although we can confidently say our non-discriminatory pay process results in equal pay, it is more challenging to reduce the gender pay gap when there is a disproportionate number of men in an organisation.

When we began reporting in 2018, the gap was 15.6%. This huge decrease is a testament to the work we have done in creating a more diverse workforce - a key factor in reducing the gender pay gap, but we know there is still more that can be done.

We will continue with positive action in recruitment and our commitment to achieving a workforce that is more reflective of our communities. In partnership with the Asian Fire Service Association, we hosted a collaborative event for large employers from the public and private sector in Essex which brought diverse expertise and voices to the table to discuss positive action and share learning.

We will continue to work with our employee networks, partners and stakeholders to gain feedback and understand how we can bring about positive change based on feedback from colleagues.

Our key strategic decisions include consideration of our Core Code of Ethics and, through our People Impact Assessments, ensure we care about the potential impact of decisions on all people. Our most recent change was to enhance maternity leave and pay, which sees full pay for the first 26 weeks, and is a prime example of where our diversity networks have championed positive change within our Service, making a real difference to people's lives.

We have introduced our Transitioning at Work guidance – a commitment we are making as a Service to make sure that transgender and non-binary colleagues are treated with dignity and respect and are not disadvantaged in the workplace.

The guidance, which has been developed with the support of our representative bodies, sets out the steps our Service takes to prevent discrimination.

This year we signed the Armed Forces Covenant, to formally pledge our support to members of the Armed Forces community. The covenant recognises our commitment to ensure the fair treatment of all staff who have served, or will serve in the Armed Forces, and their families. Many serving and former Armed Services personnel already work within our Service across a range of departments including both operational and support roles.

I want our Service to be one of the best fire and rescue services in the UK. I want all our people to work in a high performing and inclusive environment. It is what everyone deserves. Being the best means our communities are safe, our partners are supported and engaged, and our people can thrive.

Keeping our communities informed

We are committed to engaging with our communities and being open, transparent and accessible with information about our Service and what we are doing to keep people safe. In December we launched our new website which is fully accessible and easier for people to use and find information about our work and incidents.

This data snapshot shows the effect this is having already. **The data is from 1 December 2022 to 28 February 2023.**

Booking a home safety visit

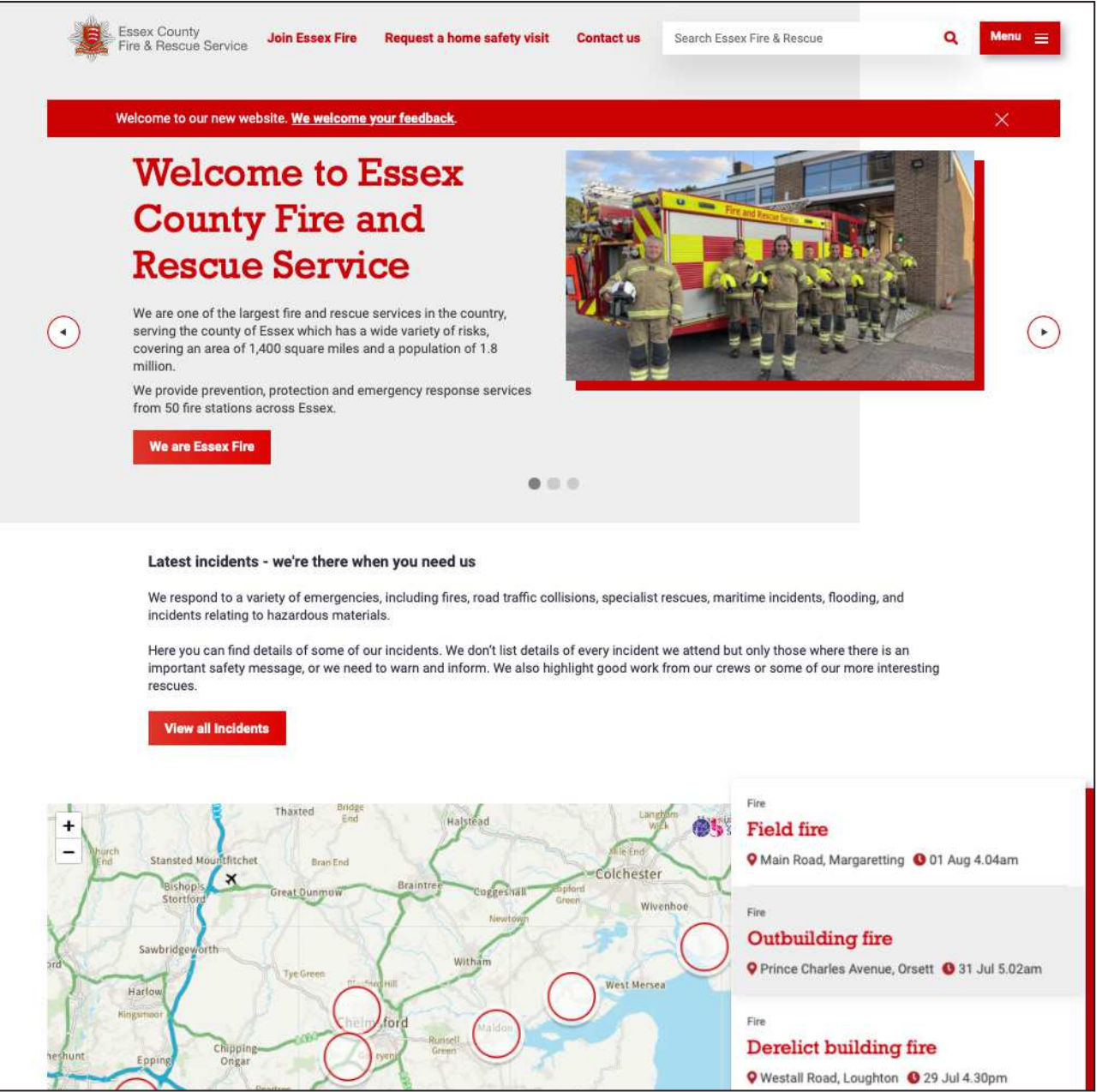
1,358 visits (old website)
3,938 visits (new website)

Home safety advice (10 top tips)

313 visits (old website)
1,599 visits (new website)

Candle safety

19 visits (old website)
261 visits (new website)



Page 25 of 97



This year our fire stations were once again able to open their doors to the public for open days and charity car washes, as well being community spaces during the winter to help some of our most vulnerable residents keep warm.

Thousands of people from across the county were able to meet our firefighters and support staff, find out about home fire safety, recruitment, careers and just talk to us. It's really important to me that our communities, particularly those who are more vulnerable, isolated or lonely see our Service as a safe and welcoming place.

Our prevention and protection teams also organised and held safe, well, secure events in some of our most vulnerable council wards in each local Service area across the county.

They worked in partnership with other services and agencies to deliver information and advice to residents to help keep them safe.

How we are keeping our communities safe

Record-breaking temperatures and thousands of extra calls and incidents; 2022/23 was a year like no other for our Service.

In total, we attended over 5,000 fires, over 1,000 road traffic collisions and over 7,000 false alarms but it was the incidents related to extreme weather that proved the most challenging.

2022 was the joint warmest summer on record in England and the driest since 1995. It resulted in an incredibly busy two months for our Service. In July and August, we received more than double the average 999 calls and attended 6,000 incidents - around twice as many as the previous year.

In addition to these large incidents, firefighters extinguished countless other fires, rescued people, and animals from a wide variety of situations and supported partner organisations and emergency services

across the county and beyond. It is not just incidents we spend our time on. We have carried out over 8,000 fire safety visits to the public, over 1,900 inspections (1,682 at high and very high risk properties) and audits at commercial properties and over 126,000 school-aged children had a visit from our education teams.

We have achieved a huge amount during 2022 to 2023, and despite extra pressures and challenging situations we have continued to work incredibly hard to keep the people of Essex safe. Our people are our service and their achievements and commitment have been outstanding this year.

Next year will have its own challenges. The cost-of-living crisis is likely to continue to impact our communities. We already have some idea of how this might increase risk within our county, so we are working hard, alongside our partners, to support our most vulnerable residents.

Following the extreme weather-related incidents, we have taken our learning to prepare for similar incidents and seasonal pressures.

I would like to say thank you to all our communities for the continued support they give to all of us at Essex County Fire and Rescue Service. Whether that has been following our safety advice, coming to our charity car washes and open days or passing on details of a vulnerable neighbour or person for us to visit. However you have supported us this year, thank you.



In July and August, we received more than double the average 999 calls and attended 6,000 incidents. Around twice as many as the the previous year.

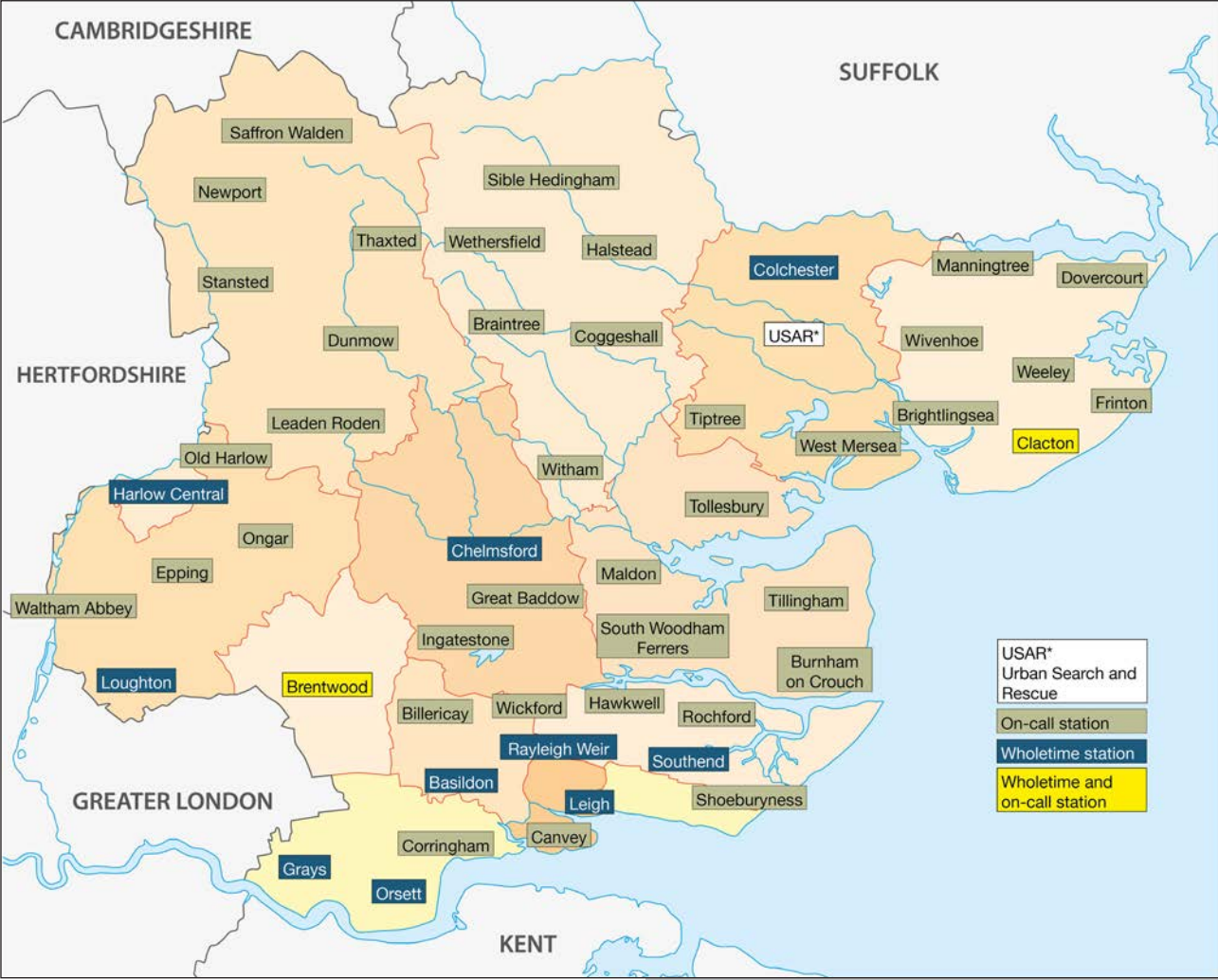
Our Service

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service is one of the largest fire and rescue services in the country, serving a county which includes Stansted and Southend airports, Harwich seaport, Lakeside shopping centre, Coryton oil refinery, power stations, docks at Tilbury and parts of the M25 and M11 motorways.

Essex is a county of contrasts. It contains numerous ecologically important areas and manages one of the largest sections of coastline (350 miles) in the country. There are various conservation areas and over 14,000 listed buildings.

The organisation is administered from its headquarters at Kelvedon Park in Kelvedon, where the Service also has a mobilising control centre.

ECFRS provides prevention, protection and emergency response services from 50 fire stations and an Urban Search and Rescue facility.



Our Vision

Safe and secure communities are the bedrock on which we build success and well-being for all.

Our mission

Essex is a safe place to live, work and travel.

Our Behaviours

How we act and how we treat each other and our communities.

The national Core Code of Ethics sits alongside our values. The five ethical principles provide the basis for promoting good behaviour and challenging inappropriate behaviour.



Our Values

We are open, honest and trustworthy

We respect and honour all we do for the Service and our colleagues, being transparent and consistent in our communications and throughout our work.

We are courageous in everything we do

Having the confidence to always own our part and not be a bystander in order to progress and learn from our experiences. **#JustOwnIt**

We work as one team

All in it together to deliver a safer Service and a safer Essex.
What part do you play?

We are always professional

We proudly stay ahead of the game by embracing training and development, continually learning, while delivering professional standards to efficiently serve our community.

We value the contribution of all

We create an inclusive and non-judgemental environment that respects people as individuals, and embraces diversity. We value everyone equally, create opportunities, and celebrate our successes.

Our strategic priorities

Fire and Rescue Plan

The Fire and Rescue Plan sets out the priorities for fire and rescue services in Essex on how we will keep our communities safe.

Working with the public and alongside our partners, the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner created the plan to make sure we provide efficient and effective prevention, protection and response activities.

The priorities in the Fire and Resuce Plan are:

- 1. Prevention, protection and response
- 2. Improve safety on our roads
- 3. Help the vulnerable stay safe
- 4. Promote a positive culture in the workplace
- 5. Develop and broaden the roles and range of activities undertaken by the Service
- 6. Be transparent, open and accessible
- 7. Collaborate with our partners
- 8. Make best use of our resources

Our Areas of Focus

Our areas of focus help us deliver our Fire and Rescue Plan priorities.

Equality

To be an inclusive employer, that delivers inclusive services and takes proactive steps to recruit a diverse workforce.

Fire Protection

Deliver our role as part of the Building Safety Regulations and embed the outcomes of the Building Risk Review into our Inspection Programme.

Prevention

To reduce fire deaths to zero and contribute towards the Safer Essex Road Partnership vision zero.

Operational Training

Provide quality training and facilities, to respond to the risks we face with assurance of competence.

Crewing

Increase our recruitment and retention; exploring flexible crewing models to improve response times.

Technology

Improve our systems and hardware to enhance productivity and connectivity.

Leadership Development

Introduce a Service-wide programme for the leaders of today and the potential ones for the future, to support workforce planning.

Fire Standards

Implement national standards to ensure best practice, support cooperative working and provide greater efficiencies.

Property and Facilities

Develop our property portfolio to meet and support the wellbeing needs of our workforce as well as our communities.

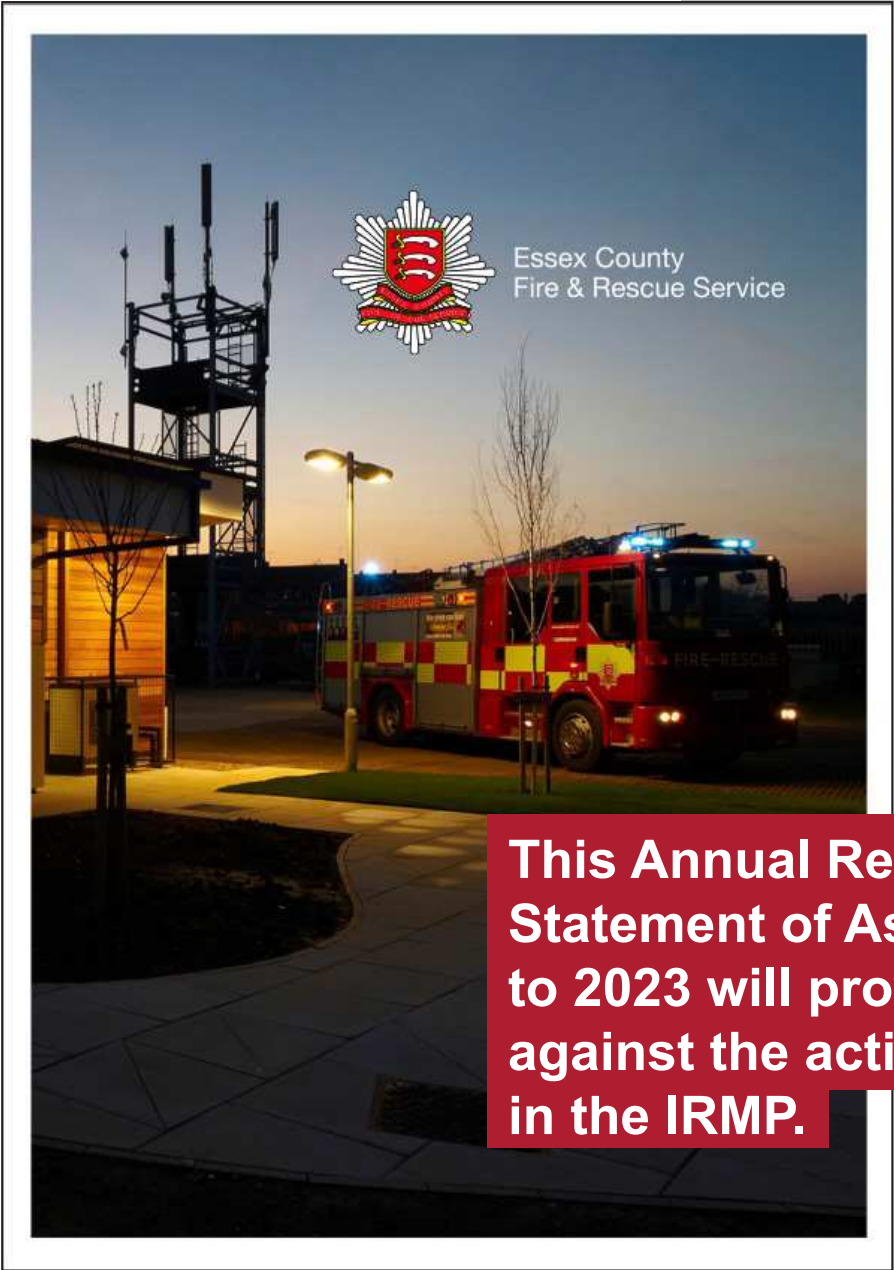
Risk

Adopt a performance and data driven approach to best use our resources to respond to new and changing risks more appropriately.

Integrated Risk Management Plan 2020 - 2024

Our Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) is our corporate plan. It sets out how we plan to put our Fire and Rescue Plan (FRP) in place and drives our annual Strategic Plan, which includes things like our continuous improvement work, our programmes for change and how we manage our budget.


This plan identifies how we manage risks in Essex, protect our communities and respond to fires, all against a backdrop of financial challenges. Our risks and demands in Essex, like the rest of our country, continue to change, which means that we need to regularly review our priorities and activities so that we actively respond to our community’s needs.



This Annual Report and Statement of Assurance 2022 to 2023 will provide an update against the activities outlined in the IRMP.

Our Performance | IRMP 2020 - 2024

Here's how we're performing against our Integrated Risk Management Plan 2020 - 2024.

 **8,470**
safe and well
safety visits

↑ Our safe and well and safety visits continue to increase. We are targeting our most vulnerable, lowering Accidental Dwelling Fires and fire fatalities.

Year	No of visits	Smoke alarms fitted
2022 - 2023	8,470	10,329
2021 - 2022	6,223	9,566
2020 - 2021	4,346	5,865
2019 - 2020	7,718	8,459

Keeping our communities safe

Despite the increase in incident numbers, Essex has one of the lowest rates of accidental dwelling fire casualties and fatalities per 10,000 population in the Eastern region.

Year	ADF	ADF per 10,000 population	Casualties per 10,000 population	Fire fatalities
2022 -2023	784	4.33	0.45	4
2021- 2022	725	4.24	0.48	10
2020- 2021	738	4.32	0.48	5
2019- 2020	787	4.57	0.47	2

Our fire fatalities are down 60% from 2021 to 2022. From 10 to 4 in 2022 to 2023.

 **37,950**
calls into control

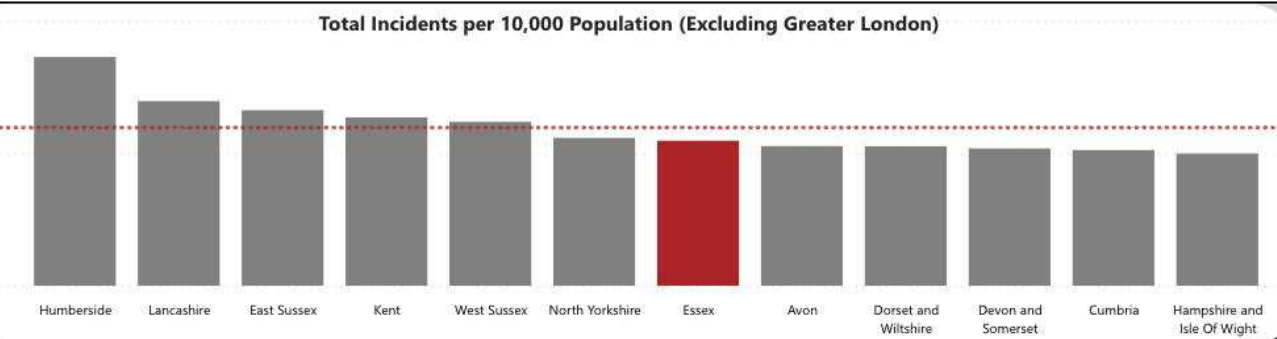
The heatwave conditions last summer resulted in a busy two months – 4,610 incidents in July and August compared to 2,674 in 2021. **82% of the fires were outdoors.**

Year	999 calls	Incidents
2022- 2023	37,950	17,568
2021- 2022	30,115	15,418
2020- 2021	28,651	14,340
2019- 2020	30,542	15,243

In August 2022, control received a 60% increase in calls compared to the previous five year average.

Year	Incidents	Total fires	Special services	False alarm
2022- 2023	17,568	5,229	5,250	7,089
2021- 2022	15,246	3,727	5,089	6,430
2020- 2021	14,340	4,186	4,102	6,052
2019- 2020	15,244	4,581	4,549	6,114

Over the last four years, **Essex has had one of the lowest total incident rates per 10,000 population** compared to similar Fire and Rescue Services in our “family group”*. The table on the right shows 2022 to 2023.



Only 15% of all fires in Essex last year were Accidental Dwelling Fires.



Year	Total fires	ADF	% of total fires
2022- 2023	5,229	784	15%
2021- 2022	3,727	725	19%
2020- 2021	4,186	738	18%
2019- 2020	4,581	787	17%

Accidental Dwelling Fires have reduced over the IRMP period.

* Family group: those other FRS who share the same levels of risk.

People

Our people are at the heart of making sure we keep our communities safe.

Our People Strategy is key to delivering our Fire and Rescue Plan. It is also a major part of delivering the Integrated Risk Management Plan.



Multi-agency exercise

To deliver against our Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) we will:

- Continue to invest significantly in training so that all our staff have the skills to remain safe in their work.
- Identify and target any gaps in skills for every employee, making sure that training is suitable for all learners and all shift systems.
- Retain specialist and technical expertise, and encourage people to add to their skills.

From 2022 to 2023 we have:

- Delivered Phase 3 Core Skills Assessment Programme (CSAP) which means our Watch Managers, Crew Managers and Station Managers can be assessors and verifiers.
- Developed our manager’s leadership skills so we have strong effective leaders both now and in the future.

- Developed a full business case for new training facilities to include hot fire facilities. We have commissioned the development of this work.
- We deliver Operational Training that ensures we can offer assurance of competence for all firefighters.
- We have strengthened our Marauding Terrorist Attack (MTA) response and training. This included delivering training to all front line crews. We have also implemented MTA Training for support staff.
- Implemented PDRPro (digital system) as our core competency recording system to ensure accurate centralised records of competence to be captured.



Wholetime Firefighter Pass Out exercise

Doing this will support the Fire and Rescue Plan priorities of:

- developing and broadening our role and range of activities;
- promoting a positive culture in the workplace;
- working together with our partners;
- helping vulnerable people to stay safe; and
- prevention, protection and response

We will continue to improve the diversity of our workforce by promoting a career in the fire service as an opportunity for everyone.

We proudly promote a culture of inclusivity in our recruitment processes and, in line with the Equality Act 2010, do our best to encourage people from a wide range of backgrounds to apply for our vacancies.

This helps to build the skills and knowledge of our existing staff and brings different experiences from each person's life to our workforce.

Like many fire and rescue services in the country, our workforce does not currently reflect the diversity of the communities in our county.

However, we believe that by:

- promoting a positive culture;
- actively engaging with our communities;
- sharing information about our activity and progress towards our objectives; and
- taking opportunities to reach out to younger people in Essex;

we can increase the diversity of people we attract to our varied roles. This includes our apprenticeships, cadet opportunities and voluntary positions.

Our positive action approach actively encourages the participation of females, ethnic minorities and people under 25-years-old.

We receive a lower proportion of applicants from these groups, which means they are under-represented in our workforce when compared to the communities in Essex.

In 2022*, we received 2,872 applications for our vacancies.

The applicants shared the following information with us.

- 387 applicants were female (13.2%)
- 149 applicants were from an ethnic minority group (5.2%)
- 503 applicants were under 25 years old (17.5%)
- 54 applicants identified as LGBTQ+ (1.9%)
- 100 applicants had a disability (3.5%)

March 2022 people statistics

- 4.6% of workforce disabled
- 3.8% of workforce ethnic minority
- 18.3 % of workforce female
- 4.2% of workforce LGBTQ

* we have only been collecting this data since 2022

Want to join us but think you're too short?

Katie is 5'3" (and a half)

We don't have height restrictions

Search: Essex Fire Wholetime



#JoinEssexFire



Prevention

Our Prevention Strategy makes sure we do the following as part of our Integrated Risk Management Plan:

Develop community safety action plans that set out risks in specific areas which we use to target our resources.

Find out who the most vulnerable people are in our communities and help them through our specialist staff.

Assess our prevention activities to make sure they are effective for our communities.

Use our operational staff to help us provide safety advice to more vulnerable people in our communities.

Tell you how we are working with our partners to reduce the number of vulnerable people killed or seriously injured on our roads.

Doing this will support the Fire and Rescue Plan priorities of prevention, protection and response, which are:

- helping vulnerable people to stay safe;
- developing and broadening our role; and
- improving safety on our roads



8,470
Home Safety visits were carried out from 2022 to 2023 by firefighters, volunteers, and other community safety staff.

Road traffic collisions

As a key partner of the Safer Essex Roads Partnership we are working to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on the roads in Essex

In 2022-2023 there were 901 people killed or seriously injured on the roads.

91 road safety events
43 FireBike events

Home Safety and Safe and Well visits

8,470 Home Safety visits.
2,822 by our firefighters and 5,648 by volunteers and other community safety staff.

Firebreak

Firebreak is an intervention programme for people aged 10 and over. The programme promotes safety by teaching people a range of vital life skills relating to fire safety.

From 2022 to 2023, we ran 24 courses for different age groups, working with vulnerable people in our communities, as well as offenders and victims.

These courses helped us engage with and support up to 288 young adults and students.

School safety fire programmes

126,536 children engaged through education visits.
In partnership with Essex Police, our education team delivers a variety of fire-safety awareness programmes. The current number of pupils (aged four to 17) is approximately 280,000.

Supporting our Integrated Risk Management Plan through Prevention

Protection

Our priority is to protect businesses, people, the local economy and the environment from fire and wider community-related risks.

Our protection work is guided by the duties placed on us by the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

To deliver against the Integrated Risk Management Plan we will:

- Review the inspection programme to make sure we are making decisions based on data we have collected, to help us to understand which premises pose the greatest risk, and target our resources appropriately.
- Make sure we have the right resources to meet our commitments in the Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP).

We have restructured Fire Protection to support the additional resource requirements of new legislation and Fire Standards.

We have implemented an out of hours fire safety officer process.

We have reviewed and refreshed the Protection Risk Based Inspection Process and aligned resources to meet delivery targets.

This has meant that we have identified and delivered more inspections than previous years.

1,974
risk based inspection audits

762 very high risk inspection
920 high risk inspection

Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022

We welcome the Fire Safety Act in England and Wales, and the Regulations in England, as important steps forward in strengthening the Fire Safety Order and improving fire safety.



Essex County
Fire & Rescue Service

Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022

Are you compliant?

The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 have been introduced as a result of the recommendations from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 1 report.

The new Regulations require 'responsible persons' of residential buildings to identify and communicate fire risk information to your fire and rescue service.

Keep in touch with us

Be the first to know about our free business safety webinars, law and regulation updates and news from our fire service.

Sign up to our newsletter: essex-fire.gov.uk/sign-up

www.essex-fire.gov.uk/business   

To deliver against our IRMP we will find opportunities to get involved with more businesses across Essex, leading to an increase in business engagement events.

We've set up a dedicated area of our website to provide guidance to affected property owners and an easy to follow form on our website to allow the information to be shared with us securely. Our Business Engagement Team are also available should a responsible person need any additional help. <http://www.essex-fire.gov.uk/legislation>



Doing this will support the Fire and Rescue Plan priorities of prevention, protection and response, which are:

- helping vulnerable people to stay safe;
- developing and broadening our role; and
- improving safety on our roads



Essex County
Fire & Rescue Service

Find us at
STAND
9

Are you up to scratch on
Business Fire Safety?

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service want to help to keep you, your business and your employees safe.

As an owner or manager of a small business, the fire safety law for the workplace can feel daunting.

The National Fire Chiefs Council has designed an interactive tool to help small business owners understand their legal duties for fire safety in the workplace.

To find out more about business fire safety, pop along to see us at the Basildon Business Expo!

For more information on business
safety, visit: www.essex-fire.gov.uk

Find us on:



Response

We respond to a variety of emergencies, including fires, road traffic collisions, specialist rescues, maritime incidents, flooding, and incidents relating to hazardous materials.

To make sure we can respond effectively we have a modern fleet of fire appliances, including specialist appliances such as aerial ladder platforms, heavy rescue pumps, incident command units and water rescue units.

In the last year we have:

- Recruited 91 on-call firefighters
- Recruited 34 wholetime firefighters
- Introduced new processes to move our appliances around the county which has increased coverage at strategic stations
- Increased productivity and increased Home Fire Safety visits
- improved firefighter safety by purchasing and using drones at incidents

1,142
Firefighters

631 Wholetime
Firefighters

511 On-Call
Firefighters

17,568
total incidents

5,229 total fires

5,250 special services

7,089 false alarms

784 accidental
dwelling fires

	Total incidents	Total fires	Special services	False alarms
2022 - 2023	17,568	5,229	5,250	7,089
2021 - 2022	15,418	3,744	5,221	6,453
2020 - 2021	14,340	4,200	4,088	6,052
2019 - 2020	15,243	4,720	4,521	6,002
2018 - 2019	15,515	4,938	4,283	6,294

Doing this will support the Fire and Rescue Plan priorities of prevention, protection and response, which are:

- helping vulnerable people to stay safe;
- developing and broadening our role; and
- improving safety on our roads

Page 34 of 97 High-rise exercise

Live or work 5 minutes from here?

join.essex-fire.gov.uk

#JoinEssexFire



Essex County
Fire & Rescue Service

You can apply to become an
on-call firefighter at this station



We have a dedicated On-Call Liaison Team (OCLO), who engage with and work with our on-call colleagues with the aim to improve recruitment and retention.

Our On-Call Development Programme has helped streamline on-boarding for new recruits and reduce the number of temporary positions.

We have continued to improve and increase recognition for on call staff. That includes special on-call events where family are invited too.

We have listened to feedback and reviewed the annual leave policy, agreeing a revised approach to manage Time Off In Lieu (TOIL).



We will improve the availability of our on-call appliances



Page 35 of 97



A Summer like no other

Make sure we have the right appliances, people and equipment in the right places to manage risk across the county, and make sure resources are available when our communities need them.



The heatwave conditions last summer resulted in an incredibly busy two months for our Service – with 4,610 incidents in July and August compared to 2,674 in 2021.

In August 2022, control received a 60% increase in calls compared to the previous five year average. 82% of the fires were outdoors.

Throughout July and August, our key station coverage and availability was at 94%.



Technology

New technology is the key to developing our Service and the way in which we protect the public. In order to support how we manage risk, it is important that our ICT infrastructure is modern and effective and makes the best use of new technologies.

Doing this will support the Fire and Rescue Plan priorities of:

- being honest, open and accessible;
- working with our partners;
- making the best use of our resources;
- prevention, protection and response; and
- helping the vulnerable to stay safe

Deliver an ICT transformation and optimisation programme that will make sure we make the best use of effective systems

All sites and fire stations have had a new fibre optic link installed, offering speeds that have made web browsing, streaming services and use of cloud-based applications such as Office 365 much easier for colleagues.

This new network provides a faster, direct connection to the internet for every location, rather than each site having to connect through Service Headquarters, which was the case previously.

We have upgraded and replaced Service mobile phones to ensure that the Service is able to maintain its communication network and take advantage of future smart phone technology.

We have moved our Health and Safety reporting to a new system, which has made the process more refined and robust.

Deliver a new command and control system that will improve how we mobilise crews and improve communications from the control room to the incident.


Deliver a data system that will improve how we report data and performance (this will guide our prevention and protection activities and help us to target resources at those who are most vulnerable).

We’re launching a new Guardian Command and Control system. This has been procured and planned, with launch in Summer 2023.

The system will improve how we mobilise and the decisions we make. For example, the system will let us know if an appliance is Breathing Apparatus deficient or efficient and mobilise accordingly.

The biggest benefit and change will be stability, particularly at times of peak demand. It will provide greater confidence to the people using it, the end users and the people of Essex.

Digital and Data Strategy video
[Watch the full video here:](https://youtu.be/U2WtUK5E1Ys) https://youtu.be/U2WtUK5E1Ys



We've created our own easy-to-use power apps



The what3words app has been rolled out on Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs) to help crews and improve our response to incidents.

It’s a useful tool for assisting crews in finding difficult locations, particularly in rural areas.

Using data

We have also delivered a new data system and employed a data scientist. This has helped us understand our data more, use data to make decisions and also identify trends and future risks.

Don’t buy second hand electric blankets.

Replace yours at least every ten years. Keep it away from water. Unplug before sleeping unless it’s overnight approved. Regularly check its condition. Don’t fold it tightly when storing. Always follow the manufacturer’s instructions.



Essex County
Fire & Rescue Service

essex-fire.gov.uk/savesafely

Finance

Ensuring that we have an efficient Service that offers value for money underpins everything we do. The Authority is responsible for ensuring that our Service’s business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

The Statement of Accounts includes an Annual Governance Statement that sets out a review of the key financial controls. The Draft Statement of Accounts for the financial year that ended on 31 March 2023 can be found here:

www.essex-fire.gov.uk/accounts

Please note, at the time of publication of this report (Sept 2023) these accounts are unaudited.

The Authority’s core budget for 2022 to 2023, before funding is £84.14m. The Authority’s core budget spend before funding is £82.16m. The budget included a 2% pay award for all staff.

In addition, the Authority committed £1.98m from Earmarked Reserves to fund one-off investments making a total budget spend of £84.14m.

Revenue Budget and Expenditure

The position at the end of year was a deficit of £4.36m, of which £3.89m was funded from Earmarked Reserves. This is set out within the table to the right (page 40) which compares actual net expenditure with the approved budget:

The Authority’s total expenditure was £88.0m against total funding of £83.7m. £3.9m was funded from Earmarked Reserves and £0.5m was funded from General Reserves.

Funding

60% of the Authority’s funding is from the Council Tax collections across the districts in Essex, and the unitary authorities of Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock. Council tax income has been based on the Commissioner’s proposal of an increase in the precept of 1.95%, which was agreed at the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel on 3 February 2022. The precept payable for a Band D Council tax property increased from £73.89 to £75.33, a change of £1.44 per year.

2021/22				2022/23			2022/23			2022/20
Actual £000	Description	Core actual £000	Earmarked actual £000	Total actuals £000	Core budget £000	Earmarked budget £000	Total budget £000	Core budget variance £000	Earmarked budget variance £000	Total budget variance £000
35,489	Wholetime Firefighters On-Call	35,647	999	36,646	35,475	863	36,337	(172)	(137)	(309)
7,561	Firefighters	9,384	-	9,384	7,263	-	7,263	(2,121)	-	(2,121)
1,575	Control	1,729	-	1,729	1,604	-	1,604	(125)	-	(125)
15,605	Support Staff	16,187	535	16,750	16,018	714	16,732	(169)	178	(19)
60,229	Total Employment Costs	62,947	1,534	64,510	60,361	1,576	61,937	(2,587)	42	(2,573)
2,360	Support Costs	1,811	429	2,240	1,604	300	1,904	(206)	(129)	(336)
10,346	Premises & Equipment	11,476	158	11,606	10,106	-	10,106	(1,369)	(158)	(1,500)
3,146	Other Costs & Services	3,981	305	4,287	3,425	100	3,525	(557)	(205)	(762)
2,212	Ill health pension costs	2,287	-	2,287	2,184	-	2,184	(103)	-	(103)
5,229	Financing Items	5,379	-	5,379	5,897	-	5,897	518	-	518
23,293	Total Other Costs	4,934	893	25,799	23,217	400	23,617	(1,717)	(493)	(2,182)
83,523	Gross Expenditure	87,881	2,428	90,309	83,578	1,976	85,554	(4,304)	(452)	(4,755)
(1,650)	Operational Income	(2,291)	-	(2,291)	(1,415)	-	(1,415)	876	-	876
81,871	Net Expenditure before Funding	85,590	2,428	88,018	82,162	1,976	84,138	(3,428)	(452)	(3,879)
(7,772)	Funding									
(8,511)	Government Grants	(9,753)	-	(9,753)	(7,549)	-	(7,549)	2,204	-	2,204
(16,901)	Revenue Support Grant	(8,780)	-	(8,780)	(8,780)	-	(8,780)	-	-	-
(80)	National Non-Domestic Rates	(16,416)	133	(16,283)	(16,519)	-	(16,519)	(103)	(133)	(236)
(47,796)	Council Tax Collection Account	(783)	1	(783)	-	-	-	783	-	783
3	Council Tax Precept	(49,384)	1	(49,384)	(49,315)	-	(49,315)	69	-	69
	Council Tax Collection Impact	(3)	1,329	1,326	-	-	-	3	(1,329)	(1,326)
(80,058)	Total Funding	(85,119)	1,462	(83,658)	(82,163)	-	(82,163)		(1,462)	1,495
814	Funding Gap / (Surplus)	470	3,889	4,360	(0)	1,976	1,976	(470)	(1,913)	(2,384)
135	Cont'ns to/(from) General Bals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
(1,737)	Cont'ns to/(from) Earmarked Reserves	-	(3,890)	(3,890)	-	(1,976)	(1,976)	-	1,914	1,914
(787)	Net Funding Gap / (Surplus)	470	(0)	470	(0)	-	(0)	(470)	0	(470)

Governance

The Service is governed by the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority (EPFCCFRA).

Our Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner is Roger Hirst.

The PFCC must:

- Provide a local connection between the fire and rescue service and local communities
- Set a budget and determine the council tax requirement
- Maintain an efficient and effective fire and rescue service for the county
- Approve an Integrated Risk Management Plan
- Develop a Fire and Rescue Plan and Fire and Rescue Statement
- Scrutinise, support and challenge performance against the Plan
- Appoint a Chief Fire Officer to lead and manage the service

The PFCC is elected by the public to hold the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Constable to account, effectively making the fire and rescue service and police force answerable to the communities they serve.

The PFCC ensures that community needs are met as effectively as possible, and local relationships improve through building confidence and trust. They work in partnership across a range of agencies at local and national level to ensure there is a unified approach to preventing and reducing crime.

The Purpose of the Governance Framework

The governance framework comprises the systems, processes, culture and values for the control and management of all activities and how the Commissioner accounts to, engages with and leads the community.

The system of internal control is a significant part of that framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. It cannot eliminate all

risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives and can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness.

The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Commissioner's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

Copies of these documents are available at www.essex.pfcc.police.uk or can be obtained from the Commissioner's office at Kelvedon Park, London Road, Rivenhall, Witham CM8 3HB.

The Governance Framework

The Scheme of Governance that operated during the year included the following:

- The Constitution
- The Scheme of Delegation
- The Elected Local Policing Bodies (Specified Information) Order 2011; the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Specified Information) (Amendment) Order 2012, and the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Specified Information) (Amendment) Order 2013. Quarterly audits are undertaken by the PFCC's office to ensure the Service's continued compliance with these Orders
- Information Management Protocol between the PFCC FRA and the PFCC
- Information Sharing Protocol relating to information shared between the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority and the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel
- Revised Financial Management Code of Practice For the Police Forces of England and Wales and Fire and Rescue Authorities created under section 4A of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004
- Codes of Conduct applying respectively to the PFCC and their Deputy and to the PFCC FRA's staff
- The Police, Fire and Crime Panels (Precepts and Chief Constable Appointments) Regulations 2012
- Government Security Classifications
- Financial and Procurement Regulations



Governance

HMICFRS

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) is responsible for carrying out inspections of fire and rescue services in England and Wales.



Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority



Police, Fire and Crime Panel

- Scrutinise the Fire and Rescue Plan and Statement of Assurance
- Scrutinise senior appointments
- Review the Council Tax precept
- Hear certain complaints against the PFCC and Deputy PFCC
- Confirm the appointment of a new Chief Constable or Chief Fire Officer

Strategic board

- Strategic oversight of the Service
- Delivery of the Fire and Rescue Plan and IRMP (CRMP)
- Development of the Budget

Performance and Resource Board

- Monitor overall operational and financial performance
- Functions delegated to Chief Fire Officer
- Medium Term Financial Plan
- Monitor Financial and Service Performance

Audit Committee

- Overview of financial regulations and contract procedures
- Financial management regulations
- Good governance
- Risk management

Essex Emergency Services Collaboration Board

- Strategic governance of the Emergency Services Collaboration Programme



Statutory responsibilities

As a Fire and Rescue Service we have legal responsibilities under multiple pieces of legislation. We aim here to explain what responsibilities fall under which piece of legislation.

Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004

The Act replaced the Fire Services Act 1948 with a new legislative framework to ensure fire and rescue services were better able to meet the particular challenges of the 21st century.

The Act clarifies the duties and powers of fire authorities to:

- Promote fire safety
- Fight fires
- Protect people and property from fires
- Rescue people from road traffic incidents
- Deal with other specific emergencies, such as flooding and terrorist attacks

- Do other things to respond to the particular needs of their communities and the risks they face.

Civil Contingencies Act 2004

Under Part One of the Act, emergency services and local authorities (defined as Category One responders) have a legal obligation to assess risk, plan and exercise for emergencies and undertake business continuity management

Fire and Rescue National Framework for England

The Fire and Rescue National Framework sets out the Government’s priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities in England. It was updated in May 2018.

The priorities within the framework are for fire and rescue authorities to:

- Make appropriate provision for fire prevention and protection activities and response to fire and rescue related incidents
- Identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue risks their areas face

- Collaborate with emergency services and other local and national partners to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the service they provide
- Be accountable to communities for the services they provide
- Develop and maintain a workforce that is professional, resilient, skilled, flexible and diverse.

Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 replaces most fire safety legislation with one simple order. It means that any person who has some level of control within a premises must take reasonable steps to reduce the risk from fire and make sure people can safely escape if there is a fire. The Order applies to virtually all buildings, places and structures other than individual private dwellings, for example a family home or individual flats in a block.

Fire and Rescue Services (Emergencies) (England) Order 2007

This outlines the additional statutory duties of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 for fire authorities.

The duty requires authorities, where provision of resources has been made by central government, to respond to incidents both within and outside the authority area involving Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear hazards (CBRN) and Urban Search and Rescue (USAR).

Localism Act 2011

The aim of the Localism Act was to devolve more decision making powers from central government back into the hands of individuals, communities and councils.

The Act covers a wide range of issues related to local public services, with a particular focus on the general power of competence, community rights, neighbourhood planning and housing.

The key measures of the Act were grouped under four main headings:

- New freedoms and flexibilities for local government
- New rights and powers for communities and individuals
- Reform to make the planning system more democratic and more effective
- Reform to ensure decisions about housing are taken locally.

Fire and Rescue National Framework for England

The Fire and Rescue National Framework sets out the Government’s priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities in England. It was updated in May 2018.

The priorities within the framework are for fire and rescue authorities to:

- Make appropriate provision for fire prevention and protection activities and response to fire and rescue related incidents
- Identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue risks their areas face
- Collaborate with emergency services

and other local and national partners to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the service they provide

- Be accountable to communities for the services they provide
- Develop and maintain a workforce that is professional, resilient, skilled, flexible and diverse.

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. Our objectives, published in-line with The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) of the Equality Act 2010, are:

- To improve the recruitment, retention, progression, development and experience of the people employed by Essex County Fire and Rescue Service to enable the organisation to become an inclusive employer of choice.

- To promote and encourage employees to voluntarily declare their self-classification diversity data to ensure ECFRS actions as an employer are evidence led and improvement focused.
- To improve the mapping, quality and extent of equality information in order to better facilitate compliance with the public sector equality duty in relation to service delivery including IRMP additional activities.
- To review the equality impact of key organisational policies for differential impact in areas such as recruitment and selection, learning and development, absence management, modified duties, talent management, appraisal, disciplinary and grievance.
- To ensure that all staff are treated with dignity and respect and have a workplace that is free from harassment and bullying by changing the culture of the organisation to one that is genuinely inclusive. All employees are high performing because we value their

differences, which includes gender or gender identity, race, or religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, pregnancy, caring responsibilities or membership of a trade union.

- To seek external review, challenge and accreditation of ECFRS' actions as an employer by actively participating with relevant equalities standards and benchmarks including the Fire and Rescue Service Equality Framework.

These objectives were adopted on 1 March 2018. They were approved by the Inclusion and Diversity Steering Group and are in place until 28 February 2022.

We last reviewed these as part of creating our People Strategy 2020-24. The objectives are reflected in our People Strategy.

Data Protection Act 2018

The Act is a complete data protection system, so as well as governing general data covered by the GDPR, it covers all other general data, law enforcement data and national security data.

The Act exercises a number of agreed modifications to the GDPR to make it work for the benefit of the UK in areas such as academic research, financial services and child protection. The Act aims to:

- Make our data protection laws fit for the digital age in which an ever increasing amount of data is being processed
- Empower people to take control of their data
- Support UK businesses and organisations through the change
- Ensure that the UK is prepared for the future now we have left the EU

Health and Safety at Work Act

Our Service recognises and accepts the responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of our employees and undertakes to protect people, assets and the communities in which we work.

To achieve this, we meet all relevant requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (together with all other statutory provisions associated with it) and supports staff in meeting their obligations under the act. Detailed health, safety and welfare specific arrangements, based on the Health and Safety Executive's methodology, are set out in our Health and Safety Policy and associated framework of policies, which take relevant legislation, guidance and industry best practice into account.

The policies provide employees with relevant and comprehensive information on the risks they face and the preventative and protective measures required to minimise them.

Quarterly inspections are carried out on all our premises and any defects are reported and monitored until completed.

There is a shared common understanding of the Service's mission, values and beliefs and a positive health and safety culture is fostered by the visible and active leadership of Senior Managers.

Our Health and Safety Team continually develops and improves systems for monitoring and improving the effectiveness of our Health and Safety Management Systems. These processes include peer Health and Safety Audits.

A productive relationship has been established between the Health and Safety Trade Union Safety Representatives and the Health and Safety Team.

One in three house fires start in the kitchen

Stop thinking, 'It won't happen', and start thinking, 'I won't let it happen'.



Stay in the kitchen when you're cooking.

Make something cold if you've been drinking or you're tired.

Never put water on an oil fire.

Clear your hob area and surfaces when you've finished cooking.

Fit a heat detector in your kitchen and a smoke alarm on each level of your home.



essex-fire.gov.uk/cook

Feedback and recognition

Feedback

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service is fully committed to providing the highest possible levels of service to the communities in Essex.

Compliments

We love to know when you have received especially good service from us. Send us your comments, thank you cards, emails and we'll share with our relevant colleagues, teams and firefighter watches.

This feedback is useful because it helps us to learn about the things we are doing right, so we can make sure we carry on doing those things in the future.

Getting in touch

If you would like to send us your feedback please email compliments.complaints@essex-fire.gov.uk or call: 0300 303 5555

Complaints

Sometimes things do go wrong. Hearing about times when we've not met your expectations helps us to improve the service we provide.

In 2022/23 we received 32 complaints. That was down from 50 complaints received the previous year.

Of the 32 complaints, we responded and closed 22 within 20 days (our target). Ten complaints took longer to action than 20 days. This was due to the complexity of the nature of the complaint, including requesting footage.

We will always make sure your complaint is dealt with quickly, fairly and consistently.



Essex County Fire and Rescue Service

11 Aug 2022 · 🌐

This week's [#ThankYouThursday](#) comes from Callum and his daughter, Harper, who stumbled across one of our Fire Engines at the weekend and couldn't resist taking a photo.

Callum said: "My daughter was very pleased your guys were able to make her day by putting the lights on the fire engine and letting us take a photo while you were watching a stack of bales burn out Birch today! Fantastic job you all do."





Essex County Fire and Rescue Service

17 Nov 2022 · 🌐

This [#ThankyouThursday](#), Colchester Fire Station would like to thank everyone who donated money during their open day. A grand total of £1,185 was raised and donated to [The Fire Fighters Charity](#) who have thanked everyone for every single donation 🙌



Helpful links

[Essex County Fire and Rescue Service website](http://www.essex-fire.gov.uk)
www.essex-fire.gov.uk

[ECFRS Unaudited Statement of Accounts 2022/23](http://www.essex-fire.gov.uk/accounts)
www.essex-fire.gov.uk/accounts

[Fire and Rescue Plan](http://www.essex-fire.gov.uk/plan)
www.essex-fire.gov.uk/plan

[Integrated Risk Management Plan \(IRMP\)](http://www.essex-fire.gov.uk/irmp)
www.essex-fire.gov.uk/irmp

[His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services \(HMICFRS\)](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/frs-assessment/frs-2021/essex/)
<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/frs-assessment/frs-2021/essex/>

[Fire and Rescue National Framework for England](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/fire-and-rescue-national-frameworkfor-england)
www.gov.uk/government/collections/fire-and-rescue-national-frameworkfor-england





E-Scooter & E-Bike Fire Safety

- Follow the manufacturer's instructions when charging and always unplug your charger when it's finished charging
- Charge the battery while you are awake and alert so if a fire should occur you can respond quickly
- Always use the manufacturer approved charger and if you spot any signs of wear and tear or damage buy an official replacement charger from a reputable seller
- Don't store or charge in escape routes or in communal areas. If there's a fire, it can affect people's ability to escape
- Ensure you have working smoke alarms on every level of your home
- In the event of a fire do not attempt to extinguish it yourself. Get out, stay out, call 999.

Agenda Item 6
EPFCP/24/23

Report title: Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Annual Report 2022-2023	
Report to: Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel	
Report author: Roger Hirst (Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex)	
Date: 28 September 2023	For: Review
Enquiries to: Darren Horsman (Strategic Head of Policy and Public Engagement) Telephone: 07967 821067 Email: darren.horsman@essex.police.uk	
County Divisions affected: All Essex	

1. Purpose of report

This report provides the Police, Fire and Crime Panel with the PFCC's draft Annual Report for 2022 - 2023 (attached at Annex A).

The Police, Fire and Crime Panel has a statutory duty under section 28(4) of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 to review and provide feedback to the Commissioner on the Annual Report. Prior to the Panel meeting, a workshop has been held for Panel members to provide feedback to the Commissioner on an earlier draft of the report. This feedback has been incorporated and the changes made in consequence are listed below.

2. Recommendations

That members of the Police, Fire and Crime Panel review the PFCC's draft Annual Report for 2022 - 2023 and either endorse this version or provide comment on its content.

3. Overview

This draft Annual Report for 2022 - 2023 reports progress in delivering the priorities within the Police and Crime Plan 2021 - 2024. A separate report has been presented to the Panel that covers the Commissioner's responsibilities around fire and rescue in his role as the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority.

As with previous Annual Reports, the attached report is fully aligned to the Statement of Accounts. This means that the content of the report has been developed alongside the Statement of Accounts and will be independently audited as part of this process. The intention in taking this approach is to provide

a fuller picture of the performance, both operational and financial, of Essex Police and of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner. Due to national issues with audit backlogs, the Statement of Accounts has not been audited yet. However, it is highly unlikely that any changes will make a material difference to the overall financial position or the narrative content within this Annual Report.

The draft Annual Report reflects feedback from the Panel's scrutiny of previous Annual Reports, so includes the Commissioner's equality objectives and is set out in line with this previous feedback. For the second year, the Panel has also held a workshop prior to the Panel meeting, where members of the Panel have provided feedback to the Commissioner on an earlier draft. This feedback is listed below, alongside an explanation of what the Commissioner has done as a result.

Page number	Suggested change	Comment / action
Throughout report	Design is very dark	A number of design elements have been tweaked to lighten the design and additional space has been incorporated into the design. The overall design look and feel has not been changed nor has the overall colour palette.
Throughout report	Review photos to check they are relevant and include captions.	Done
Page 3	Some text on the Contents page might be hard to read.	Text checked and, while compliant with standards, we have changed the text to be white to improve readability.
Page 3	Can we add page numbers on the contents page?	Done
Page 9	Can we change colour alignment to the graph?	Done
Page 20	Change photo to a female officer	Done
Page 21	Remove repetitive statement from the section referring to a fall in domestic abuse cases in Essex.	Done

The report presented to the Police, Fire and Crime Panel today is a draft. The Panel can either endorse this version or provide further feedback on it to the Commissioner. If the Panel provides additional feedback, a further, final version will be shared with the Panel before publication.

Appendices

Annex A – PFCC Draft Annual Report 2022 – 2023



ANNUAL REPORT

2022-2023



CONTENTS

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS
2022-2023

POLICE, FIRE & CRIME
COMMISSIONER'S REPORT



04



CHIEF CONSTABLE'S
REPORT

06



CHIEF FINANCIAL
OFFICER, PFCC
REPORT

08



FURTHER INVESTMENT
IN CRIME PREVENTION

14



REDUCING DRUG
DRIVEN VIOLENCE

18



PROTECTING VULNERABLE
PEOPLE AND BREAKING THE
CYCLE OF DOMESTIC ABUSE

20



REDUCING VIOLENCE
AGAINST WOMEN AND
GIRLS (VAWG)

24



IMPROVING
SUPPORT FOR
VICTIMS OF CRIME

28



PROTECTING RURAL
AND ISOLATED AREAS

30



PREVENTING
DOG THEFT

32



PREVENTING BUSINESS
CRIME, FRAUD AND CYBER
CRIME

34



IMPROVE SAFETY
ON OUR ROADS

36



ENCOURAGING
VOLUNTEERS AND
COMMUNITY SUPPORT

38



SUPPORTING OUR
OFFICERS AND STAFF

40



INCREASING
COLLABORATION

42



POLICE, FIRE & CRIME COMMISSIONER'S REPORT



Roger Hirst welcoming new recruits to Essex Police

This year has marked an important milestone in the development of Essex Police as we have completed our multi-year growth programme. Since 2016 we have increased the annual investment into Essex Police by £86m. This has come from a combination of increased central government funding, local funding through the police precept and efficiency savings.

Since 2016 we have increased the annual investment into Essex Police by **£86M**

As a result of this increased investment the Chief Constable has been able to recruit an additional 905 officers, taking the total officer establishment to 3,755. Extra staff and more equipment have also been funded to ensure officers are supported to be out in their communities with the right level of resources to do the job. This is the largest the force has been in its 183-year history.

Throughout the year we have seen a downward trend in long term crime levels. This trend has become more evident since the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic between 2020-2022 passed through our crime data. Overall crime is now below the level seen leading up to the pandemic with a 2.4 % fall between 2019-2020 and 2022-2023. Since 2019-2020 is the last pre-pandemic figure it provides a useful baseline for comparison.

The small reduction in overall crime is supported by the continued reduction in anti-social behaviour and burglary, significant reductions in homicide and early signs of a long-term reduction in violence against the person offences. These patterns, taken together, show a long-term reduction in traditional forms of crimes.

While traditional forms of crime have reduced over the last five years and all crime has reduced compared to the pre-pandemic levels the five-year trend in reported crime has increased. This is because new offences have been introduced, such as stalking and harassment, and changes have been made to how crime is recorded. Essex Police has been rated as outstanding for its crime data accuracy, so we know that the reported level of crimes gives us a good picture of what is happening in communities.

The changes to reporting levels are particularly marked in domestic abuse cases. Since 2016 we have seen a significant increase in the recording of domestic abuse.

This has been mainly driven by increased levels of reporting and the positive decision by the government to introduce new offences of stalking and harassment as well as controlling and coercive behaviour. These are awful crimes that have devastating effects and need to be stopped. Nobody should have to go through this and the more we can do to prevent these forms of crime, the more people can live their lives free from fear.


We have worked hard, through the Southend, Essex and Thurrock Domestic Abuse Board, to encourage victims to come forward, to try new innovative approaches to preventing perpetrators from causing harm, while continuing to firmly prosecute those that offend. This year the cumulation of this hard work has started to show with a 9.1% reduction in the number of cases compared to the year before. This is a small but significant start and one that goes against the national trend.

Another continued area of sustained effort has been on our fight against drug driven violence. Essex Police has continued to build its capacity to tackle hardened criminals, organised gangs, drug dealers and county lines, successfully targeting and closing entire lines. This work is supported by our Violence and Vulnerability Unit which works in partnership across Essex to prevent young and vulnerable people from getting involved in gangs. This is having a positive impact with 8,000 children, young people and young adults reached each year in communities and direct interventions.

During the year we have also successfully secured £1.183m from the Home Office's Safer Streets Fund to make our streets safer, especially for women and girls. Together with local match funding from Councils and wider partners we have been able to invest £2.002m in four projects across Essex where local communities have told us they feel unsafe. Ninefields Estate in Waltham Abbey, Witham Town Centre, the Greenstead area of Colchester and

Colchester Town Centre will each receive funding for a range of activity to improve the physical environment, promote community involvement, and create safer spaces. This includes investment in redesigning walkways, lighting, CCTV and activities to strengthen community engagement, including with schools, young people and businesses.

This is the **largest** the force has been in its **183-year** history



The force, together with partners, has also been working hard to prevent violence against women and girls. A new tool has been developed to help Community Safety Partnerships understand areas of concern in their communities and focus their prevention activity. The force has also continued to improve the way sexual offences are investigated, learning from national programmes to work together better with criminal justice partners and ensure victims are at the heart of how they investigate. This has led to a 6.3% reduction in the number of sexual offences committed against females compared to the previous year and a 2.1% increase in the number of cases solved. While there is still much more to do in this area these are important steps in the right direction.

While there remain many challenges to face, at the end of the year we have a police force in Essex that is bigger than it has ever been before. We have strong and productive partnerships with councils, voluntary

services and communities. We are well positioned to get crime down and have a committed force which has the tools available to it to make this difference.

As we continue to progress and improve how we keep our communities safe, I recognise the huge commitment and difference that our team in Essex Police makes, and the many partners who support and help them to deliver. I would like to thank each and every one of them for their contribution and in particular the Chief Constable and his senior team for their ongoing commitment, openness and transparency. They make a difference every day and on behalf of the people of Essex I want to thank them for their hard work in making our communities safer.



ROGER HIRST
Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner

PFCC
POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME
COMMISSIONER FOR ESSEX



Roger Hirst and the **Deputy Chief Constable** at the launch of the ASB Hotspot Pilot in Brentwood

CHIEF CONSTABLE'S REPORT



The Chief Constable addressing new officers at a police pass out parade

Essex Police has grown to be the biggest it has ever been with an establishment of 3,755 officers, 2,427 police staff, 102, police community support officers and a strength of 327 special constables. Public trust in the force remains high with 75% of people in Essex stating that we do a good or excellent job.



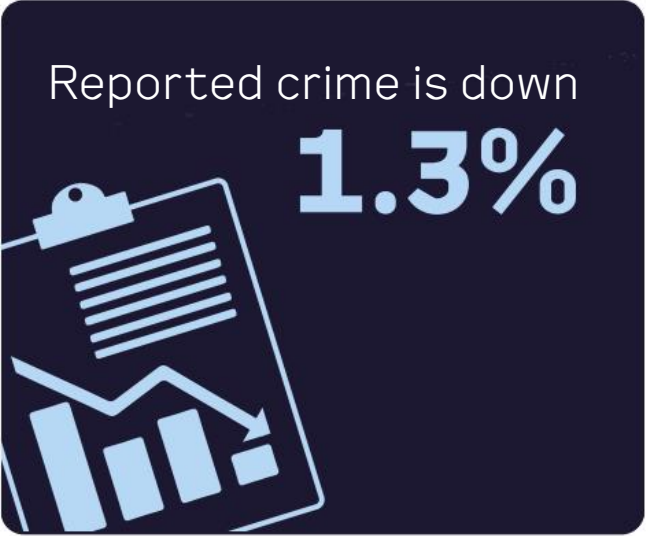
Most importantly, reported crime is down by 1.3%. Essex Police continues to put the new and existing resources at its disposal to best use to protect and serve the county. This report relates to the first full financial year since the introduction of the 2022 - 2025 Essex Police Force Plan, which is focused on victims, violence, vulnerability, and visibility.

The number of officers, funded by both central Government and the local precept, increased during 2022/23 with this being the final year of the national police uplift programme. By March 2023, we had an officer establishment of 3,755, an increase of more than 900 since 2016.

My attention now moves towards ensuring that we have an effective recruitment pipeline and focus on retention and progression, developing the capabilities of the hard-working officers, staff and volunteers within the force to ensure that they are appropriately skilled, equipped and enabled to serve the public to the best of their abilities.

As Chief Constable, I am immensely proud to lead such hardworking officers, staff and volunteers who are dedicated to delivering justice to every victim of crime and who work tirelessly to maintain the trust and confidence of the communities that they serve, help people and keep our county safe. In March 2023 Baroness Louise Casey published a report into the standards of behaviour and internal culture of the Metropolitan Police Service which exposed significant failings across the organisation which contributed to a culture of misogyny, racism, homophobia and sexism. It is moments like this that make us stop and think as events like these, linked to policing nationally, impact on public confidence across the UK. Although the public's confidence in Essex Police remains high this is not something that I am complacent about and I am ensuring that we understand

our own position against the review findings by adopting a strategy of listening and understanding as well as undertaking an assessment of our practices and processes. Working in conjunction with the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) our approach to ensuring that we behave with integrity, demonstrate strong commitment to ethical values and respect the rule of the law is explained within the Annual Governance Statement that is included within this Statement of Accounts.



2022/23 has been a particularly busy year with the need to respond to Just Stop Oil protest activity at petrochemical distribution sites in West Essex and petrol station forecourts. Protestors began a prolonged period of disruptions on 1st April 2022 using a wide range of tactics simultaneously across multiple sites in Essex. There were further protests in October 2022 including two protestors who scaled the Dartford River Crossing bridge causing it to be closed for two days. The cost to the force was £5.6m. I worked together with the PFCC to approach the Home Office for Special Grant funding and to date the Home Office have reimbursed £4m with the force having to fund the remaining £1.6m.



The Chief Constable talking to new recruits with the High Sheriff in the background

Following the sad passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, we played a key contributory role to the events leading up to and including her funeral. This included an extensive security operation at Stansted airport, demonstrating the key role and effectiveness of the Force in providing its contribution to the Strategic Policing Requirement.

We have had many successes during the year but one that has demonstrated exceptional teamwork has been the soft launch of our Rapid Video Response (RVR) in the Force Control Room. RVR is having an immediate positive impact, as an additional and effective way of providing a fast time, face to face consultation with an officer, in response to the needs of our victims of Domestic Abuse. This is seeing

faster response times and more effective evidential capture at the initial point of contact, supporting victims to report offences being committed against them. This is just one project that has demonstrated how we effectively use our financial resources to improve outcomes for victims of crime.



THE FINANCIAL OVERVIEW



The Group Accounts for the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex and Essex Police explain the Group’s financial activity during the financial year 2022/23, as well as the financial position at 31st March 2023.

The accounts are prepared and presented in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting In the United Kingdom 2022/23 (the Code). The Code is prepared under International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), which have been adopted as the basis for public sector accounting in the UK.

RESULTS FOR 2022/23

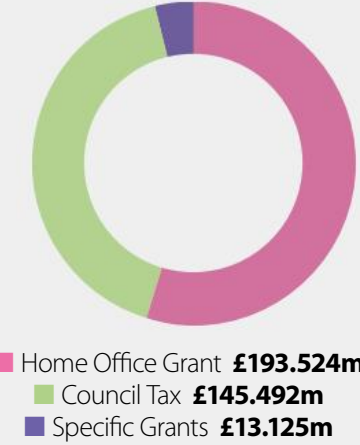
The Group ended the year on a funding basis, with a deficit of £3.030m funded with a transfer of £1.606m from earmarked reserves and £1.424m from the General Reserve. This deficit excludes adjustments for items required by regulation for the accounting basis, as shown on page 49. The main adjustments are for the cost of pensions, the cost of capital, and other minor technical accounting adjustments. The reconciliation of the adjustments is summarised on page 80 of these accounts.

WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM

In 2022/23 we continued to receive the Essex share of the additional government funding for the Police Uplift Programme, to increase the number of police officers across the country by 20,000. The PFCC increased the precept by 4.79% (£9.99 per year on a Band D property) resulting in an overall level of resources for 2022/23 enabling us to deliver against the ambitions set out in the Police and Crime Plan 2021 to 2024, the Government’s Beating Crime Plan, meeting our legal responsibilities, and our national obligations to the Strategic Policing Requirement and helped make a significant difference to our ability to positively affect the communities we serve.

The chart below shows an analysis of the PFCC’s key sources of funding in 2022/23 of £352.141m. The Home Office core grant paid to the PFCC accounted for 55% of the total funding. These grants and income raised by council tax were used to fund the net revenue expenditure for 2022/23 of £355.171m, with the balance of £3.030m funded by a transfer of £1.606m from earmarked reserves and £1.424m from the General Reserve.

Funding Sources 2022/23



One of the challenges we face is, that nationally, Essex is the second lowest funded force (funding from grants and council tax) per head of population and has the lowest spend per head of population (Source: HMICFRS 2022 Value for Money Profiles).

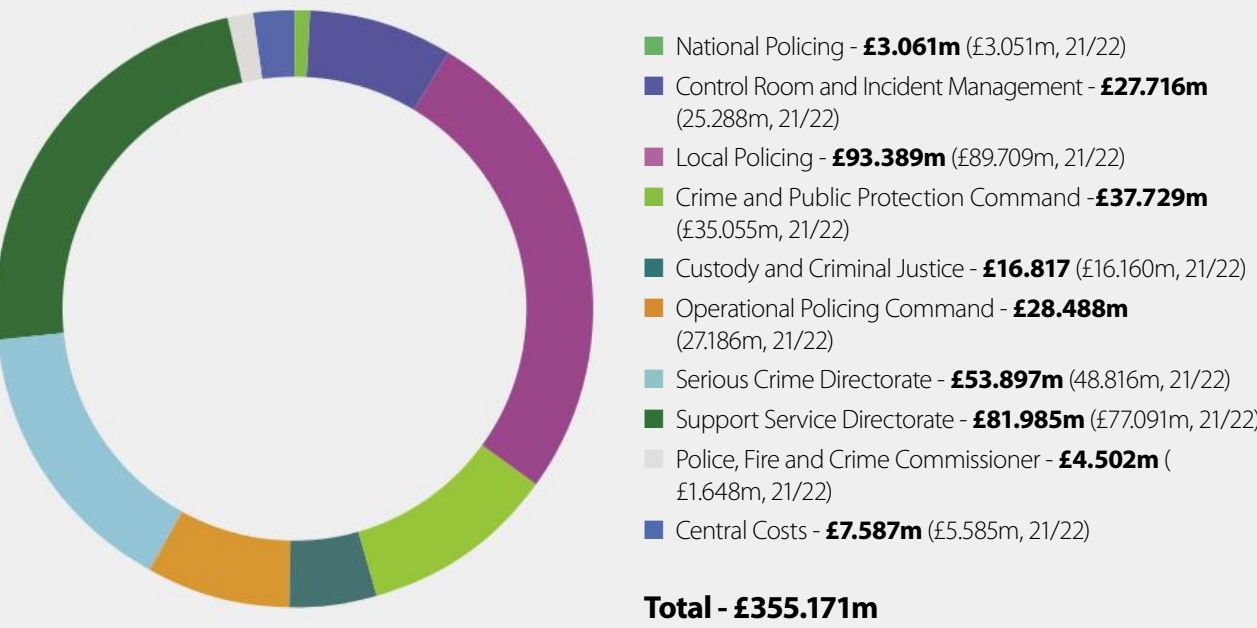
Essex Police has a good track record of delivering cash and efficiency savings to maximise the benefit out of every penny. In 2022/23 £4.6m savings were delivered with £3.8m of these recurring annually, and there continues to be an ambitious savings programme with £12.2m programmed to be delivered in 2023/24.



One of our Special Constabulary out on patrol

WHAT THE MONEY IS SPENT ON

The graph below shows an analysis of the Group’s net revenue expenditure.



FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

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 police staff along with police officers and PCSOs are employed by the Chief Constable. The Chief Constable in turn has operational control of police officers, PCSOs and police staff. While the PFCC has strategic control of all assets, income, PFCC staff and liabilities and is responsible for establishing most reserves and controlling all cashflow.

The table below shows budgeted and actual net expenditure, with the latter also included in note 9 (Expenditure and Funding Analysis). The net expenditure excludes depreciation, pensions liabilities, accumulated absences and other items which do not 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 accounting practice. The Expenditure and Funding Analysis shows how the funding has been used and provides a link to the figures reported in the CIES.

The net expenditure budget of £351.694m, as presented at the Police, Fire and Crime Panel in February 2022, was funded by £352.2m from Budgeted general grants and council tax, with the balance of £0.506m being transferred to reserves (£0.712m to earmarked reserves and £0.206m from the General Reserve). The actual position for the year was a deficit of £3.030m. The total contribution from the General Reserve for the year was £1.424m, and there was a £1.606m contribution from earmarked reserves.

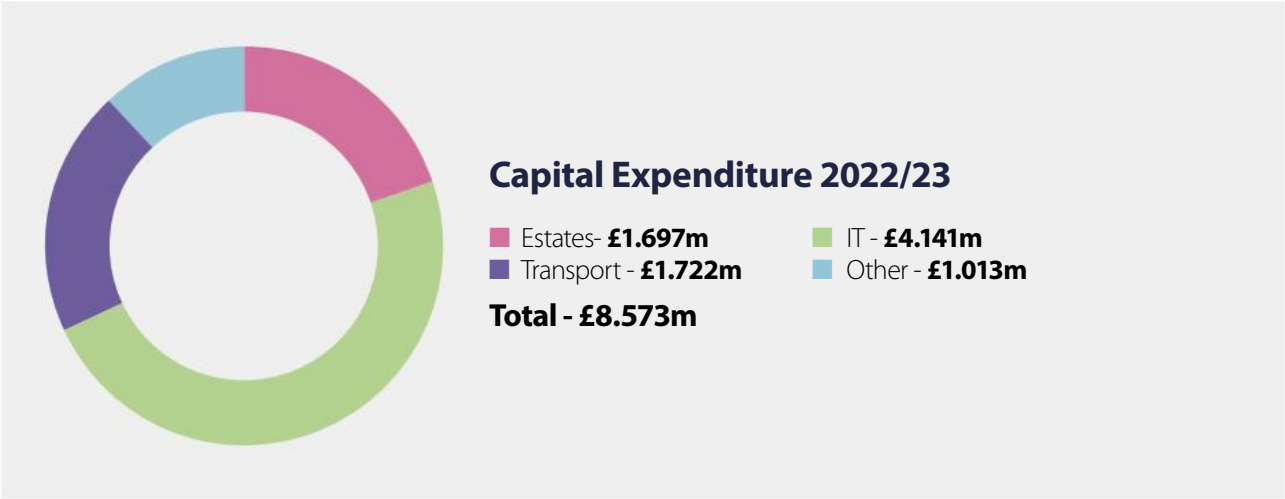
The main contributing factor to the overspend was the need to respond to the Just Stop Oil protest activity at petrochemical distribution sites in West Essex, petrol station forecourts and other sites across Essex which began on 1st April 2022. Large numbers of protestors disrupted multiple sites using a range of tactics. In total this cost Essex Police £5.584m. The PFCC and the Chief Constable worked together to seek financial assistance from the Home Office which resulted in £4.003m of funding being received to part cover the costs. This additional income and the fact that Essex Police attracted an additional £1.020m of funding from the Home Office for overachieving on the national police uplift programme, resulted in significantly more income to cover part of the associated overspends against budget.

	2022/23				
	Group			Actual	Variance over / (under)
	Original Budget	Virements	Current Budget		
Employees					
Police Officer pay and allowances	215,313	4,678	219,991	223,599	3,607
PCSO pay and allowances	3,615	(124)	3,492	3,455	(37)
Police staff pay and allowances	93,899	1,537	95,436	93,497	(1,939)
Ill-health/medical pensions	4,247	480	4,726	4,735	8
Training	1,852	157	2,009	1,926	(82)
Other employee expenses	547	138	685	803	118
	319,473	6,866	326,339	328,015	1,676
Other Service Expenditure					
Premises	9,611	24	9,635	10,842	1,207
Transport	6,204	112	6,316	7,390	1,074
Supplies & services	42,688	489	43,177	43,708	531
Third party payments	7,874	94	7,968	10,182	2,214
	66,378	719	67,096	72,122	5,026

	Original Budget	Virements	Current Budget	Actual	Variance over / (under)
Gross Operating Expenditure	385,851	7,584	393,435	400,137	6,702
Income	(35,006)	(9,443)	(44,449)	(50,621)	(6,172)
Net Cost of Services	350,845	(1,858)	348,987	349,516	530
Other Expenditure / (Income)					
Other Expenditure / (Income)	52	0	52	(417)	(470)
Capital & other adjustments	796	5,279	6,075	6,072	(3)
	849	5,279	6,128	5,655	(473)
Net Expenditure	351,694	3,421	355,114	355,171	56
Sources of funding					
Police grant	(126,537)	-	(126,537)	(126,537)	-
Formula funding grant	(66,987)	-	(66,987)	(66,987)	-
Council tax precept	(143,276)	-	(143,276)	(143,276)	-
Council tax support grant	(10,992)	-	(10,992)	(10,992)	-
Council tax freeze grant	(2,113)	-	(2,113)	(2,113)	-
Collection fund surplus	(2,275)	-	(2,275)	(2,215)	59
	(352,200)	-	(352,200)	(352,141)	59
(Surplus)/ Deficit before Transfer to Earmarked Reserves	(506)	3,421	2,914	3,030	116
Transfer to/(from) Earmarked Reserves	712	(2,318)	(1,606)	(1,606)	(0)
Transfer to/(from) the General Reserve	(206)	(1,102)	(1,308)	(1,424)	(116)

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

A capital investment programme of £17.889m for 2022/23 was presented to the Police, Fire and Crime Panel in February 2022, to maintain the infrastructure needed to support an effective and efficient police service. By March 2023 capital approvals had been increased to £18.510m. However, the force has experienced delays in the delivery of the capital programme including problems with supply chains, shortage of labour and other issues due to the on-going effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. There has also been significant slippage in delivery of the fleet replacement programmes due to issues with the National Vehicle Framework agreement and worldwide shortages of semi-conductor chips. Taking these factors into account, actual capital investment for the period only totalled £8.573m.



The estates capital expenditure of £1.697m, includes £1.105m on delivering the estates strategy, of this £0.586m was on the refurbishment of the site at Boreham. The remainder of the estates capital expenditure was primarily spent on maintenance of the estate.

- The capital expenditure on information technology of £4.141m includes expenditure of:**
- £2.414m 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;
 - £0.870m on the roll out of laptops to local policing teams; and
 - £0.481m on the migration of a data centre

The capital expenditure for transport of £1.722m, included £1.666m for the annual fleet replacement programme.

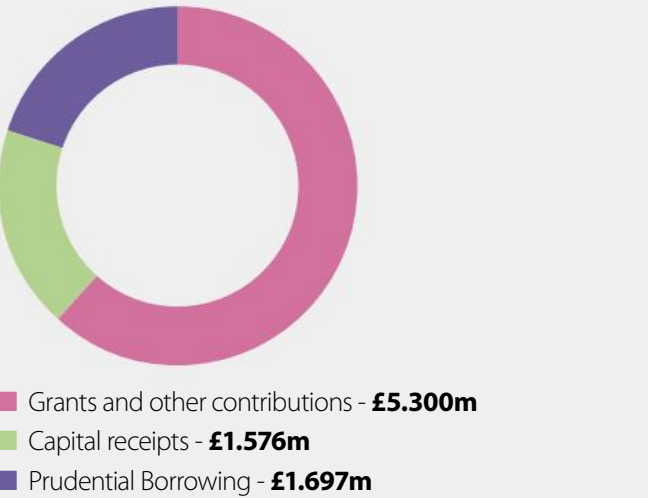
Other capital expenditure of £1.013m includes investment in body armour of £0.443m, automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) of £0.287m, and other capital equipment to support operational policing of £0.283m.

CAPITAL FINANCING

Capital resources available to fund capital investment come from four main sources, primarily from capital receipts, revenue contributions and government grants and contributions. Where capital investment exceeds these available resources the PFCC can borrow to finance the capital investment providing we can demonstrate we are complying with the Prudential Code of Practice which requires any borrowing to be affordable, prudent and sustainable. There was a need to finance 2022/23 capital investment with £1.697m of prudential borrowing (In this instance this was internally financed and did not lead to external borrowing).

Capital financing resources applied in 2022/23 are shown below.

Capital - Financing Sources



The £5.300m of grants and contributions included £5.279m that was applied from the Future Capital Funding Reserve which is a revenue earmarked reserve to hold funds for this purpose.

RESERVES

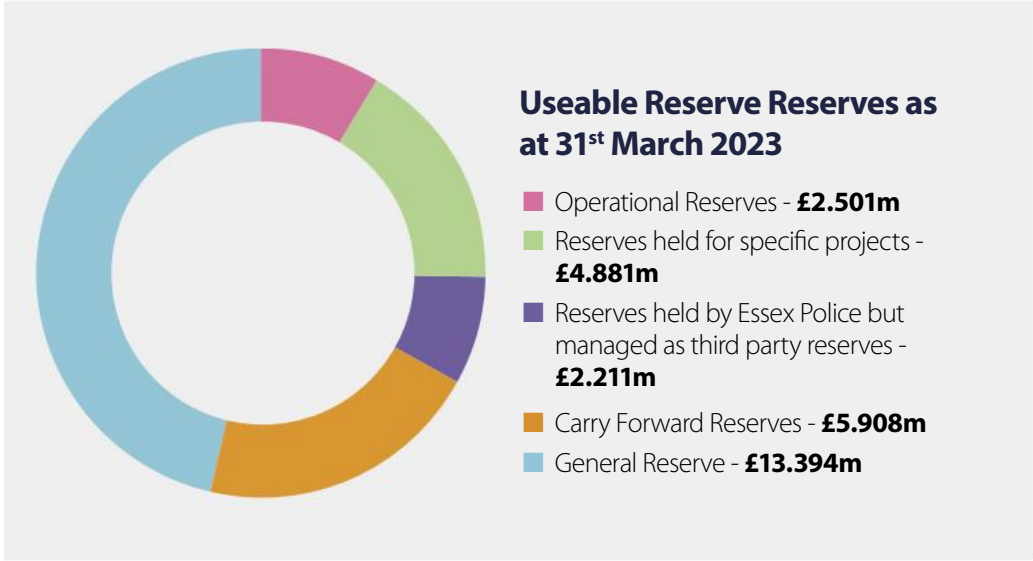
The revenue reserves are key to our financial strategy, ensuring that there is some resilience to cope with unpredictable financial pressures and long-term financial commitments. Specific earmarked reserves are held to manage known financial liabilities and possible risks.

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

- To establish a General Reserve position of 3% of net revenue expenditure by the end of 2024/25 and to then maintain the General Reserve at 3% by each year end, in the three following years of the Medium Term Financial Strategy, for unknown and/or unforeseeable events;
- Earmarked reserves will be created to cover for possible known significant risks and future commitments;
- The PFCC will apply a prudent approach to reserves and risk management although this will be balanced with ensuring the public of today benefit from today’s funding;
- The PFCC will take a long-term approach to protecting, maintaining and investing in all its assets supporting policing for the long term as well as short term;
- Reserves not required for the above purposes will be clearly identified as available for other discretionary opportunities; and
- The PFCC will where possible build up and maintain a level of reserves for investment, borrowing only where the life of the asset and economic environment make it the most efficient way of financing investment.

The General Reserve is held to provide a working balance to protect against unexpected cost pressures. The balance on the General Reserve as at 1st April 2022 was £14.818m. The 2022/23 net withdrawal from the General Reserve of £1.424m reduced the balance to £13.394m, 3.8% of net revenue expenditure.

Earmarked revenue reserves total £15.501m at 31st March 2023 (a reduction of £1.6m since 31st March 2022). Included within these reserves is £2.211m of monies held by Essex Police which are managed as third party reserves, mainly comprising of income originating from police seizures which the force has rights to retain, including receipts received through the Asset Recovery Incentive Scheme (ARIS) to fund crime reduction-related expenditure. The levels of usable reserves at 31st March 2023, are shown in the chart below.



Officers out on patrol

FUTURE PENSION PAYMENTS AND LIABILITIES

We are required under accounting standards to include the total liability of future pension payments in the Balance Sheet. There are statutory and contractual arrangements in place for funding these pensions.

Accounting standards require that the total future assets and liabilities in respect 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 43) include net assets of £95.734m (2021/22 net liability of £193.569m) for police staff and £2,209.838m net liabilities (2021/22 £3,297.849m net liability) for police officers.

The PFCC group has an agreed position with the pension administrator regarding the future liability provision. The statutory arrangements for funding the police officer pension liability and the PFCC group arrangements for funding any police staff pension deficit, therefore, mean that the financial position of the PFCC group remains sound. It should be noted that the police staff pension value actually reflects an asset for 2022/23, however this position can change annually.

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

The significant increase in inflation over the last year has had an impact on the cost of supplies and services and is expected to impact further during 2023/24. We have reviewed the impact of these pressures over the next two years and our sensitivity analysis demonstrates we will be able to manage the cost of supplies and services in the short-term. However, with staff being such a significant percentage of our costs, the impact is more likely to come from pay award increases affected by these rising costs. We must also factor in the programmed capital investment over the next five years to support the vision and strategic priorities within the Police and Crime Plan. An ambitious programme of transformation continues to help prepare us to meet the demands of today and the future, involving police estates, technology and an enhanced police operating model.

We will continue to consider the various impacts of our costs in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) as we develop the budget for 2024/25. The MTFS reflects the impact of investment, cost pressures and efficiencies over five years, starting with the first year of the budget being developed. The MTFS we are currently developing considers the period 2024/25 to 2028/29. We have a detailed sensitivity analysis within the MTFS, and we will consider various scenarios, in order that we are able to act promptly to the pressures we might face.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I do hope that the readers of these accounts will find the information valuable and of interest and I would like to acknowledge and thank the Chief Constable’s Corporate Finance Department for all the hard work that has gone into producing such a comprehensive set of accounts. I am also very grateful for all their hard work and support throughout the year, with the production of the budget, monitoring statements and updates to the MTFS.



Officer parading in front of friends and family

FURTHER INVESTMENT IN CRIME PREVENTION

Over the last seven years we have successfully increased investment in policing, to grow the force, increase visibility and accessibility of policing and help to prevent crime. Between April 2022 and the end of March 2023 a further £21.9m has been invested in frontline policing in Essex. Over the last seven years £85.9m has been invested. This has been achieved because of increases in central government funding, increases in the local policing precept and significant improvements in the efficiency of the force enabling more funding to be directed to frontline services.


With this extra investment we have successfully undertaken the biggest police recruitment programme in a generation. By the end of this year, we had completed this programme, meaning there are 905 more officers in Essex Police than there were in 2016. In the last year 200 of those new officers have been recruited.

Essex Police now has an establishment of 3,755 officers, making it the biggest it has been in its 183-year history. This is well above the additional 800 that was committed to in the 2021-24 Police and Crime Plan.

The increase in officers has provided a significant boost to neighbourhood policing, with the focus on driving down crime in our communities. Significant investments have been made in Town Centre Teams with 90 new officers located in key areas across the county, in our Community Safety Teams and in Children and Young People Officers.

Various operations have been implemented across the county including Operation Showboat in Clacton where high visibility patrols have been deployed in the town centre after it was identified as an ASB hotspot following reports of low-level criminal damage, street drinkers and public order offences. During 2022-2023 Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABC) were given to 14 youths offending in the area.

Further investment in partnership working is also continuing, with Essex Police implementing a 'whole system' approach to reducing crime, which encompasses earlier intervention and diversion, to help break cycles of crime. This means by working with partners such as Safer Essex, Community Safety



A further **£21.9m** has been invested in frontline policing in Essex

Between April 2022 and the end of March 2023

Partnerships and voluntary services Essex Police can take a long-term problem-solving approach that actively addresses the root causes of issues such as domestic abuse (DA), ASB and Violence Against Women and Girls. A key example of this type of initiative was Operation Union in Southend over the summer of 2022. Due to its success in preventing crime and bolstering public confidence, it will return in 2023 working once again with partners, providing a visible policing presence in the Southend area to engage, respond and proactively deter offending at identified hotspots.

In March 2023 the government launched their National Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Action Plan and Essex Police was chosen as one of 10 forces to receive investment in hotspot policing. The Action Plan built on many of the good initiatives tried in Essex. Essex experienced a 31.4% decrease (9,618 fewer) in ASB incidents for the 12 months to March 2023 compared to the 12 months to March 2022. There was a decrease of 49.8% ASB reports in the 12 months to March 2023 compared to the 12 months to December 2019 (20,919 fewer incidents). The 2019 figure is used as it avoids the impact on crime recording from the national COVID lockdowns.



Officer out on patrol

To ensure the downward trend in ASB is maintained, a newly formed Local Policing Support Unit Strategic Coordination Group was introduced earlier in the year to coordinate and direct specific mobilisations of Police Volunteers, Specials, Accredited Persons and Active Citizens (over 1,500 people) across all 10 policing districts. These mobilisations help drive down ASB by providing high levels of visibility in targeted areas to support Neighbourhood Policing Teams. They are shown to have a significant positive impact on levels of ASB. This initiative also supports the positive impact the Community Safety Engagement Officers (CSEOs) have had in increasing levels of engagement with local communities since they were first introduced in 2020.

This positive, proactive and targeted approach to preventing crime is starting to have an impact and there was a decrease in all crime rates of 1.3% for the 12 months to March 2023 compared to the 12 months to March 2022. When compared to the 12 months to December 2019, all crime decreased by 2.9%; this equates to 4,933 fewer offences. In our latest Crime Harm Data, the force has seen a slight increase from 14.1 to 14.5. (These scores are based on the level of harm caused by each offence and is calculated by using the default length of sentence and offender would receive). These are measures for the 12 months up to January 2023 and the 12 months over the same period a year before. This shows us that, while all crime is starting to go down, we continue to see a shift in the types of crimes being committed from lower-level offences to those that would attract a longer custodial sentence.

Over the year public confidence has also reduced from the record high of 80.1% in the 12 months to December 2021 to 75% in the 12 months to December 2022. This is still well above the pre-pandemic level of 64.7% which was measured in the 12 months to December 2019. This measure tracks the number of residents who rate Essex Police



Officers out on patrol

as either good or excellent. The survey reaches over 8,000 people per year and provides a reliable statistical analysis of confidence in policing in Essex.

In terms of accessibility, Essex Police received 27,708 fewer 101 calls to the Force Control Room (FCR) over the last 12 months to March 2023 (229,895 calls) compared to the 12 months to March 2022 (257,603). This is a 10.8% reduction. There was a 21.6% decrease compared to the 12 months to December 2019 (293,049 calls).

More concerning was that 37.5% of 101 calls were abandoned in March 2023, an increase of 25.5 % points when compared to the same period the year before (12.0%). There was an increase of 3.5 % points when compared to December 2019 (34.0%). The average wait time increased by over nine minutes in March 2023 when compared to March 2022, and an increase of over five minutes when compared to

December 2019. A similar pattern can be seen in the Resolution Centre where there has been a 19.1% decrease in calls compared to the 12 months to December 2019 (107,347 calls). Over this period 17.7% of calls were abandoned in March 2023, a decrease of 5.8 % points when compared to December 2019 (23.5%). The average wait time increased by over six minutes in March 2023 when compared to March 2022, and an increase of over two minutes when compared to December 2019.

This is a worrying trend and, due to performance in this area, Contact Management is subject to one of the force's major change programmes, which aims to optimise and improve its processes.

On a more positive note, the number of online reports increased by 47.2% (11,538 more) compared to the 12 months to December 2019.



Town Centre Team officers out on patrol

REDUCING DRUG DRIVEN VIOLENCE



Drugs have a huge impact on our communities. They lead to violence, the exploitation of vulnerable people and a destructive cycle of harm and crime.

It is vital we protect young or vulnerable people from gangs while we deal with the hardened criminals who prey on them and protect our communities from criminal activity that is the cause of increased violence.

To tackle drug-driven violence we have been investing in both prevention, through our Violence and Vulnerability Unit, and enforcement, by working with the National Crime Agency and investing in the Essex Police Serious Violence Unit.

In 2021-2022, we increased our investment in the Essex Police Serious Violence Unit and the Serious Crime Directorate and recruited a further 30 officers to these teams. This growth has had a significant impact over the last 12 months with the number of drug related homicides reducing from seven to three in the 12 months to March 2023.

Essex Police also conducted 25.3% more Organised Crime Group (OCG) disruptions (85 more) for the 12 months to March 2023 compared to the 12 months to March 2022. This continues a significant year on year increase in our activity to tackle the hardened criminals that fuel drug driven crime in our county.

The Serious Crime Directorate (SCD) continues to develop intelligence and lead on enforcement activity against Class A drug supply networks. This enforcement extends from those involved in importation, local distributors and street level dealers within the county. Through this layered and targeted approach, utilising a range of overt and covert tactics, we are making Essex a more difficult environment for individuals and gangs to target vulnerable people through drugs supply.

The use of Criminal Behaviour Orders (CBOs) as a preventative tool is well established in Essex. A safeguarding and diversion approach is being taken

30 officers recruited in the Essex Police Serious Violence Unit and the Serious Crime Directorate



In 2021-2022

regarding the youths that are operating within the county lines. The Raptor Teams provide a force-wide response in preventing, dismantling, and disrupting violent street gangs who cause harm to communities. Within each Raptor team there is a Safeguarding Officer who is part of the multi-agency Violence and Vulnerability Unit, supervised by a central Detective Sergeant working with partners in a 'public health approach' to try to prevent violence and young people from joining or being affiliated to gangs through active community engagement and partnership working.

This additional local investment, combined with additional central government funding to support the National Drugs Strategy, and the increased use of innovative enforcement tactics, such as using human trafficking charges, has led to a significant improvement in investigations and prevention activity. Our data shows that the level of violence related to drugs is either falling or steady across the county and the level of risk associated with county lines has fallen dramatically since October 2021.

As well as tackling those who drive drug driven crime, we have also significantly increased our investment in activity to prevent young or vulnerable people from being drawn into a life of crime. Following

confirmation in April 2022 that the Essex Violence and Vulnerability Unit would receive three years of Home Office investment and investment from local partners a three-year business case was developed to expand the programme with £8.3m to be invested in prevention activity over the next three years. This extra investment is being used to tackle serious violence and drug driven harm linked to gangs and county lines for those under 25 years of age.

The Violence and Vulnerability Unit delivers a number of diversions for children, young people and young adults. This includes professional early help teams who work closely with schools to understand and intervene at earlier points with a child and their family. They work alongside the School Enrichment Project that works with young people in identified schools through activities that help them develop a positive relationship with trusted adults. In the first half of 2022-23, 124 children and young people took part in this programme. Following the project, those ready to learn increased by 31%, while persistent non-attenders reduced from 71% to 47%.

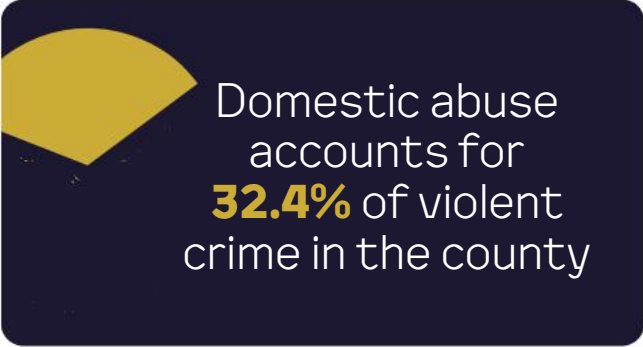
Meanwhile, the Fearless Futures / Knife Crime Violence Model is also being used across the county. These approaches use focused deterrence through tailored interventions in response to identified behaviours for high-risk individuals. They work with these young people to communicate the consequences of violence and offer support with positive routes away from crime. Between April and September 2022 there were 42 less offences – totalling £92,862 'avoided costs'.



Officers out on patrol with partners in Chelmsford

PROTECTING VULNERABLE PEOPLE AND BREAKING THE CYCLE OF DOMESTIC ABUSE

Giving a voice to those who need protection, supporting the vulnerable and reducing the number of people who fall victim to crime in their communities or their homes is key in reducing the level of harm in our communities.



It involves controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence and abuse. It affects an unacceptable number of victims, which is why breaking the cycle of domestic abuse is a priority.

Essex experienced a 9.1% decrease (2,815 fewer) in the number of recorded domestic abuse offences for the 12 months to March 2023 compared to the 12 months to March 2022. The force recorded 1,019 fewer offences in the three months to March 2023 compared to the three months to March 2022 (6,419 v. 7,438).

This is a significant result and one that goes against the national trend.

Currently, stalking and harassment offences account for about a fifth (19.9%) of all domestic abuse investigations. Having identified examples of over-reporting in this area, Essex Police is in the process of auditing and – where appropriate – correcting

stalking and harassment offences which have been recorded too many times. This is having an impact on the data for these offences.

The Southend, Essex and Thurrock Domestic Abuse Board (SETDAB) is chaired by the Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, Jane Gardner, and coordinates the work to tackle domestic abuse across Essex. It commissions a range of specialist victim and perpetrator services and works closely with Essex Police to target perpetrators.

The Commissioner, along with SETDAB partners, commissions a range of services from Victim Support which offers the first line of support to more specialist services such as Next Chapter, Safe Steps and Changing Pathways which are co-commissioned with Essex County Council, Southend-on-Sea City Council and Thurrock Council.

These services deliver an integrated domestic abuse support service including refuges, Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs) and community-based support. These co-commissioned services include the delivery of the Compass Helpline, a seven-day-a-week, single point of access which provides advice and support for victims and professionals.

Synergy Rape Crisis Partnership, a service for victims of rape and sexual abuse including historic child sexual abuse, is also commissioned to deliver specialist support across the county, including therapeutic support, advocacy, counselling and Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs). Synergy offers a single point of contact for victims of abuse, ensuring help and advice can be found in a consistent and accessible way.



Essex Police has an important role in safeguarding victims, reducing vulnerability and tackling perpetrators. It solved 3.0% (98) fewer DA offences for the 12 months to March 2023 compared to the 12 months to March 2022 and solved 180 fewer offences in the three months to March 2023 compared to the three months to March 2022 (876 v. 696).

There was a 5.5% decrease (1,647 fewer) in DA offences and a 4.7% increase (141 more) in the number of DA offences solved for the 12 months to March 2023 compared to the 12 months to December 2019.



£503,000

in funding from
the Home Office

In the last year we successfully secured £503,000 in funding from the Home Office and invested this in support for survivors of sexual abuse and domestic violence in Essex. This means that we have been able to increase funding to organisations such as Synergy Rape Crisis Partnership, The Children’s Society, Wilderness Foundation and specialist domestic abuse charities such as Safe Steps, and Next Chapter.

The PFCC also contributed funding to services including £30,000 to the Community J9 Domestic Abuse Initiative which brings training to residents who are keen to recognise domestic abuse and learn how to respond to survivors.

Essex Police is continuing the programme of investment in dedicated officers in the Domestic Abuse Problem Solving Teams who work in collaboration with other partners to support high volume, repeat victims and tackle repeat perpetrators.

Following the tragic murder of Ashley Wadsworth, police reviewed how they use data to identify the highest risk perpetrators. Using extensive research by Essex analysts they developed the ‘Operation Puffin perpetrator cohort’, designed by employing known indicators of domestic homicides based upon both the risks posed by the perpetrator and the relationship. This means officers are now looking more at the type of behaviour which might indicate increased risk, including coercive and controlling behaviour, stalking and a history of violence.

The Claire’s Law process has also been reviewed and officers are being encouraged to utilise the ‘right to know’ aspect where appropriate. Partner agencies can also make applications. Under this review, consideration is being given to having an automatic referral made into the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS) for any partner or recent ex-partner of a high-risk offender identified through Operation Puffin.

A lot of work has been put into domestic abuse awareness campaigns including raising awareness for young people; recognising abusive behaviours and seeking support to change; older people’s awareness and support services; awareness of stalking behaviours and support services and increased community awareness through our J9 initiative.

Between August and October 2023 domestic abuse experts delivered training to over 1,200 Local Policing officers, who are first responders to calls of domestic abuse. The training focused on officer behaviours and initial interactions with DA victims, better identification of coercion and control, and



Deputy Chief Constable out on patrol as part of our ASB Hotspot Policing Pilot

9.1% decrease (2,815 fewer)

of recorded domestic
abuse offences

For the 12 months to March 2023 compared to the 12 months to March 2022.

preventative order training, with the outcome being an improved level and quality of the initial response helping the identification and prevention of DA.

We have also been working with partners around human trafficking, modern slavery and organised immigration crime. Together with Essex Police, Justice and Care and Essex Chambers of Commerce, we hosted the Exploited into Essex conference that brought together agencies, businesses and law enforcement from across the country with the overriding message that exploitation will not be tolerated in Essex.



OBSESSING. STALKING. HARASSING.

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REDUCING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS (VAWG)



We will not tolerate male violence, abuse and misogyny against women and girls in any form.

In Essex, VAWG offences reduced by **7% (2,777 fewer offences)**

In the 12 months to March 2023 compared to the 12 months to March 2022



A high volume of VAWG offences can be attributed to Stalking and Harassment which account for 40% of recorded offences. While this represents a serious challenge for police it is important that victims feel confident in coming forward and that Essex Police is aware of the level of crime that is happening across our communities.

However, there are many strands which policing cannot tackle alone such as education, the prevalence of VAWG in our communities, and the risks posed by offences committed on the internet. As a result, partnership engagement is key in tackling VAWG and several projects have been developed to promote collaborative working with partners including the Essex County Council VAWG Charter; Southend, Essex, and Thurrock Domestic Abuse Board (SETDAB); Essex Violence and Vulnerability Unit; and Multi Agency Public Protection (MAPPA) and Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) and the Operation Minerva and the Essex County Council VAWG Mapping Programme.

During 2022, the Minerva Home Office funded work began with an analysis of every neighbourhood in Essex, with Nottingham Trent University working with Essex Police, Essex County Council and Essex County Fire and Rescue Service. The project has so far resulted in the development of detailed local maps showing every hotspot road in the county where women are at increased risk of violence.


Minerva Zones have been shared with the Safer Essex Partnership and Community Safety Partnerships who are working with partners locally to put together bespoke plans to tackle the causes of violence against women and girls in those locations.

During the year we have also successfully secured £1.183m from the Home Office's Safer Streets Fund to make our streets safer, especially for women and girls.

Together with local match funding from Councils and wider partners we have been able to invest £2.002m in four projects across Essex where local communities have told us they feel unsafe. These areas follow the success of projects in the Bunny Walk area of Chelmsford and Grays Town Centre in Thurrock. Both areas benefited from significant funding through earlier rounds of this fund and have seen significant increases in local confidence as a result.

Ninefields Estate in Waltham Abbey, Witham Town Centre, the Greenstead area of Colchester and Colchester Town Centre will each receive funding for a range of activity to improve the physical environment, promote community involvement, and create safer spaces. This includes investment in



 Officers out on patrol

redesigning walkways, lighting, CCTV and activities to strengthen community engagement, including with schools, young people and businesses.

The Commissioner continues to invest in services to support victims, and we work hard across the county with our partner agencies to encourage survivors of domestic abuse and sexual violence to come forward, seek support and report abuse. This includes working with Synergy Essex and rape and sexual abuse specialist services.

Since 2016 the increase in recorded rape is stark and presents significant challenges to investigators trying to manage the sheer volume of cases. There has been a 153% increase in overall recorded rape from 2016 – 2021, a trend that continued in 2022. DA related rapes have also increased exponentially, a 244% growth from July 2016 to July 2022.

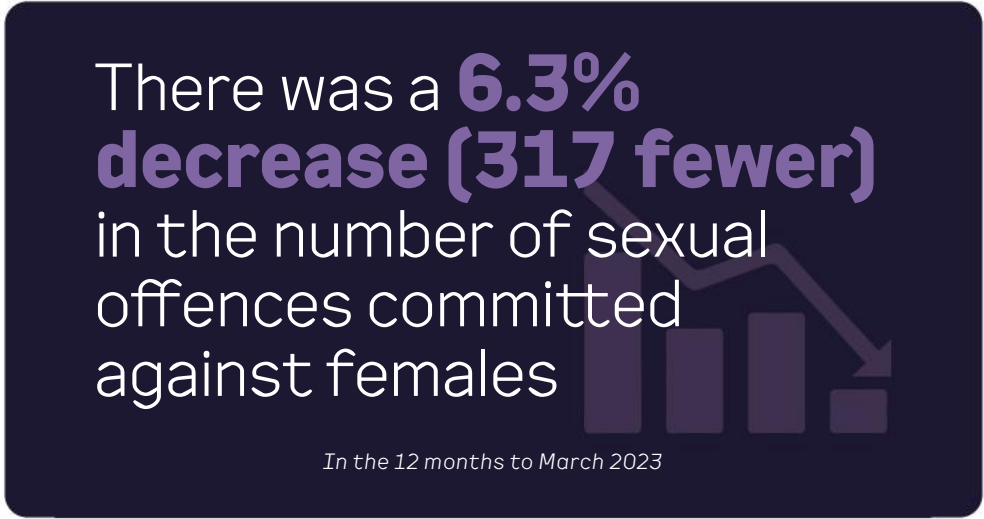
Despite these increases Essex continues to outperform other eastern region forces significantly in terms of the investigation length for rape investigations and the solved outcome figures. These measures place Essex fifth in the Most Similar Group (MSG) rankings. However, the investigation and prosecution of rape and sexual offences is an



area nationally that is undergoing significant scrutiny, and this is equally the case in Essex. Our current solved rates are still woefully low and much more work needs to be done both nationally and locally in Essex to drive further improvement.

There is some indication that positive progress is starting to be made. Essex experienced a 7.0% decrease (2,777 fewer) in the amount of Violence Against the Person (VAP) offences committed against females in the 12 months to March 2023 compared to the 12 months to March 2022. There was a 4.4% increase (1,544 more) in the number of VAP offences committed against females in the 12 months to March 2023 compared to the 12 months to December 2019.

There was a 6.3% decrease (317 fewer) in the number of sexual offences committed against females in the 12 months to March 2023 compared to the 12 months to March 2022, and a 22.8% increase (868 more) compared to the 12 months to December 2019. Essex Police solved six more of these offences in the 12 months to March 2023 compared to the 12 months to March 2022 and solved 95 more compared to the 12 months to December 2019. While more work is needed, the increase in the total number of cases solved is a positive step.



The four largest crime categories are Stalking and Harassment, Violence with Injury, Violence without Injury, and Public Order Offences. Since 2016 domestic abuse has consistently accounted for 45% - 50% of VAWG incidents.

Essex Police's reporting is significantly higher than other forces (bringing our overall solved rate down) due in part to the overall efficiency of the Essex Crime Registrars. As mentioned previously, the force is reviewing its recording approach for stalking and harassment offences to resolve any over-reporting. Essex Police has been graded as outstanding by the HMICFRS in respect of our crime recording accuracy and integrity.

Operation Soteria Bluestone is a national academic study funded by the Home Office looking at ways in which the police and the judiciary can improve, by taking a more victim focused approach, by police and the Crown Prosecution Service working better together and by introducing more victim focused ways to provide evidence in court. Essex has been involved from the start monitoring progress, findings and sharing learning.

Many of the recommendations from the project are already in place in Essex, so in many respects, Essex is ahead of the curve, particularly having long established specialist teams investigating these high harm offences, a trauma informed approach to dealing with victims and a solid working relationship with both Independent Sexual Violence Advisors and the Crown Prosecution Service.

However, we recognise there is still much to do in the VAWG arena and it will continue to need significant focus for the next few years.



IMPROVING SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME



Our objective is to recognise and prevent the harm caused to victims and protect those who are most at risk of becoming the victims of crime.

Over the last year we have allocated **over £5m** to support victims



This is a significant increase compared to the previous year when we allocated £2.336m and is a result of increased funding from the Ministry of Justice of £2.3m and additional funding from partners. Our investment in victims' services has been going up each year since 2016-2017 and reflects our growing efforts to provide the best possible level of support.

As well as specialist services, this funding is used to commission Victim Support which delivers the overarching support service for victims of crime throughout Essex. Through them we help victims have a more positive experience of the criminal justice system, enable them to feel equipped and empowered to move on independently of victim services and help them to have a 'voice' to express the way a crime has affected them.

The funding also pays for our Essex Restorative and Mediation Service. This service is delivered by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex's team and brings together people in conflict to give them opportunities to seek answers and understand what drove the crime or incident they were involved in and the impact it had. This restorative approach is designed to help both sides to move on with their

lives in a positive way. A 2022 independent report by WhyMe? suggested that Restorative Justice in Essex delivered benefits in excess of £500,000; reflecting a £12 benefit for every £1 invested.

Essex Police, as part of investigating a crime, has a duty to support victims under the Victims' Code of Practice. That support may be varied and will be determined by the needs of the victim and the complexity of the investigation. Essex Police continues to look to ways to provide greater support, with particular focus on maintaining victim engagement throughout the process. Its specialist teams provide a wide range of support. In addition, there has been recognition of the positive impact that IDVAs and ISVAs have had on maintaining victim engagement in the process. 19% more victims support criminal prosecutions where an ISVA is involved and, as a result, we have been able to invest more to increase the level of service available.

In 2022, the PFCC successfully applied for an additional £730,000 of funding from central government to bolster domestic abuse and sexual abuse services, including more funding for local IDVAs and ISVAs to support victims and survivors through the criminal justice process.

Essex's specialist sexual and domestic abuse support services continue to provide an excellent level of support to victims, with our specialist sexual abuse service reporting that, between December 2022 and the end of March 2023, 92% of those engaged in its community-based services felt more in control of their lives and 95% reported improved health and well-being. The single points of access for victims of domestic abuse and sexual abuse mean clearer and more consistent pathways of referral and support, meaning victims know where and how to access support and can expect the same level of service regardless of where in Essex they might live.

Post charge, the CPS and ISVA work together to carry out joint visits to victims who are at high risk of



disengaging in the criminal justice process. A great deal of the Witness Care work relates to overcoming hurdles to court attendance, whether this be arranging transport or providing information on the process to address concerns.

Essex Police has a good working relationship with support service providers across Essex and work together with them in support of victims of crime.

Essex experienced a 6.9% decrease (3,305 fewer) in the number of offences with a repeat victim for the 12 months to March 2023 (44,575 offences) compared to the 12 months to March 2022 (47,880 offences) and a 4.4% increase (1,871 more) compared to the 12 months to December 2019 (42,704 offences). Except for August 2022, the year-on-year change for repeat victimisation has decreased each month since March 2022.

The number of individual repeat victims decreased by 1.5% (336 fewer) for the 12 months to March 2023 (22,148 individual victims) compared to the 12 months to March 2022 (22,484 individual victims). There was an increase of 3.9% (841 more) compared to the 12 months to December 2019 (21,307 individual victims).

The average number of days taken to investigate high harm offences increased to 52.1 in March 2023 compared to 43.7 in March 2022 (8.4 days more). There was an increase of 7.9 days compared to December 2019 (44.2 days).

PROTECTING RURAL AND ISOLATED AREAS



Essex has a large rural community that makes a huge contribution to our county. We already work well with our rural communities, but we want to make an even bigger difference to their safety and security by helping them build greater resilience, prioritise the crime that matters to them, support victims and protect the vulnerable.

During the past year we have updated the Rural Crime Strategy, so it is relevant and reflective of the needs of communities in Essex. The focus is on preventing crime by building on the strength of rural communities to get crime down together. We have also listened to our rural communities and know they want a better flow of intelligence, more targeted enforcement, and even more visible policing as this helps them feel safe and reassured.

Through continued investment in tackling rural crime, and with Essex Police currently having one of the largest Rural Engagement Teams in the country, we have seen a reduction in types of rural crimes in 2022.

Rural crime decreased by 0.7% (159 fewer offences) in the 12 months to March 2023 compared to the 12 months to March 2022. During this period all crime decreased by 1.3%. Comparing this to the 12 months to December 2019 (the last figures available prior to the COVID pandemic) rural crime decreased by 9.2% (2,423 fewer offences) compared to all crime in Essex decreasing by 2.9%.

Essex Police solved 0.5% (-12) fewer rural crime offences for the 12 months to March 2023 compared to the 12 months to March 2022, and 15.4% fewer (a decrease of 470) compared to the 12 months to December 2019.

Over recent years Essex Police has been very successful in tackling hare coursing, working with regional forces to provide a coordinated and targeted approach. As a result of this, hare coursing is no longer the main type of wildlife incident recorded in Essex, following a statistically significant reduction in the 12 months to December 2022 versus the 12 months to December 2021. With 173 fewer incidents it is now third after trespass incidents and stray horse incidents.

The Rural Engagement Team works closely with traveller communities across Essex ensuring a positive and proactive approach is undertaken in tackling crime, protecting victims and supporting the vulnerable. Anti-social unauthorised encampments are dealt with robustly and as a result the number in Essex has continued to decrease year on year, dropping from 228 in 2018 to 60 in 2022 (a reduction of 168).

The Tri-Service Rural Community Officer pilot in the Dengie ran successfully up until March 2022 at

Rural crime decreased by
0.7% (159 fewer offences)

in the 12 months to March 2023 compared to the 12 months to March 2022.



which point it was extended following an evaluation showing the effectiveness of the scheme. The approach has now been expanded with a second Tri-Service Officer appointed in March 2023 in Uttlesford. Tri-Service Officers works with partner agencies such as parish councils and the National Farmers' Union, and put activities in place to keep people safe, reduce crime, raise the profile of all the services, and to promote health and wellbeing. The collaborative role on the Dengie has seen 25% more residents receive an at-home safe and well visit, previously carried out by the fire and rescue service.



+ Essex Police Rural Engagement Team

PREVENTING DOG THEFT



Though incidents of dog theft remain low in Essex, the prevention of dog theft is a key objective. Essex Police's Local Policing Support Unit takes ownership of the crime with the Rural Engagement Team taking responsibility for proactive work, investigation standards and community dog events.

Essex Police is now fully integrated into the National Pet Taskforce, effectively tackling crime through review of all investigations, introduction of a proactive ability to respond to intelligence, and joined up working with partners including Crime Stoppers, the RSPCA, and Dog Watch.

Six priorities were identified to tackle dog theft in Essex:

- Improve data recording by adding details of stolen animals, to allow improved searching and greater data accuracy.
- Ensure representation of Essex Police at the National Police Working Group.
- Ensure consistent media messaging in line with the national strategy.
- Consider implementation of preventative measures (DNA, UV marking) to reassure dog owners.
- Respond effectively to intelligence around illegal breeding.
- Work with Operation Opal to improve the national intelligence picture.

There were seven fewer dog thefts in Essex for the 12 months to March 2023 compared to the 12 months to March 2022, making 53 in total.

Significant work was undertaken in 2022 to promote the issue of dog theft via a new leaflet distributed to key partners such as vets, the Dogs Trust, the RSPCA, dog groomers, pet stores, and country parks to raise awareness of preventing dog theft.

We will continue to work with charities and partners to introduce campaigns and promotional activity to increase awareness of dog theft and promote prevention activity, so people know how to keep their dog safe.

There were **seven fewer dog thefts** in Essex

for the 12 months to March 2023 compared to the 12 months to March 2022, making 53 in total.



Police Dog at public engagement event

PREVENTING BUSINESS CRIME, FRAUD AND CYBER CRIME



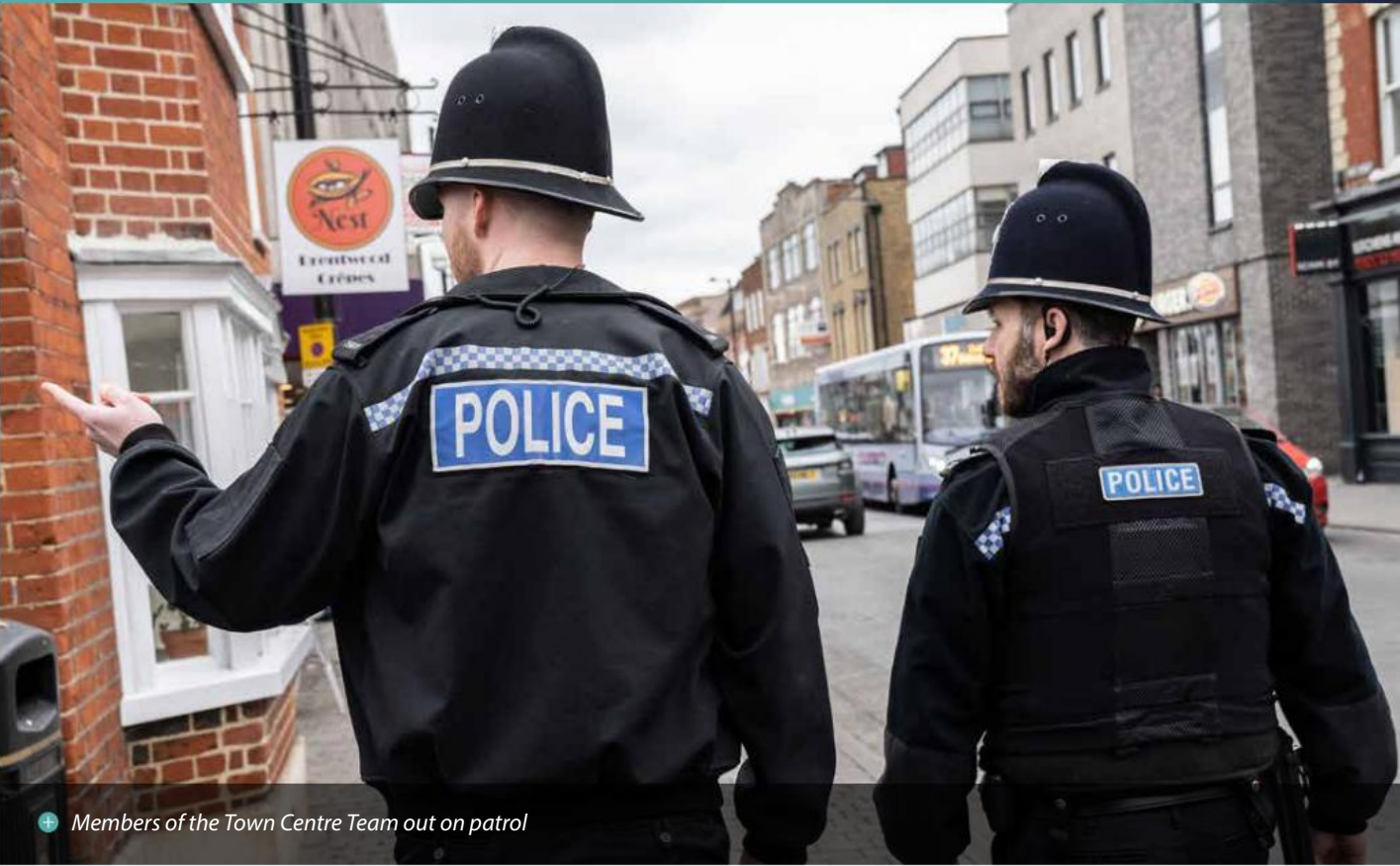
The trend for business crime was relatively stable until March 2020, when restrictions were introduced in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This resulted in large decreases in the number of offences recorded each month. Since April 2021, although offences have been increasing, they remain below levels seen prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

There was a 12.8% decrease (3,075 fewer) in the number of business crime offences and a 31.0% decrease (1,515 fewer) in the number of business crimes solved in the 12 months to March 2023 compared to the 12 months to December 2019.

Shoplifting accounts for approximately 47.2% of business crime and increased by 13.4% in 2022/23, although it has decreased compared to pre pandemic levels - (10,563 Mar 2020 v 9896 March 2023). In the past year the Business Crime Team has actively sought, and been successful in, obtaining criminal behaviour orders (CBO) against those who continue to commit crime against local businesses. A CBO is a set of conditions placed on an individual by a court, which will prevent the person from causing further harm against the business. The conditions could include banning the individual from entering a particular shop or area such as a town centre for a defined amount of time. If the

10.4% decrease in the number of fraud offences related to business crime

In the 12 months to March 2023 compared to the 12 months to March 2022.



Members of the Town Centre Team out on patrol

person breaches the order, it could result in a prison sentence. This has been successful in these cases as it is often a small number of people committing a large volume of crime so targeted, intelligence led tactics can have a big impact.

This equates to 38 fewer offences. There was also a 32.2% decrease in the 12 months to March 2023 compared to the 12 months to December 2019. This equates to 156 fewer offences.

In January 2023, the Essex Police Prevent and Protect Officer together with Security Awareness Special Interests Group (SASIG+) held a conference ‘combatting cyber fraud through collaboration’ which attracted speakers and delegates from around Essex and beyond and looked at the issue of cyber fraud.

The Prevent and Protect Officer also works with the business crime team to hold regular virtual business cyber clinics whereby businesses can get bespoke cyber protective advice. The officer also attends local business networking events and obtains referrals for the Eastern Cyber Resilience Centre, where they can get expert advice and services.

The Commissioner and Essex Police continue to work closely with Essex Chambers of Commerce through the Strategic Business Crime Board, which invites businesses from across Essex to have an input into how to tackle business crime in their areas. It also continues to support and engage with the Business Crime Team to share best practice and advice to help prevent businesses becoming a victim of crime.

IMPROVE SAFETY ON OUR ROADS



On average, five people are killed on our roads every day in England. Many more suffer life changing injuries. While there was a significant reduction in the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads leading up to the COVID 19 pandemic, since 2022 the numbers have increased as poor driving has increased. To tackle this, the Commissioner along with Essex Police and our partners in the Safer Essex Roads Partnership, have committed to ‘Vision Zero’ – an aspiration to achieve zero road deaths and serious injuries on the roads of Essex by 2040.

There was a 4.5% increase (38 more) in the number of those killed or seriously injured (KSI) in Essex for the 12 months to March 2023 compared to the 12 months to March 2022, with the rate of increase slowing more recently. The number of KSIs also increased by 67 in the 12 months to March 2023 compared to the 12 months to December 2019.

- 45 people died on Essex roads during 2022.
- Death and serious injuries have reduced by 52% between 2005 and 2021.
- 32% of collisions involving death and serious injury involve speed related factors.
- 46% of road deaths occur on rural roads.
- The annual cost of injuries in Essex sits at £205m. £104m Social Care, £19m Emergency response, £4m Police Investigation, lost output £65m, £12.5 property damage

During 2022, Essex Police refreshed its Roads Policing Strategy to align with the Vision Zero ambition and meeting the Police and Crime Plan priority to improve safety on our roads. It is underpinned by four pillars:

- Preventing harm and saving lives
- Tackling crime
- Driving technology and innovation
- Changing minds

The prevention work being carried out includes Operation Calla which is focused on young people and car enthusiasts and works through engaging with drivers by supporting legal driving and reducing anti-social behaviour associated with car meets. Sadly, motorcycle deaths and injuries in the county remain too high and Essex Police has been conducting dedicated patrols along known motorcycle routes with the aim of reducing collisions involving motorcycles.

Our partners also work together on designated days across the county to provide education, and enforcement if required, around poor driving. Each partner has differing responsibilities which, when combined, allow for collaborative focus on road safety throughout Essex.

Throughout the past year, better use of technology is being developed through initiatives such as improving Essex Police public contact systems - so people can report poor driving more easily, enhancing investigations, and streamlining enforcement and offence processing as well as working with partners on further innovation.

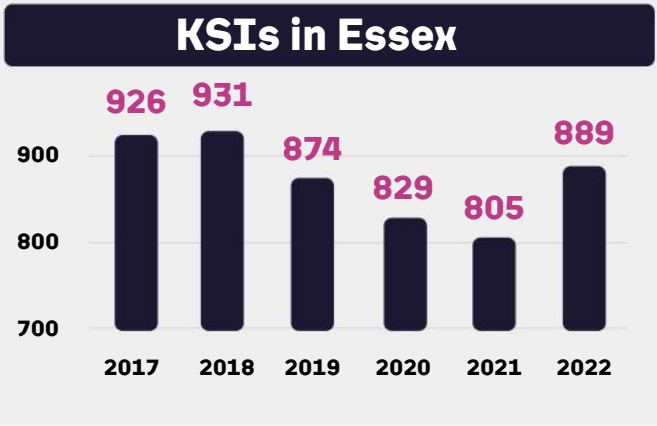
Engagement activity has been taking a broader look at how to reduce people killed and seriously injured by changing driver attitudes through education courses such as the National Driver Offender Retraining Courses and influencing and educating members of the public through social media posts. During 2022/23 Essex Roads Policing Unit's Twitter account had 23k followers and growing.

Death and serious injuries have reduced by **52%** between 2005 and 2021.



There was a 12.1% decrease (305 fewer offences) in drink / drug driving offences for the 12 months to March 2023 compared to the 12 months to March 2022. There was a 15.5% decrease (239 fewer offences) in drink driving and a 6.7% decrease (66 fewer offences) in drug driving. There was also a 33.1% decrease (1,097 fewer offences) in drink / drug driving offences for the 12 months to March 2023 compared to the 12 months to December 2019. Of these offences, there was an 11.3% decrease (166 fewer offences) in drink driving and a 50.5% decrease (931 fewer offences) in drug driving. All these offence types are primarily driven by police proactivity in relation to road safety.

The county is also benefiting from major road network infrastructure projects, such as the A12 upgrade, which includes the very latest roadside technology to manage and enforce critical road traffic offences, helping towards casualty reduction.



ENCOURAGING VOLUNTEERS AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT



Page 67 of 97

We know that encouraging more members of our communities to come forward as volunteers can help towards preventing crime and we are extremely proud of and grateful for those who gave up their valuable time over the year to help support our communities.

Essex Police provides many volunteering opportunities, including serving communities as a Special Constable, providing crime prevention advice to neighbours as an Active Citizen or supporting young people as part of the Volunteer Police Cadets scheme. The Commissioner also has volunteer schemes including Essex Restorative Justice Mediators, Independent Custody Visitors and volunteers who work with the Essex Police dog unit to check on the welfare of police dogs.

Within Essex Police, the Citizens in Policing and the Special Constabulary play an integral part in supporting the force. In 2022, the Local Policing Support Unit (LPSU) introduced a Strategic Co-ordination Group which proactively supports the mobilisation of all Special Constables, Police Support Volunteers, Active Citizens, Accredited Persons and, where appropriate, our Volunteer Police Cadets, with local operations and initiatives.

Essex Watch Liaison Officers continue to work with Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) to offer crime and fraud prevention advice. During 2022/23 the Essex Watch scheme has continued to grow its members including an increase in Dog Watch, Farm and Rural Watch and Heritage Watch volunteers, all helping to keep communities safer. The key positives of the watch schemes are that they are tailored to specific individuals that are linked by their work, activities or interests. For example, Dog Watch brings together individual dog walkers or owners who regularly walk their dogs in areas they know and where they are

likely to spot suspicious or unusual activity in that area, whereas Business Watch is aimed at businesses within a defined location so that each business can take part in the overall security of that area.

Within Essex Police, the Citizens in Policing and the Special Constabulary play an integral part in supporting the force



The Special Constabulary remains an important source of recruits into the regular constabulary, and this has contributed to the decline in Specials over the year. The Special Constabulary headcount is currently 317 (as of March 2023). This is down 30.8% (141 fewer) compared to March 2022. Compared to the 12 months to December 2019 this is down 38.9% (202 fewer). The pandemic also saw a significant change, as when restrictions lifted and the cost of living changed many Special Constables were faced with difficult decisions around change of lifestyle, cost of living and personal circumstances which had an impact on their volunteering hours and time to support Essex Police. While our Special Constabulary remains the second largest, after the Met, in the country the challenges of maintaining and rebuilding the size and strength of this important part of the force is significant. However, Essex Police and the Commissioner continue actively to promote the Specials through campaigns such as 'My Other Life' which looks to attract volunteers from across a range of communities.

Encouraging our young people to become part of our volunteer network also continues with Essex Police Volunteer Cadets scheme. Currently there are 220 Volunteer Police Cadets and 86 Volunteer Cadet Leaders across 13 Cadet Units across the

county. The cadets also are part of the Strategic Co-ordination Group and support their Local Community Policing Teams with events.

The PFCC also runs volunteer schemes including the Independent Custody Visiting Scheme which has 15 active members and the Animal Welfare Scheme that has 3 active members. In the past year the scheme manager implemented a new ICV induction training programme designed to equip volunteers to carry out their roles effectively and ensure detainees' rights and entitlements are being adhered to in police custody suites across Essex. The scheme is expanding its volunteer base with four new ICVs joining in 2022, and to support them in their new roles, the scheme has additionally set up a mentor scheme for new volunteers with experienced ICVs.

The Essex Restorative and Mediation Service (ERMS) also sits within the PFCC's remit and works with people who have been involved in conflict, including criminal offences. In June 2022 the scheme received sign off to mediate between domestic abuse survivors and their perpetrators, something that it had not covered before, and which was a huge vote of confidence in the proven efficacy of the scheme. There are currently 37 active ERMS volunteers.



Essex Citizen and Community Support Officer out on patrol

SUPPORTING OUR OFFICERS AND STAFF



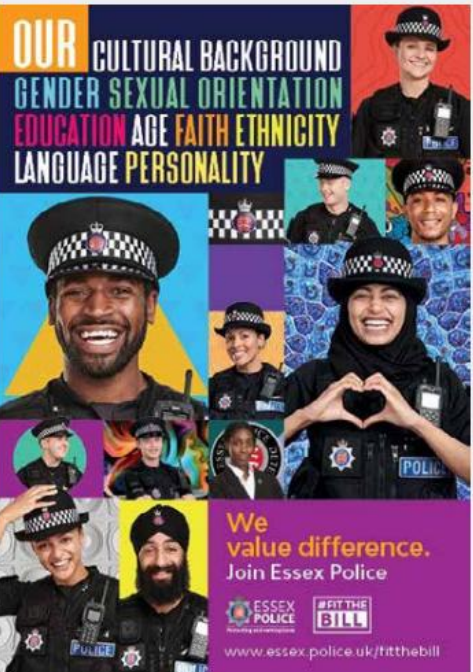
Despite several high-profile police misconduct cases nationally, confidence in police in Essex remains high. However, the Chief Constable and the Commissioner fully acknowledge the importance of upholding and maintaining a framework which sets the standards and behaviours of officers and staff through strategies such as the Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Strategy and the Professionalism Strategy.

Essex Police has strong marketing and media campaigns through #Fit the Bill and #We Value Difference, supporting a continuous programme of outreach and recruitment work with the aim of securing the very best talent and maximising diversity, equality and inclusion. In the 12 months to March 2023, 423 new officers took their oaths of allegiance and started their Essex Police careers. The new officers pledged their commitment to police with the consent of every community at a time when the force is welcoming more new colleagues from a range of different backgrounds.

Of the 2017 applications to March 2023, a total of 272 were from minorities. By March 2023 the officer ethnic minority position had increased to 4.10% (as a proportion of all officers). This was measured against the economically active population in Essex from the 2011 Census Data which is 6.56%. The number of females applying to become police officers remains consistently around 40%. By March 2023 the number of female officers represented 37.09%, the highest ever position, as a proportion of all officers.

Supporting and investing in staff welfare continues, with the force receiving several awards from external bodies for the innovative services it provides over the year. It has also embedded many of the processes that the national Police Covenant will seek to introduce nationally. The Police Covenant is a government-led initiative which aims to ensure that officers, staff, volunteers and their families are not disadvantaged as a result of their service in the police.

Officers being assaulted in the line of duty is totally unacceptable and both the Chief Constable and the Commissioner have pushed for the doubling of sentences for assaults on Emergency Service Workers. As of 28th June 2022, the maximum impossible prison term for offences of common assault or battery committed against an emergency worker was doubled from 12 months to 24 months.



+ Image caption



+ Image caption



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INCREASING COLLABORATION



We aim to build a culture of collaboration and continue to unlock resources to reinvest into our emergency services in Essex. Through our Emergency Services Collaboration we have secured benefits (Net Present Value) over 10 years of over £14m. This is against a target benefit of £15.4m by 2027. These savings are being reinvested in the services to help provide a more efficient and effective service and ultimately provide better provision to the people of Essex.

Over the year significant projects have been undertaken through this collaboration. The decision was taken during the year to build a new police station in Harwich on the current site of the Dovercourt Fire and Rescue Service. Not only will this provide an efficient use of resources, it will also help promote operational collaboration between the teams at a local level. While the planning process for this is being undertaken, capital funding has been allocated with the 2023-2024 budget with construction expected to start in January 2024.

Following the successful completion of a Tri-Service Rural Community Prevention Officer, all three services (Essex Police, Essex County Fire and Rescue Service and the East of England Ambulance Service) have agreed to extend the programme. A dedicated Tri-Service Rural Community Prevention Officer has been recruited to work in the Uttlesford area to see how well the initiative can be applied in other areas. The first pilot took place in the Dengie area of Maldon and had a significant impact on the level of prevention work undertaken by each of the services. This visible, coordination role is having a positive impact and a further role was added in April 2023 to cover Uttlesford.

Working alongside our Community Safety Partnerships and academic partners the Board has also developed a hot-spot mapping tool, which identifies hyper-local 'Minerva zones' which are more vulnerable to VAWG offences. These zones have been shared with Community Safety Partnerships which are in the process of identifying and implementing prevention initiatives to proactively address potential activity.

Significant work has also been undertaken in addressing the recommendations from the inquiry into the Manchester Arena Bombing, the development of a joint fleet workshop and a coordinated approach to dealing with new developments in Essex. The work on new developments has already resulted in Essex emergency services being one of the few areas to be included in the local design guides and is continuing to build capacity and influence which is helping to deliver a safer, lower risk, built environment.

The Joint Education Team, which consists of six members and is funded by both Essex Police and Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, has proven to be very effective. The team provide a catalogue of safety education programmes for young people covering home safety, cyber safety, arson and hoax call prevention, knife crime prevention, gangs awareness, road safety, hate crime prevention, anti-social behaviour prevention and firework safety. Since the early stages of the collaboration, the number of young people engaged by these teams has grown by 55% while also delivering benefits of £1,582,214 (Net Present Value) over 10 years.

In 2022-23 the PFCC also received an update report on the Collapsed Behind Closed Doors project, which means medical professionals can reach those in need of emergency attention quicker, reducing the likelihood of serious injury. As well as improving the speed of this response, the project has profiled cost savings of around £600,000 over a 10-year period.



Police Community Support Officer and an officer out on patrol

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/scrutiny/essex-police-performance

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

As at March 2023 three of the twelve PFCC priorities are graded good by Essex Police (Reducing drug driven violence, Protecting Vulnerable People and Breaking the Cycle of Domestic Abuse and Dog Theft), seven are rated adequate and two require improvement (Improving Support for Victims of Crime and Improving Safety on our Roads).

FURTHER INVESTMENT IN CRIME PREVENTION	REDUCING DRUG DRIVEN VIOLENCE
PROTECTING VULNERABLE PEOPLE AND BREAKING THE CYCLE OF DOMESTIC ABUSE	PREVENTING BUSINESS CRIME, FRAUD AND CYBER CRIME
REDUCING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS (VAWG)	IMPROVE SAFETY ON OUR ROADS
IMPROVING SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME	ENCOURAGING VOLUNTEERS AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT
PROTECTING RURAL AND ISOLATED AREAS	SUPPORTING OUR OFFICERS AND STAFF
PREVENTING DOG THEFT	INCREASING COLLABORATION

PRIORITY 1
FURTHER
INVESTMENT IN
CRIME PREVENTION

PRIORITY 2
REDUCING DRUG
DRIVEN VIOLENCE

PRIORITY 3
PROTECTING
VULNERABLE PEOPLE
AND BREAKING THE
CYCLE OF DOMESTIC
ABUSE

Police and Crime Plan Priorities	Police Priority Indicators	12 months to Dec 2019	12 months to Mar 2022	12 months to Mar 2023	Number Difference 2022/23	% Difference 2022/23	Direction of Travel 2022/23
PRIORITY 1 FURTHER INVESTMENT IN CRIME PREVENTION	Number of all crime offences	168,218	165,518	163,285	-2,233	-1.3	Improving
	Harm (Crime Severity) Score - All Crime	13.8	14.1	14.5	0.4	-	Deteriorating
	Number of homicides	61	26	15	-11	-42.3	Improving
	Number of Anti-Social Behaviour incidents	41,975	30,674	21,056	-9,618	-31.4	Improving
	Number of FCR 101 calls received	293,049	257,603	229,895	-27,708	-10.8	Improving
	Number of Resolution Centre calls received	107,347	86,852	86,846	-6	0.0	Improving
	Number of online reports	24,468	28,879	36,006	7,127	24.7	Improving
	Percentage of FCR 101 Calls Abandoned	34.0	12.0	37.5	25.5	-	Deteriorating
	Percentage of Resolution Centre Calls Abandoned	0.2	15.5	17.7	2.1	-	Deteriorating
	FCR 101 Average wait time (mm:ss)	07:00	02:52	12:04	09:12	-	Deteriorating
	Resolution Centre Average wait time (mm:ss)	14:52	11:03	17:06	06:03	-	Deteriorating
	Percentage of people who have confidence in policing in Essex (internal survey)	64.7	80.1	75.0	-5.1	-	Deteriorating
	Confidence Interval	1.1	0.9	1.0			
PRIORITY 2 REDUCING DRUG DRIVEN VIOLENCE	Number of drug related homicides	10	7	3	-4	-	Improving
	Number of Violence with Injury offences	15,360	15,706	15,823	117	0.7	Deteriorating
	Number of knife-enabled crime offences	1,638	1,634	1,622	-12	-0.7	Improving
	Number of Organised Criminal Group disruptions	99	336	421	85	25.3	Improving
	Percentage of people who have confidence that the policing response to drug crime is improving (internal survey)	-	-	59.8	-	-	-
	Confidence Interval			1.2			
PRIORITY 3 PROTECTING VULNERABLE PEOPLE AND BREAKING THE CYCLE OF DOMESTIC ABUSE	Number of domestic abuse offences	29,726	30,894	28,079	-2,815	-9.1	Improving
	Number of domestic abuse offences solved	3,005	3,244	3,146	-98	-3.0	Deteriorating
	Repeat victims of DA	20,558	21,182	18,391	-2,791	-13.2	Improving
	Number of child abuse offences	5,259	6,391	6,050	-341	-5.3	Improving
	Number of child abuse offences solved	275	420	451	31	7.4	Improving
	NRM referrals (modern slavery)	98	170	248	78	45.9	Improving

PRIORITY 3
(continued)

PRIORITY 4
REDUCING VIOLENCE
AGAINST WOMEN AND
GIRLS

PRIORITY 5
IMPROVING
SUPPORT FOR
VICTIMS OF CRIME

Police and Crime Plan Priorities	Police Priority Indicators	12 months to Dec 2019	12 months to Mar 2022	12 months to Mar 2023	Number Difference 2022/23	% Difference 2022/23	Direction of Travel 2022/23
PRIORITY 3 (continued)	Number of Domestic Violence Protection Notices	242	273	163	-110	-40.3	Deteriorating
	Number of Domestic Violence Protection Orders	242	252	144	-108	-42.9	Deteriorating
	Percentage of people who have confidence that the policing response to protecting children and vulnerable people is improving (internal survey)	83.2	86.3	79.6	-6.7	-	Deteriorating
	Confidence Interval	1.0	0.9	1.0			
PRIORITY 4 REDUCING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS	Number of violence against the person (including Stalking & Harassment offences) against females	35,418	39,739	36,962	-2,777	-7.0	Improving
	Number of sexual offences against females	3,811	4,996	4,679	-317	-6.3	Improving
	Number of sexual offences against females solved9	203	292	298	6	2.1	Improving
	Percentage of females who feel safe walking alone in their area after dark (internal survey)	-	-	43.5	-	-	-
	Confidence Interval			1.5	-		
PRIORITY 5 IMPROVING SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME	Number of offences with a repeat victim	42,704	47,880	44,575	-3,305	-6.9	Improving
	Average days taken to investigate High Harm offences	44.2	43.7	52.1	8.4	-	Deteriorating
	Number of referrals to Victim Support	41,068	28,601	27,983	-618	-2.2	Improving
	Percentage of victims of crime who have confidence in policing in Essex (internal survey) Victims	52.7	61.0	61.0	0.0	-	Stable
	Confidence Interval	3.5	3.5	3.0			
	Percentage of victims of crime who have confidence in policing in Essex (internal survey) Non-Victims	66.1	82.1	77.1	-5.0	-	Deteriorating
	Confidence Interval	1.1	0.9	1.0			
	Percentage disparity between victims and non-victims	13.4	21.1	16.1	-5.0	-	Improving

PRIORITY 6
PROTECTING RURAL
AND ISOLATED AREAS

Police and Crime Plan Priorities	Police Priority Indicators	12 months to Dec 2019	12 months to Mar 2022	12 months to Mar 2023	Number Difference 2022/23	% Difference 2022/23	Direction of Travel 2022/23
	Number of rural crime offences	26,459	24,195	24,036	-159	-0.7	Improving
	Number of rural crime offences solved	3,047	2,589	2,577	-12	-0.5	Deteriorating
	Harm (Crime Severity) Score for Rural Crime	8.7	8.8	8.8	0.0	-	Stable
	Percentage of people who have confidence in policing of rural areas in Essex (internal survey)	64.2	82.9	77.4	-5.5	-	Deteriorating
	Confidence Interval	2.1	1.7	1.9			

PRIORITY 7
PEVENTING DOG
THEFT

	Number of dog thefts	57	60	53	-7	-	Improving
	Number of dog thefts solved	2	2	2	0	-	Stable
	Percentage of people who have confidence that the policing response to dog theft is improving (internal survey)	-	-	63.3	-	-	-
	Confidence Interval			1.4			

PRIORITY 8
REDUCING BUSINESS
CRIME, FRAUD AND
CYBER CRIME

	Number of business crime offences	24,034	18,810	20,959	2,149	11.4	Deteriorating
	Number of business crime offences solved	4,891	2,952	3,376	424	14.4	Improving
	Number of fraud offences related to business crime	485	367	329	-38	-10.4	Improving
	Total number of fraud offences	2,076	1,462	1,931	469	32.1	Deteriorating
	Percentage of people who have confidence that the policing response to tackling cyber crime is improving (internal survey)	-	-	50.4	-	-	-
	Confidence Interval	-		1.7			

PRIORITY 9
IMPROVING SAFETY
ON OUR ROADS

	All people killed or seriously injured (KSI) in road collisions	823	852	890	38	4.5	Deteriorating
	Number of driving under the influence of drink and/or drugs on Essex roads	3,312	2,520	2,215	-305	-12.1	Deteriorating
	Failure to provide offences	399	365	306	-59	-16.2	Deteriorating
	Number of driving related mobile phone crime on Essex roads	2,269	475	1,635	1,160	244.2	Deteriorating
	Percentage of people who have confidence that the policing response to policing the roads is improving (internal survey)	68.2	63.9	66.9	3.0	-	Stable
	Confidence Interval	1.1	1.1	1.1			

PRIORITY 10
ENCOURAGING
VOLUNTEERS
AND COMMUNITY
SUPPORT

Police and Crime Plan Priorities	Police Priority Indicators	12 months to Dec 2019	12 months to Mar 2022	12 months to Mar 2023	Number Difference 2022/23	% Difference 2022/23	Direction of Travel 2022/23
	Number of Specials	519	458	317	-141	-30.8	Deteriorating
	Number of Police Support Volunteers	117	99	99	0	0.0	Stable
	Number of Active Citizens	60	56	56	0	0.0	Stable
	Number of Volunteer Police Cadets	296	221	220	-1	-0.5	Deteriorating
	Number of Volunteer Cadet Leaders	90	87	86	-1	-1.1	Deteriorating
	Number of Cadet Units	10	13	13	0	0.0	Stable
	Number of Neighbourhood Watch - Co-ordinators	-	-	2,343	-	-	
	Number of Neighbourhood Watch - Members	-	-	79,449	-	-	
	Percentage of people who feel there are good opportunities for those who want to volunteer to assist policing and reduce crime in Essex (internal survey)	-	-	52.5	-	-	-
	Confidence Interval			1.1			

PRIORITY 11
SUPPORTING OUR
OFFICERS
AND STAFF

	Ethnic Minority employees: percentage of total workforce	3.53	4.36	4.11	-0.25	-	Deteriorating
	Vacancies (Full Time Employee): Officers	-21.07	17.00	-11.87	-29	-169.8	Deteriorating
	Vacancies (Full Time Employee): Staff	-204.13	-165.75	-284.03	-118	71.4	Deteriorating
	Vacancies (Full Time Employee): PCSO	-0.91	-9.19	-8.43	1	-8.2	Improving

PRIORITY 12
INCREASING
COLLABORATION

	School Visits	-	-	361	-	-	-
	Programmes Delivered	-	-	1,347	-	-	-
	Audience Numbers	-	-	122,599	-	-	-

ORGANISATIONAL OVERVIEW

CURRENT STRUCTURE

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 re-elected again in May 2021.

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). Jane Gardner is the Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner. The governance arrangements of the PFCC and Chief Constable are included in the joint Annual Governance Statement.

THE ROLE OF THE PFCC

The PFCC is directly elected by the public and has a statutory duty to hold the police to account on their behalf for the delivery and performance of the police service in Essex. 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 is responsible for setting the strategic direction and objectives of the force through the Police and Crime Plan, setting an annual budget and precept, monitoring financial outcomes and 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 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 is responsible for and accountable to the PFCC for the delivery of efficient and effective policing and the management of resources and expenditure by the police force.

He remains operationally independent in the service of the communities of Essex. 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. He has day to day responsibility for the financial management of the force within the framework of the agreed budget allocation and levels of authorisation issued by the PFCC.

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

Essex Police's Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Strategy 2020-2025 recognises that there is a unique life-enhancing power in genuine equality, greater diversity and dignity for all. One of the objectives within this strategy is to attract, recruit, progress and retain a more diverse workforce that better reflects our communities to improve confidence in Essex Police. In 2021, Essex Police continued with the #FitTheBill police officer recruitment campaign, 'We Value Difference', originally launched in 2020, to attract more diversity into the force. Nationally, policing struggles to attract people who are black, Asian, minority ethnic, LGBTQ, female or who declare other protected characteristics. The 'We Value Difference' campaign tackles diversity and inclusion in its entirety and shows that it is our values (Transparency, Impartiality, Integrity and Public Service) which define us and that these values are what policing is most interested in.

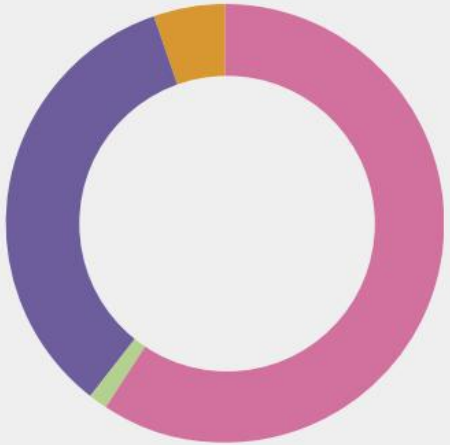
The campaign is changing the make-up of the force and making it more representative of the communities it services. Whilst application numbers for police officers slowed in 2022/23 compared to previous years, ethnic minority and female proportions have remained strong. The officer ethnic minority position was 4.11% (as a proportion of all officers) as at 31st March 2023 compared to 4.36% a year earlier and female officers represented 37.09% as at 31st March 2023 compared to 35.84% on 31st March 2022.

During 2022/23 our police officer strength increased by 171 full-time equivalents (FTE) to 3,743.

The chart below shows the make-up of the workforce for the group as at 31st March 2023



Essex Police's Equality Diversity and Inclusion Strategy



Our Workforce - FTEs at 31st March 2023

- Police Officers - **3743**
- PCSOs - **94**
- Police Staff - **2146**
- Specials (headcount) - **327**

Essex Police has seen a welcome but rapid period of growth over the last few years as a result of the government's ambition to recruit an additional 20,000 police officers nationally. In 2022/23 the police officer establishment grew by 200 additional officers, 180 of which were funded by the national uplift programme and 20 by an increase in precept. At an officer establishment of 3,755 Essex Police is the biggest it has ever been enabling the force to be more effective and efficient. 2022/23 was the final year of the government's uplift programme and moving into 2023/24 the focus is on investment to consolidate the growth and continue the positive progress already made in protecting and serving the people of Essex. Priorities are now shifting to developing the capabilities of the workforce as well as ensuring that there is an effective recruitment pipeline and focus on retention and progression to provide the best service to the public.

In addition to making the most of our own workforce, partnership working and collaboration permeates throughout the force and is fully embedded within both force business planning and delivering services. The force uses a wide variety of different models and approaches to maximise the benefits working in partnership brings. The force collaborates with other forces at a national level, regional and local level and has joint operational and support directorates with Kent Police to maximise efficiency and effectiveness.

FUTURE TRENDS AND RISKS

TRENDS IN CRIME AND THE FORCE'S LONG-TERM VISION

Despite there being a high demand for policing services, due to both the volume of crime and incidents, and their severity and increasing complexity, in the year to 31st March 2023 there has been a 1.3% decrease with 163,285 offences recorded compared to 165,518 in the previous 12 month period to 31st March 2022.

Prevention remains a key focus of the force building on investment already made during 2019/20 to 2022/23 to strengthen activity to tackle the issues causing the most harm. The force will continue working with partners to deliver against a Crime Prevention Strategy and whole system approach to enable the force to optimise its investment. The Force Management Statement (FMS) aligns existing resources (both financial and people) to unlock additional capacity, capabilities and potential to prevent crime.

Despite the force growing, with its allocation of the additional 20,000 officers nationally and investment from increases in council tax, Essex Police has a good track record of delivering cash and efficiency savings to maximise the benefit out of every penny. In 2022/23 £4.6m savings were delivered with £3.8m of these recurring annually.

CURRENT AND EMERGING RISKS AND MITIGATION

The three-year comprehensive spending review has provided some certainty over Home Office funding up to 2024/25 which will make it easier to consider demand pressures compared to future funding levels. One of the challenges the force faces is that it is the second lowest funded force nationally (funding from grants and council tax), and the ninth lowest in receipt of government grant per head of population. It also has the lowest spend per head of population.

The detrimental impact of COVID-19 on government finances along with significant increases in inflation over the last year, driven by both domestic and global factors, has impacted the costs of supplies and services, and this is resulting in significant funding challenges to Essex Police and partners with the potential withdrawal of non-statutory services and these challenges are likely to impact public services for some years to come.

The mitigation to these funding challenges will be the continuation of the work to review services and drive out efficiencies and cashable savings including deliver of an ambitious savings programme for 2023/24 of £12.212m.

In addition to the risks around future funding and increasing costs of services, the following are strategic risks that the force and the PFCC is currently facing which are likely or almost certain to have a major impact:

- Operation Hazel Cost not fully funded by Home Office – Costs for Operation Hazel (the Essex Police response to the Just Stop Oil protestor activity) total £5.584m with £4.003m funded by the Home Office. £1.584m remains unfunded impacting on financial resilience due to the need to draw on reserves which will need to be replenished.
- Prevention of business crime, fraud and cyber crime – Levels of fraud and exploitation, especially of vulnerable people within the community continues to grow, increases in levels of unreported criminality and the business community suffering financially leading to lower levels of economic activity across Essex and increased deprivation and levels of crime.
- Protecting vulnerable people and breaking the cycle of domestic abuse and reduction in violence against women and girls – A risk of increase in harm to victims with the potential for more domestic homicides or serious sexual assaults. Priority may not be realised due to various potential issues including conflicting priorities against police budgets

Strategic risks and associated mitigating actions are reviewed regularly by the force, the PFCC and Joint Audit Committee.

Page 76 of 97

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.

- 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.



ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT SUMMARY

The PFCC and Chief Constable produce an Annual Governance Statement which is published in full at **www.essex.pfcc.police.uk**. Below is a summary of the governance arrangements in place and the current governance issues being addressed.

Governance Framework

The governance framework comprises the systems and processes, and culture and values by which the work of the PFCC is directed and controlled and the activities through which the Commissioner accounts to and engages with the community. It enables the PFCC to monitor the achievement of their Police and Crime Plan and to consider whether these objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost effective services, including achieving value for money.

Seven core principles of good governance:

- ✓ Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law.
- ✓ Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.
- ✓ Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits.
- ✓ Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes.
- ✓ Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it.
- ✓ Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management.
- ✓ Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability.

Governance Structure

Police, Fire and Crime Panel

- Scrutinise the Police and Crime Plan and Annual Report
- Scrutinise senior appointments
- Review the Council Tax precept
- Hear certain complaints against the PFCC and Deputy PFCC
- Confirm the appointment of a new Chief Constable or Chief Fire Office

PFCC
POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME
COMMISSIONER FOR ESSEX



Roger Hirst

- Maintenance of Essex Police
- Ensure it is effective and efficient
- Complies with law and proper standards
- Public money is safeguarded
- Secure continuous improvement

**ESSEX
POLICE**
Protecting and serving Essex



Ben-Julian Harrington

Chief Constable

- Maintains the King's Peace
- Direction and control of the force's officers and staff
- Responsible for supporting the PFCC in the delivery of the Police and Crime Plan

HMICFRS

- His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) is responsible for carrying out inspections of police forces in England and Wales.

Performance and Resource Board

- Financial and performance monitoring

Strategic Board

- Strategic governance, oversight of Essex Police's strategic transformation programme, Medium Term Financial Strategy and capital programme.
- Primary adviser to the PFCC and Chief Constable in respect of strategic decisions

Joint Audit Committee

- Advise the PFCC and the Chief Constable according to good governance principles
- Adopt appropriate risk management arrangements

Significant governance issues 2022-23

Within the Annual Governance Statement significant issues are addressed and progress against last years significant issues are reported on. For the reported year the following significant issues have been identified.



Demand Management



Review of Police Funding Formula



Public confidence and victim satisfaction



Blue light collaboration



Devolution

STRATEGIC POLICING REQUIREMENTS

The Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR) sets out those threats which, in the Home Secretary's view, are the biggest threat to public safety and must be given due regard by PFCCs when issuing or varying Police and Crime Plans. It supports PFCCs as well as Chief Constables to plan, prepare and respond to these threats by clearly linking the local response to the national, highlighting the capabilities and partnerships that policing needs to ensure it can fulfil its national responsibilities.

A revised version of the SPR was published in February 2023 which provided strengthened detail around the action required from policing at the local and regional level to the critical national threats. The 2023 SPR sets out seven identified national threats.

These are as follows: Serious and Organised Crime (SOC); Terrorism; Cyber; Child Sexual Abuse; Public Disorder and Civil Emergencies. These remain from the 2015 version with the addition in 2023 of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), reflecting the threat it presents to public safety and confidence.

Given this annual report is for the year April 2022 to March 2023, it will not respond in detail to the revised SPR due to the timing of its publication. However, as Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, I am confident I have given due regard to the six threat areas identified in the previous SPR in my Police and Crime Plan and in my role holding my Chief Constable to account. VAWG, while not previously contained in the SPR, is a key priority in my Police and Crime Plan 2021-24 and has been included within my scrutiny programme.

More information about the scrutiny of these issues is available on my website at www.essex.pfcc.police.uk





2024/25 Budget

Agenda Item 7

Reference number: EPFCP/25/23

Report title: 2024/25 Budget	
Report to: Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel	
Report author: Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex	
Date: 28 September 2023	For: Noting and comment
Enquiries to: Janet Perry, Chief Financial Officer, and Strategic Head of Performance & Resources, PFCC E-mail: janet.perry@essex.police.uk	
County Divisions affected: All Essex	

1. Purpose of Report

This report lays out the background issues, the current assumptions, and the challenges in setting the 2024/25 budgets for both Essex Police and Essex Fire and Rescue Service.

2. Recommendations

To note the background issues, the current assumptions, and challenges, in setting the 2024/25 budgets for Essex Police and Essex Fire and Rescue Service

3. Context

- 3.1. The 2024/25 budgets for Essex Police and Essex Fire and Rescue Service are being set against the backdrop of a challenging economic environment, with the continuation of high inflation, rising interest rates, and the likelihood of a recession increasing.

4. Essex Police - Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

- 4.1. The Essex Police MTFS that was presented to the Police, Fire and Crime Panel in February 2023 showed the following position as laid out in figure 1 below:

2024/25 Budget

Figure 1 Essex Police MTFs at February 2023

Actual / Forecast			Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023/24 to 2027/28						
2020/21	2021/22	2022/23		2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	5 Year Total
£m	£m	£m		£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
312.8	330.5	365.7	Net budget requirement (before appropriations to/from reserves)	377.9	382.9	392.3	400.9	409.0	1,963.1
6.7	2.7	(9.8)	Net appropriations to/(from) reserves	(3.3)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	(3.3)
319.5	333.2	355.9	Net budget requirement (after appropriations to/from reserves and before savings and efficiencies)	374.6	382.9	392.3	400.9	409.0	1,959.7
(4.8)	(2.9)	(3.7)	Savings and efficiencies (cashable)	(10.9)	(3.0)	(3.0)	(3.0)	(3.0)	(22.9)
314.7	330.3	352.2	Net budget requirement (after appropriations to/from reserves and savings and efficiencies)	363.6	379.9	389.3	397.9	406.0	1,936.8
(314.7)	(330.3)	(352.2)	Total funding	(363.7)	(380.0)	(386.9)	(394.1)	(401.7)	(1,926.3)
0.0	0.0	0.0	Annual (shortfall)/surplus	0.0	0.0	(2.4)	(3.8)	(4.3)	(10.5)

4.2. At this time, the break-even position in 2024/25 was based on the following key assumptions:

- a) A 2.5% council tax precept increase.
- b) Police officers remaining at 3,755 FTEs.
- c) A 2.0% pay increase for Officers and Staff in September 2023 and 2.5% in September 2024.
- d) A 1.75% increase in taxbase compared to a 1.15% increase in 2023/24.
- e) A £1.5m surplus on the Collection Fund.
- f) New recurring cashable savings of £3.0m in each year of the MTFs and all one-off pressures to be funded by further one-off savings. One-off savings of £2.7m were included in 2024/25 netted off against the net budget requirement. From this report and onwards one-off savings are separated out to improve transparency; and
- g) The Home Office police grants will increase in line with the most recent Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) with Essex receiving a share of the grant uplift in line with existing funding share allocations council tax precept increase of 2.5%.

4.3. These assumptions have been reviewed and updated and the MTFs at June 2023 shows the position as laid out in figure 2 below.

Figure 2 Essex Police MTFs at June 2023

Actual / Forecast			Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023/24 to 2027/28						
2021/22	2022/23	2023/24		2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	5 Year Total
£m	£m	£m		£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
332.0	359.8	378.8	Net budget requirement (before appropriations to/from reserves)	391.2	400.7	408.7	417.6	421.9	2,040.1
2.7	(3.0)	(2.9)	Net appropriations to/(from) reserves	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.0	0.0	2.0
334.7	356.8	375.9	Net budget requirement (after appropriations to/from reserves and before savings and efficiencies)	391.9	401.5	409.2	417.6	421.9	2,042.1
(2.9)	(3.7)	(10.9)	Savings and Efficiencies Plan- Recurring	(3.0)	(3.0)	(3.0)	(3.0)	(3.0)	(15.0)
(1.5)	(0.9)	(1.3)	Savings and Efficiencies Plan- One off	(2.1)	(2.6)	(3.0)	(4.3)	(1.4)	(13.4)
330.3	352.2	363.7	Net budget requirement (after appropriations to/from reserves and savings and efficiencies)	386.8	395.9	403.2	410.3	417.5	2,013.7
(330.3)	(352.2)	(363.7)	Total funding	(380.0)	(386.9)	(394.1)	(401.7)	(409.5)	(1,972.2)
0.0	0.0	0.0	Annual (shortfall)/surplus	(6.8)	(9.0)	(9.1)	(8.6)	(8.0)	(41.5)

2024/25 Budget

- 4.4. The movement in the MTFS is an adverse change of £6.8m, from the balanced position that was reported at February 2023.
- 4.5. The table at figure 3 shows the detail of the MTFS for each year, and the financial impact of the changes to the calculations and revised assumptions, for 2024/25 and for the overall MTFS since the MTFS at February 2023.

Figure 3 Essex Police detail of the MTFS at June 2023 changes since the MTFS at February 2023

Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/25 to 2028/29							Changes since the MTFS at February 2023	
							2024/25	5 Year Total
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	5 Year Total	Change (reduction) / increase £m	Change (reduction) / increase £m
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m		
Opening net budget requirement	363.7	386.8	395.9	403.2	410.3	1,959.9	0.0	76.8
Prior year activity agreed at budget setting	2.1	(0.8)	(0.8)	(0.5)	0.0	0.1	0.1	(2.4)
Pay award	4.7	5.2	5.4	5.6	5.8	26.6	0.7	(3.6)
Pay progression	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	10.0	(0.4)	(2.4)
Pay other	4.7	0.8	0.3	0.3	0.3	6.5	2.9	(1.0)
LGPS pension shortfall and auto enrolment	0.0	0.0	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.6	0.0	(0.8)
Contractual inflation	1.9	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	5.9	(0.1)	(2.5)
Contractual and legal	0.8	1.5	2.2	1.5	1.5	7.6	0.4	2.0
COG approved investment	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Committed change (includes FYE of PUP)	6.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.2	0.0	0.3
Revenue impact of investment - recurring	1.5	1.9	0.1	2.5	(0.9)	5.0	0.6	0.8
Revenue impact of investment - one-off	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	4.5	0.0	(1.5)
New demand and budget growth - recurring	1.7	0.4	0.2	0.1	0.1	2.5	1.1	(2.7)
New demand and budget growth - one-off	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	4.5	0.0	0.4
Use of one-off recurring budget	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Appropriations to/(from) reserves	0.8	0.8	0.5	0.0	0.0	2.0	0.8	5.3
Net budget requirement (before savings and efficiencies)	391.9	401.4	409.2	417.5	421.9	2,042.0	6.2	68.8
Savings and efficiencies (cashable - recurring)	(3.0)	(3.0)	(3.0)	(3.0)	(3.0)	(15.0)	0.0	0.0
Savings and efficiencies (cashable - one-off)	(2.1)	(2.6)	(3.0)	(4.3)	(1.4)	(13.3)	0.6	8.0
Net budget requirement (after savings and efficiencies)	386.8	395.9	403.2	410.3	417.5	2,013.7	6.8	76.9
Opening funding	(363.7)	(380.0)	(386.9)	(394.1)	(401.7)	(1,926.3)	0.0	(49.5)
Government funding	(9.6)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	(9.6)	0.0	0.7
Council Tax - Base	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	(0.0)
Council Tax - Taxbase change	(2.7)	(2.8)	(2.9)	(3.1)	(3.2)	(14.8)	0.0	(1.6)
Council Tax - Precept increase	(3.9)	(4.1)	(4.3)	(4.5)	(4.7)	(21.5)	0.0	5.2
Collection fund	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	(0.8)
Total funding	(380.0)	(386.9)	(394.1)	(401.7)	(409.5)	(1,972.2)	0.0	(45.8)
Annual (shortfall)/surplus	(6.8)	(9.0)	(9.1)	(8.6)	(8.0)	(41.5)	(6.8)	(31.0)

- 4.1. These changes are related to more detailed calculations, a review of the assumptions, as well as known changes that have taken place since February 2023. Figure 4 below shows the detailed changes to the assumptions and how they relate to the 2024/25 adverse movement of £6.8m, since the MTFS at February 2023. In addition, the table at figure 5 shows the impact that the MTFS at June 2023 has on the General Reserve. Whilst in 2024/25 will be below the 3% target requirement, however in the following years the plan is to build the General Reserve back to 3%

2024/25 Budget

Figure 4 Essex Police MTFS at June 2023 changes to 2024/25 since the MTFS at February 2023

	Assumptions in the MTFS at February 2023	Brought Forward to MTFS at February 2023	Assumptions in the MTFS at June 2023	Brought Forward to MTFS at June 2023	MTFS at June 2023
		£m Surplus/ Favourable (Deficit /Adverse)		£m Surplus/ Favourable (Deficit /Adverse)	£m Surplus/ Favourable (Deficit /Adverse)
	Opening	0.0	Brought Forward	0.0	0.0
Prior Year agreed at budget setting	Initial Prior Year	(2.0)	Initial Prior Year and late changes at 2023/24 budget setting	(0.1)	(2.1)
Police Officers 31 March 2024	3,755 FTEs	(6.2)	3,755 FTEs		(6.2)
Pay Award	2.0% pay increase September 2023 and 2.5% September 2024 (officers & staff)	(4.0)	2.0% pay increase September 2023 and 2.5% September 2024 (officers & staff) and more detailed calculation of the 2022/23 payaward	(0.7)	(4.7)
Pay progression and other pay	Pay progression at £2.4m and other pay at £1.8m	(4.2)	Pay progression at £2.4m and other pay at £1.8m and adjustment for initial budget calculation	(2.5)	(6.7)
New Demand and Budget Growth	Initial Budget Growth	(0.6)	Initial Budget Growth and early capture of pressures from commands	(1.1)	(1.7)
Revenue Impact of Investment	Revenue Consequences of Capital Investment	(0.9)	Revenue Consequences of Capital Investment updated for revenue costs of borrowing to fund the capital programme (MRP and Interest)	(0.6)	(1.5)
Contractual and Legal	Initial Contractual and Legal	(0.4)	Initial Contractual and Legal and further budget holder	(0.4)	(0.8)
Inflation	Contractual inflation based on current levels of higher inflation	(2.0)	Contractual inflation based on current levels of higher inflation adjusted for known changes	0.1	(1.9)
One off Budget pressures	One off budget pressures	(1.8)	One off budget pressures		(1.8)
One off savings		2.7	Reduction required for one off savings	(0.6)	2.1
Appropriations (to) / from Reserves		0.0	Adjustment to reserve balance at March 2024 to	(0.8)	(0.8)
Savings	£3m annually	3.0	£3m annually		3.0
Home Office Grants	Home Office police grants increase in line with the most recent CSR with Essex receiving a share of the grant uplift in line with existing funding share allocations.	9.6	Home Office police grants increase in line with the most recent CSR with Essex receiving a share of the grant uplift in line with existing funding share allocations.		9.6
Precept, tax base change and collection fund	Precept at 2.5% each year from 2024/25	6.6	Precept at 2.5% each year from 2024/25		6.6
Balance	Roundings	0.2	Roundings adjusted	(0.1)	0.1
	Total Movement	0.0	Total Movement	(6.8)	(6.8)
	Carry Forward	0.0	Carry Forward	(6.8)	(6.8)

2024/25 Budget

Figure 5 Essex Police detail of the updated June 2023 MTFS on the General Reserve

2023/24 £m		2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
15.7	Earmarked revenue reserves	15.9	16.1	16.3	16.5
10.2	General reserve	11.0	11.7	12.2	12.2
22.2	Total - revenue reserves	18.1	18.3	19.2	18.2
2.8%	General reserve as a % of net revenue expenditure	2.8%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%

- 4.2. Further work continues to assess the full impact of all cost pressures. This will include the pay award of 7% in September 2023, which is funded by the Home Office based on 2.5% being in the budget. This together with the allocation method will leave a further shortfall of nearly £4m.
- 4.3. Alongside this work to consider budget pressures, there is much work ongoing regarding identifying savings and efficiencies. The intention is to identify sufficient savings to fund priority budget pressures, although at the same time there will be difficult decisions to be made regarding the budget pressures identified.

2024/25 Budget

5. Essex County Fire and Rescue Service (ECFRS) - Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

5.1. The table at figure 6 below shows the changes in core budget in each financial year up to 2026/27, along with a breakdown of core funding sources.

5.2. The assumptions in this projection have been adjusted since the MTFS that was presented to the Police Fire and Crime Panel in February 2023. The main changes, include moving the 2024/25 and 2025/26 precept to 3%, adding 2% per annum to the Revenue Support Grant and incorporating the savings and cost pressures identified so far in 2023/24.

Figure 6 Essex Fire and Rescue Service core budget and core funding sources

	Published Budget 2023/24 £m	MTFS 2024/25 £m	MTFS 2025/26 £m	MTFS 2026/27 £m	Assumptions
Core Budget From Prior Year	82.16	88.40	91.45	93.71	
Pay Inflation and Cost Pressures	4.94	2.63	1.82	1.44	2% Annual Pay Inflation. 2024/25 includes 2023/24 Pay Pressure .
Non Pay Inflation and Cost Pressures	1.10	0.43	0.44	0.44	2% Non Pay Inflation
New Investment and Service Demands	1.30	0.43	0.00	0.00	24/25 - ICT Pressures & Increase in Audit Fees
Additional Pressures	0.00	0.30	0.00	0.00	Investment in On Call (Activity)
Core Budget plus Growth	89.50	92.19	93.71	95.58	
Savings (One-Off)					
Cashable Efficiencies (Savings)	(1.10)	(0.74)	0.00	0.00	£0.3m Interest Rec'd / £0.3m Council Tax Surplus / £0.14m Canteen/Ambulance Response Posts
Net Budget Requirement	88.40	91.45	93.71	95.58	
Total Funding Summary	Published Budget 2023/24 £m	MTFS 2024/25 £m	MTFS 2025/26 £m	MTFS 2026/27 £m	Assumptions
Revenue Support Grants	9.67	9.86	10.06	10.26	2% Increase per annum
National Non Domestic Rates	17.13	17.14	17.14	17.14	Flat Cash Basis
Local Government Funding Settlement	26.80	27.00	27.20	27.40	
Council Tax Precept	53.26	55.42	57.71	59.51	3% Council Tax Precept in 2024/25 and 2025/26 2% in 2026/27 1.1% Annual Growth in Council Tax Base
Total General Funding	80.06	82.42	84.91	86.91	
Government Grants	8.34	9.04	8.64	8.84	2024/25 - £0.5m Additional Business Rates Relief Grant from 2023/24 & 2% per annum increase in Business Rates Relief per annum 2025/26 Remove £0.6m Service Grant
Total Funding	88.40	91.46	93.55	95.76	
Unidentified Cashable Efficiencies (Savings)	0.00	0.02	- 0.15	0.17	
Net Budget Position (surplus) / deficit	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	

5.3. ECFRS produced a balanced budget for 2023/24, which included the following pay assumptions:

- 5% Pay Award for 2022/23 for Operational Staff.
- 4% Pay Award for 2023/24 for all staff.
- £0.4m was allocated for the creation of a local cost of living allowance (subject to affordability of the pay award settlements).

5.4. The 2022/23 pay award for non-operational staff (Green Book) was accepted in November 2022. In March 2023, the NJC reached agreement on the pay award for

2024/25 Budget

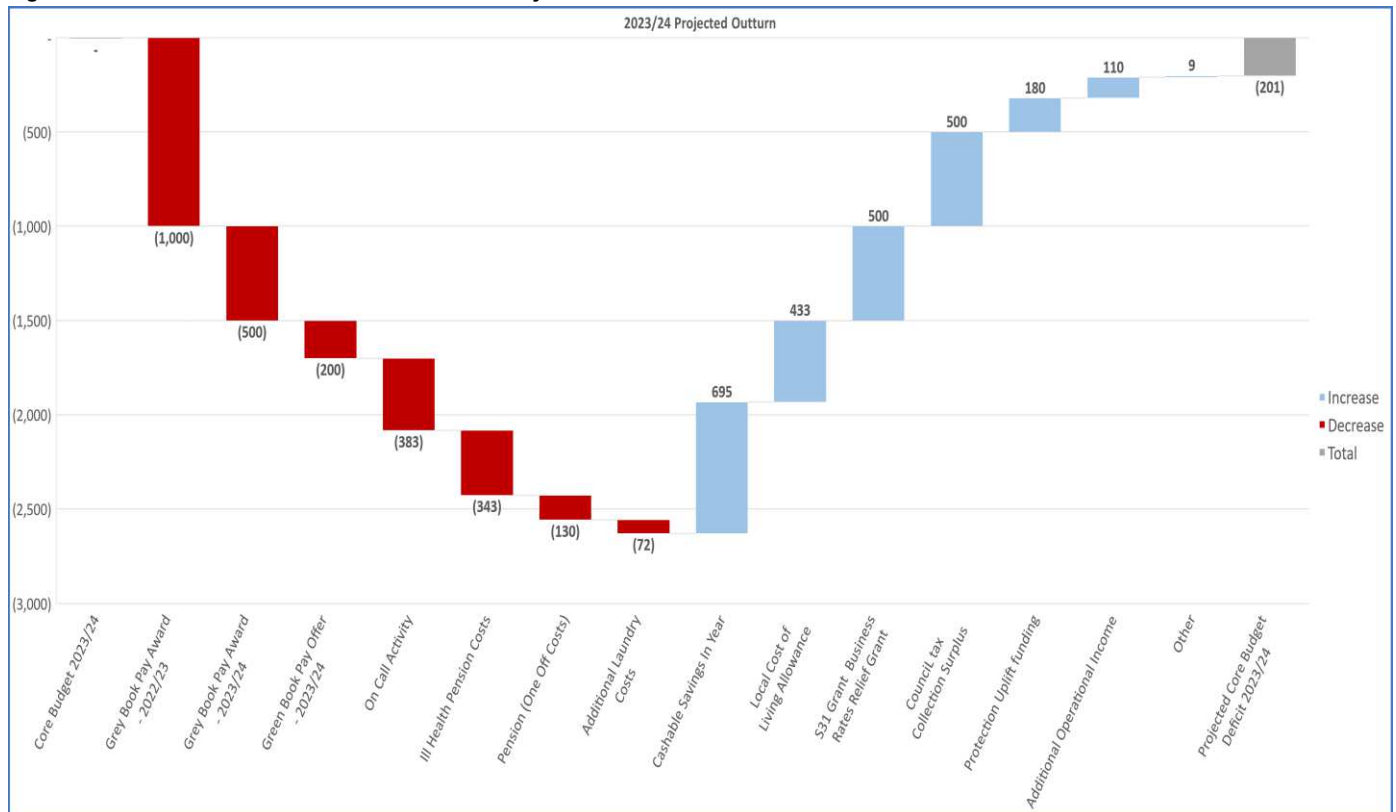
the operational staff which was for a 7% pay award for 2022/23 (backdated to 1st July 22) and a 5% pay award for 2023/24.

5.5. The 2023/24 pay award for non-operational staff has still to be settled, at this stage the offer has been included in the table at figure 6.

6. 2023/24 forecast outturn.

6.1. The current 2023/24 forecast outturn is shown in the waterfall chart below at figure 7.

Figure 7 Essex Fire and Rescue Service 2023/24 Projected Outturn



6.2. This projection for 2023/24 shows a financial deficit of £0.2m. The key financial movements are:

- (£1.5m) cost pressure from pay award for operational staff in 2022/23 and 2023/24
- (£0.3m) additional on call activity in year
- (£0.3m) unplanned Ill health pension costs.
- (£0.2m) cost pressure from potential pay award for non-operational staff in 2023/24 (based on rejected offer)
- (£0.2m) year to date pay cost variances.
- £0.5m unplanned Council Tax Collection Surplus
- £0.5m unplanned S31 Business Rates Relief Grant Funding
- £0.4m Re-allocation of cost-of-living allowance to fund pay award pressure

6.3. In setting the 2024/25 budget, various budget assumptions are being considered, the current financial position has been discussed at the Productivity and Efficiency Board, and the cashable savings so far identified have been included in the table at figure 6.

2024/25 Budget

7. Next steps

- 7.1. Further iterations of the MTFS and the 2024/25 budget for both Essex Police and Essex Fire and Rescue Service will continue to be developed as savings plans are agreed and further information on the assumptions within the MTFS become clearer. The PFCC will work with the Panel Budget Setting Working Group, which has proven to be extremely beneficial in previous years.
- 7.2. Following the Panel Budget Setting Working Group meetings an update on the 2024/25 budget and MTFS for Essex Police and Essex Fire and Rescue Service will be shared with the Panel in December.

Report title: Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) Decisions	
Report to: Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel	
Report author: Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner	
Date: 28 September 2023	For: Noting
Enquiries to: Pippa Brent-Isherwood (Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer) (01245) 291613 pippa.brent-isherwood@essex.police.uk	
County Divisions affected: All Essex	

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Panel with information about financial and strategic decisions made by the PFCC.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Panel is invited to note the contents of the report, identifying any areas that require further clarification or comment.

3. Context / Summary

- 3.1 This report contains information about decisions made and published since 7 July 2023 up to and including 14 September 2023.

4. Appendices

Appendix A: PFCP Meeting 28 September 2023: PFCC Decisions Detailed
Appendix B: PFCP Meeting 28 September 2023: PFCCFRA Decisions Detailed

Ref	Decision On	Value	Outline	Date approved
031-23	Treasury Management Strategy 2023/24 (incorporating the Investment Strategy and Capital Strategy)	N/A	This report comprises three strategies; the Treasury Management Strategy (TMS), which covers the approach to investments and borrowing, and the Investment Strategy which is primarily focused on commercial-orientated investments, as well as the Capital Strategy, which covers capital expenditure and financing and the link to external borrowing requirements.	11/09/2023
053-23	Temporary Funding to Supplement In-House Capability in Digital Forensics	£*	The report is asking for temporary funding to increase capacity for forensic analysis, the details of which are operationally sensitive.	03/08/2023
058-23	Capital Business Case - Digital Fingermark Imaging and Capture System	£*	The Serious Crime Directorate (SCD) is requesting capital monies to purchase a new Digital Fingermark Imaging and Capture System, the details of which are operationally sensitive.	24/08/2023
071-23	Purchase of software	£*	The Serious Crime Directorate (SCD) is requesting capital monies to purchase software, the details of which are operationally sensitive.	24/08/2023
083-23	Essex Restorative and Mediation Service Case Management System	£11,550 over three years	This report outlines the intention of and rationale for the Essex Restorative and Mediation Service (ERMS) replacing its current case management system.	28/07/2023
089-23	Security improvements	£*	This report is presented to the PFCC to request approval for capital funding to improve security measures, the details of which are operationally sensitive.	22/08/2023
108-23	Additional MoJ Formula Based Grant 2023-24	£73,633 income	This report seeks approval from the PFCC to accept an additional in-year grant of £73,633 from the Ministry of Justice for funding in relation to victim support services for 2023-24.	19/07/2023
109-23	Special Police Services Agreement	£*	This decision report seeks the Commissioner's approval to continue a current SPS Agreement through to 31 st March 2026. The details are operationally and commercially sensitive.	24/08/2023
110-23	Independent Custody Visiting (ICV) Annual Reports	N/A	The purpose of this report is for the Commissioner to approve the Independent Custody Visiting Scheme for Essex Annual Reports for 2020/21 and 2021/22.	23/08/2023
111-23	MoJ IDVA and CrSF Funding Allocation 2023-25	£819,094 over two years	This report seeks approval from the PFCC to allocate £819,094 (£409,547 each year, for two years) from the 2023-24 and 2024-25 Victims' Fund for	28/07/2023

Ref	Decision On	Value	Outline	Date approved
			Critical Support Funding (CrSF) and the recruitment of IDVA resources in 2023-24 and 2024-25.	
114-23	Community Safety Development Fund (CSDF) Communication Support	£7,500	This report seeks approval for the allocation of £7,500 from the Community Safety Development Fund to publicise the grant recipients and the alignment to the Police and Crime Plan, and to encourage wider participation in future rounds.	06/09/2023
115-23	Update to the 7 Force Contract Standing Orders	N/A	The purpose of this report is to set out the outcome of the annual review of the 7 Force Contract Standing Orders and to seek approval for their adoption.	11/09/2023
116-23	Phase 3 of the 2023-24 Essex Violence and Vulnerability Joint Budget	£287,100	This report seeks approval for the allocation of £287,100 from the Essex Violence and Vulnerability Joint Budget to various organisations for delivery against the objectives set out in the Essex Violence and Vulnerability Work Programme 2023/24.	27/07/2023
117-23	Re-Route expansion resources	£398,100 over 18 months	This report seeks approval for the recruitment of an additional 4.5 FTE officers for 18 months to deliver an expanded Re-Route project through the Essex Violence and Vulnerability Unit (VVU).	23/08/2023
118-23	Treasury Management Consultancy Contract 2023/24	£15,550.77	The proposal seeks to formalise the current arrangements in place for Arlingclose to undertake treasury management consultancy services on behalf of the PFCC, extending these arrangements up to the end of March 2024.	24/08/2023
119-23	Deed of Variation to modify the Contract for Sale for the former Harlow MIT and Transport Workshop	Reduction in sale price of £75,000	This decision report seeks approval of a Deed of Variation to modify the sales contract and the sale price for the disposal of the former Harlow MIT and Transport Workshop, following exchange of contracts on a conditional basis.	03/08/2023
120-23	Sale of a former police house	£*	This decision report recommends that the PFCC disposes of a vacant, surplus to operational requirements, former police house by sale.	18/07/2023
121-23	Essex Probation HGV Training Project	£10,000	This report seeks approval for the allocation of a £10,000 match-funding contribution from the PFCC's Community Safety Development Fund (CSDF) to the Probation Service for the delivery of an HGV driver training pilot for people on probation.	24/08/2023

Ref	Decision On	Value	Outline	Date approved
123-23	Sale of a former police house – Amendment to sale price	£*	This decision report recommends that the PFCC disposes of a vacant, surplus to operational requirements, former police house by sale, for an amended price.	22/08/2023
127-23	Specials Recruitment Plan and Delivery	£10,000	The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the allocation of up to £10,000 for the Special Constabulary to support a continuous recruitment campaign across the county which would ensure our Special Recruitment Ambassadors can attend recruitment and engagement events to increase the number of Special Constables in Essex.	18/08/2023
129-23	Project Grip – Year 2 grant payment to the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner of Essex - Delivery Plan	£795,706 grant + £238,712 match funding = £1,034,418	This report seeks approval to accept, sign and deliver year 2 of the Home Office grant funding to tackle serious violence across Essex. The maximum grant available to claim this year is £795,706, in addition to match funding at 30% (£238,712), so will result in a total investment, including match funding, of £1,034,418.	25/07/2023
130-23	Drug Testing on Arrest Grant Agreement 2023/25	Up to £120,000 over two years	The Home Office has approved a grant to the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner of Essex Police from the Drug Testing on Arrest (DToA) programme of up to £70,000 for the financial year 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 and up to £50,000 for the financial year 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025. This decision report summarises how Essex Police will utilise the grant and seeks agreement from the Commissioner to approve and sign the grant agreement.	01/08/2023
131-23	Grant Agreement – ASB Hotspot Response Pilots for the Period 1 April 2023 – 21 March 2024	£1,050,000	The Home Office is proposing to provide the PFCC with grant funding of up to £1,050,000 to deliver one of 10 Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Hotspot Response Pilots as part of its ASB Action Plan. This decision report seeks authority to enter into the associated grant agreement.	03/08/2023
132-23	Memorandum of Understanding – College-Run Online Assessment Process	Net saving of c. £5,350	This report seeks the PFCC's approval to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) relating to the national online police officer recruitment process run by the College of Policing. The MoU sets out the service provided by the College in delivering both the national sift and the online assessment process.	24/08/2023

Ref	Decision On	Value	Outline	Date approved
138-23	Review of the PFCC's Constitution	N/A	The purpose of this report is to seek the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's (PFCC's) approval for the adoption and publication of their updated Constitution.	22/08/2023

*Denotes decision report which is pending publication due to commercially sensitive information or not published in full due to otherwise sensitive information. Commercial decisions will be published upon completion of the contract.

Decisions previously reported and published since the last meeting of the Police, Fire and Crime Panel

019-23 Recovery of Stray, Loose or Abandoned Horses (signed 20/03/2023)
 056-23 Victim Support Contract Extension 2023 (signed 09/06/2023)
 057-23 Synergy Contract Extension 2023 (Supplementary) (signed 09/06/2023)
 064-23 Upgrade of Car Wash Facilities at Boreham (signed 08/06/2023)
 091-23 Boreham Infrastructure – Fencing – Stage A Capital Bid (signed 09/06/2023)
 099-23 Airwave Device Refresh (signed 21/06/2023)

For detailed information on each decision, go to the PFCC website at [Decision making - Essex Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner \(pfcc.police.uk\)](https://pfcc.police.uk) Decisions can be sorted by reference number and date on the PFCC website.

Please note: This report contains PFCC decisions made after 7 July 2023, up to and including 14 September 2023 (ahead of submission for the PFCC meeting of 28 September 2023).

Ref	Decision On	Value	Outline	Date approved
023-23	Strategic Assessment of Risk	N/A	This report provides the PFCC with the supporting information from the Service Leadership Team (SLT) for its recommendation to approve this year's Strategic Assessment of Risk.	21/07/2023
031-23	Cleaning Contract Procurement	£*	The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the awarding of a contract for General Building Cleaning and Ancillary Services following a tender process run by the NFCC's FM & Construction National Category Lead on behalf of Essex County Fire and Rescue Service. The new contract will result in improved cleaning provision across all Authority sites alongside increased contract management. This will provide a consistent approach to cleaning across all ECFRS sites, whilst making a saving against the original cleaning costs. The details are commercially sensitive, but a redacted version of the decision report has been published.	10/08/2023
032-23	Electrical Planned Preventative Maintenance Contract	£*	The purpose of this decision report is to seek approval for the awarding of a contract for electrical planned preventative maintenance for an initial period of three years plus an additional two years. The details are commercially sensitive, but a redacted version of the decision report has been published.	10/08/2023
033-23	Wholetime Station Modernisation Project – Orsett Station Works Contract	£*	The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the awarding of a contract for internal alterations to form new dormitories and complete fire compartmentation works at Orsett Fire Station. The works also include the associated mechanical and electrical services following a tender process run against the Essex Construction Framework. The details are commercially sensitive, but a redacted version of the decision report will be published.	14/09/2023

*Denotes decision report which is pending publication due to commercially sensitive information or not published in full due to otherwise sensitive information. Commercial decisions will be published upon completion of the contract.

Decisions previously reported and published since the last meeting of the Police, Fire and Crime Panel

019-23 Procurement of a New Finance System (signed 08/06/2023)

027-23 Joint Fleet Workshop – Progression to Full Business Case (signed 04/07/2023)

029-23 ECFRS Training Centre – Stage 2 Report (signed 04/07/2023)

For detailed information on each decision, go to the PFCC website at [Decision making \(Fire and rescue\) - Essex Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner \(pfcc.police.uk\)](#) Decisions can be sorted by reference number and date on the PFCC website.

Please note: This report contains PFCC decisions made after 7 July 2023, up to and including 14 September 2023 (ahead of submission for the PFCP meeting of 28 September 2023).

Report title: Forward Work Plan	
Report to: Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel	
Report author: Sophie Campion, Senior Democratic Services Officer	
Date: 28 September 2023	For: Approval
Enquiries to: Sophie Campion, Senior Democratic Services Officer sophie.campion2@essex.gov.uk	
County Divisions affected: All Essex	

1. Purpose of report and background

- 1.1 To plan the business of the Panel.
- 1.2 The next Meeting of the Panel is scheduled for **Thursday 7 December 2023**.
- 1.3 Business proposed to be taken to the meetings is provided in the work programme at Appendix 1.
- 1.4 At each meeting, except the February meeting at which the proposed precepts are considered, the following standard items are also on the agenda in addition to the matters listed on the work programme:
 - PFCC Decisions Report
 - PFCC Update
 - NAPFCP Update
 - Forward Work Plan

2. Recommendation:

- 2.1 The Panel is asked to note the Forward Work Plan and identify any other business it would like to consider.

Appendix 1

Provisional Date	Topic Title	Lead Contact	Purpose and Target Outcomes
7 December 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Essex PFCP Budget Half Year Outturn Report Police and Crime Plan Performance Measures (Quarter 2) Fire and Rescue Plan Quarterly Performance Update Budget Update Report on Annual Complaints 2022-23 	SDSO OPFCC OPFCC OPFCC SDSO	To note Statutory Duty to review the Police and Crime Plan and monitor performance Statutory Duty to review the Fire and Rescue Plan and monitor performance Update on Budget-Setting process To note
1 February 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed Fire and Rescue Precept Proposed Police Precept 	OPFCC OPFCC	Statutory Duty to review the proposed precepts
Future work Date TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A review of the issues relating to E-Scooters A workshop providing an overview of the work of the Southend, Essex and Thurrock Domestic Abuse Board – October 2023 	TBC Jane Gardner, Deputy PFCC	As agreed at the Panel's meeting on 22 March 2022 As agreed at the Panel's meeting on 15 June 2023, in relation to Priority 3 – Protecting vulnerable people and breaking the cycle of domestic abuse, of the Police and Crime Plan 2021-2024.

Report title: Dates of Future Meetings	
Report to: Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel	
Report author: Sophie Campion, Senior Democratic Services Officer	
Date: 28 September 2023	For: Noting
Enquiries to: Sophie Campion, Senior Democratic Services Officer sophie.campion2@essex.gov.uk	
County Divisions affected: All Essex	

1. Purpose of the Item

To inform Members of the remaining meeting dates for 2023-24 and set out the proposed meeting dates for 2024-2025.

2. Meeting Dates

Thursday 1 February 2024 (Precept meeting)
Thursday 15 February 2024 (Reserve date if required)
Thursday 14 March 2024
Thursday 20 June 2024 (Annual meeting)
Thursday 25 July 2024
Thursday 3 October 2024
Thursday 5 December 2024
Tuesday 4 February 2025 (Precept meeting)
Tuesday 18 February 2025 (Reserve meeting if required)

The meetings will be scheduled to commence at 2:00pm and held at County Hall, Chelmsford, unless otherwise stated.

3. Recommendation

To note the future meeting dates