



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

# ANNUAL REPORT

2021-2022 >>>>>>





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# Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's Report

The last year has seen the continuation of our investment programme in Essex Police. This has already resulted in Essex Police growing by more than 700 officers since April 2016 and we have provided funding for this growth to reach 900 additional officers, meaning we will have 3,755 in total by March 2023. This will be the highest number of officers that we have ever had in Essex. During the year, we have also taken stock of the progress we have made, the changing context we operate within, not least the impact of COVID-19, and worked with partners and the public across Essex to set out a new ambitious strategy to get crime down, protect the vulnerable and support victims of crime that is set out in the published Police and Crime Plan 2021-2024.

> **Roger Hirst** welcoming new officers to the Essex Police Force



Our new priorities build on the progress we have made over the last five years, in particular the **growth in officers, the focus of working with communities to get crime such as anti-social behaviour, burglary and theft down, and our work to tackle domestic abuse and drug-driven violence.** They also go beyond our previous priorities to set out more clearly our ambition to tackle violence against women and girls, protect the vulnerable and use the extra capacity our investment programme has delivered to shift the main focus of Essex Police from responding to incidents to preventing them in the first place.

Overall, levels of crime have increased over the last five years as new forms of crimes such as stalking, controlling and coercive behaviour have been added to the statute books and started to be used more commonly. Our work encouraging victims to come forward and report domestic violence means we now have a much better idea of the actual level of domestic violence in society, while we have seen a continued increase in the levels of violence driven by drugs.

At the same time, our response to burglary, theft and anti-social behaviour has led to significant year-on-year reductions showing that where we can focus and implement a clear strategic approach to tackling certain types of crimes, we can get these crimes down consistently.

These trends over the last five years have been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdowns imposed to control its spread. Overall, crime levels fell significantly as shops closed and our movements were significantly reduced. Essex Police also used this time to take significant enforcement action on organised gangs, drug dealers and county lines, successfully targeting and closing down entire lines. The increased use of Domestic Violence Protection Orders and other proactive preventative tactics were also put to good use and had a positive impact.

We also knew that as many people were locked up in their homes, there was an increased risk that vulnerable people could become victims of crime and increased funding was channelled into supporting services, helplines and tailored interventions to prevent this being the case, if at all possible.

> *The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner out on patrol with the Community Policing Team in Witham*



As the national vaccination programme progressed during 2021 and we slowly returned to normal, we also saw a return of some of the crime types that had been subdued over the previous 18 months. This resulted in a 11.7% increase in overall crime levels in the 12 months to March 2022 compared to the 12 months to March 2021. However, this was still 1% down on the 12 months to March 2020, the last year that did not have a direct impact from the COVID-19 lockdown measures.

These trends show that while overall crime levels have grown in the last year as lockdowns have eased, they are still at a lower level now than they were prior to the pandemic and provide a positive longer-term downward trend.

Essex Police have played a huge role throughout the pandemic, working with partners through the Essex Resilience Forum to co-ordinate the countywide response. During this period, our independent public survey of 7,000 people per year, told us that public confidence in Essex Police significantly increased from 64.7% of people saying that "Essex Police do a good or excellent job" in the 12 months to December 2019, to 76.3% in the 12 months to December 2020 and then 80.1% in the 12 months to December 2021. This is a significant increase and gives a clear picture of the value that both the public and partners place on the force.



**Roger Hirst**

Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner

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



WE WILL HAVE

**3,755**

OFFICERS IN TOTAL BY  
MARCH 2023



This will be the highest number of officers that we have ever had in Essex



# Chief Constable's Report

**Essex Police continues to grow and to put the new and existing resources at its disposal to best use to protect and serve the county. This report relates to the third full financial year since the introduction of the current Essex Police Force Plan, which is focused on victims, vulnerability, violence and visibility.**

The number of officers, volunteers (including Special Constables) and police staff is increasing, funded by both central Government and the local precept. By March 2023, we'll have 3,755 officers, an increase of more than 900 since April 2016.

To ensure that these men and women are appropriately skilled, equipped and enabled, the force continues to re-invest savings achieved through its extensive modernisation programme to offer an improved service to the public and to businesses.

This ranges from the force's capability to respond to the most serious crimes requiring extensive long-term investigations to the reassurance afforded to local communities through an increased visible presence in urban and rural areas and crime prevention.

This report is a demonstration of my commitment as Chief Constable and of all those at Essex Police to deliver justice to every victim of crime.

In May of 2021 I congratulated the re-elected Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) for Essex, Roger Hirst and I'm looking forward to continuing work with the



> *The Chief Constable welcoming new officers.*

PFCC to strengthen our force, so that our officers, staff and volunteers can carry on helping people, keeping our county safe and catching even more criminals.

It has been a busy year with helping our national colleagues policing of the G7 Summit in June and the United Nations Climate Change Conference of Parties (COP26) in November which was one of the largest cost recoveries that we've had to complete at more than £1.3m.

During the year the Police Foundation published a report on the future of policing in the context of a national crisis in confidence in policing, and setting out an agenda for fundamental change. There is no doubt that some events linked to policing nationally have impacted public confidence across the UK. However, I'm pleased to say many of the recommendations from the report are already being



implemented in our force and we continue to regularly review our standards of professionalism to ensure that we are doing the right thing, at the right time and in the right way. We continue to police with the consent of our community in Essex, with public confidence in our force remaining at an all-time high. Our independent public confidence survey saw that 80% of the 7,000 residents questioned say Essex Police does a good or excellent job. However, this is not something we are complacent about and we continue to strive to do all we can to give the best possible service to victims and our communities.



# 80%

OF THOSE RESIDENTS  
QUESTIONED SAY  
ESSEX POLICE DOES A  
GOOD OR EXCELLENT JOB

During the year, a new Crime Prevention Strategy (2021-2025) was launched. The strategy will ensure our preparedness for increased volumes and complexity of crime and sets out our plan to work more closely with partners, the voluntary sector and our communities to prevent crime and find solutions to the issues that cause the most harm to our communities.

We have seen huge successes during the year, including charging more than 330 suspects for drug-related offences. We continue to seize drugs and proceeds of cash earned through committing crime on a daily basis. Of those charged, 148 were jailed for an average of three-and-a-half years, ensuring criminals continue to be removed from the streets of our county. Our work on Operation Grip enables us to use data to pinpoint areas and times where offences are most likely to happen so we can proactively patrol to prevent crime before it happens. This has been held up as best practice by the Government and is now being rolled out across the country. We have been successful in attracting funding for the next three years to continue this work, which allows us to really focus on preventing crime before it happens.

The force has and will police with the consent of all communities and make full use of all available resources to be a diverse and inclusive organisation.

In the 2021/22 financial year our police officer numbers grew from 3,369 to 3,555 (full time equivalents) and it will grow a further 200 in the coming year. We continue to encourage candidates from diverse backgrounds to join our force.



Officers working together to prevent disorder and keep our communities safe



Our colleagues are not only growing in number, they are growing in capability. While continuing to deliver the Force Plan to catch criminals, protect people and keep people safe, we continue to work in an agile way meaning that officers and staff can spend even more time with the people who need our help and less time travelling to and from police buildings.

I have a vision of a united Essex in which we celebrate our diversity and where we value each other's differences. In May, following the relaxation of COVID restrictions, Essex started returning to a level of normality with the county's night time economy returning to business as usual levels. Overall crime levels have grown in the last year as lockdown eased but they still remain lower than they had been prior to the pandemic. The recovery brings new businesses and new communities to our county and we will use all our resources to make sure that Essex is a safe and prosperous place to live and work.



**BJ Harrington**

Chief Constable of Essex



# Report of the Chief Financial Officer, PFCC

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 2021/22, as well as the financial position at 31st March 2022. The accounts are prepared and presented in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting In the United Kingdom 2021/22 (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. The global financial situation is evolving quickly and this report was written at the end of the 2021/22 financial year and reflects the position at that time.

## Results for 2021/22

The Group ended the year on a funding basis, with a surplus of £2.7m, which will be transferred to the General Reserve and earmarked reserves. This surplus is after adjusting for items, required by regulation, between the funding basis and the accounting basis, as shown on page Error! Bookmark not defined.. The main adjustments are for the cost of pensions, the cost of capital, and other minor technical accounting adjustments. The reconciliation of the adjustments are summarised on page Error! Bookmark not defined. of these accounts.

The General Reserve was £14.8m at 31st March 2022, which is 4.5% of net revenue expenditure and an increase of £1.6m since 31st March 2021. Earmarked reserves increased by £4.8m and were £17.1m at the end of 2021/22, including the Future Capital Funding Reserve of £4.4m and £2.6m of reserves held on behalf of partners and third parties.

During 2021/22 the Group invested £12.1m on improving the estate, updating information technology and the replacement programme for the vehicle fleet. This investment was achieved, without any external long-term borrowing. The expectation is that we will need to borrow externally, to deliver the planned capital investment for 2022/23.

## 2021/22 Funding

In 2021/22 we received the Essex share of the total £550m additional government funding for the Police Uplift Programme, to increase the number of police officers across the country by 20,000. The PFCC also increased the precept by 4.98% (£9.90 per year on a Band D property) allowing an increase to the number of police officers in Essex by a further 186 Full-Time Equivalents (FTE). This has meant that Essex now has 700 more FTE officers, than it had in 2016 and during 2022/23 we have plans to recruit another 200 FTE. This means there will be 3,755 FTE police officers, by the end of 2022/23, which will be the highest number in the history of Essex Police.

## Future Pension Payments

We are required under accounting standards to include the total liability of future pension payments in the Balance Sheet, which therefore includes £3.5bn net liabilities for the cost of future pension payments. There are statutory and contractual arrangements in place for funding these pensions, meaning the financial position of the Group is therefore sound.



## Medium Term Financial Strategy

The significant increases in inflation in the last few months of the 2021/22 financial year, has already had an impact on the cost of supplies and services, and is expected to impact further during 2022/23 and 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. The police staff pay award is settled until September 2023, which provides some certainty, again in the short term, while the police officer pay award is still to be agreed. We will continue to consider the various impacts of our costs in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) as we develop the budget for 2023/24. The MTFS reflects the impact of 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 2023/24 to 2027/28. 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.

> PCSOs out patrolling and providing reassurance in the community



**Janet Perry FCCA ACMA CGMA**

Chief Financial Officer, PFCC

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POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME  
COMMISSIONER FOR ESSEX



# FURTHER INVESTMENT IN CRIME PREVENTION



**Focused investment in crime prevention is essential to reduce overall crime and in keeping our communities safe. Since April 2016, we have invested in the capacity of Essex Police to prevent crime and this investment continued during 2021/2022.**

The establishment was increased by 1,986 officers during the year, taking the total increase to 700 and bringing the total establishment of Essex Police up to 3,555. These new officers were recruited throughout the year with the force at establishment by the end of March 2022.

These new officers focused on tackling serious violence, including doubling the size of the Serious Violence Team, tackling domestic abuse including a new Domestic Abuse Problem Solving Team, more officers to tackle serious and organised crime, new Disruption Teams to deal with crime in local districts and increased capacity in teams such as Roads Policing and dog handlers.

Working with partners and the public, we also secured support for further investment in 2022/23 with a commitment to recruit a further 200 officers during the year. This will mean by the end of March 2023, Essex Police will have 3,755 officers, making it the largest and strongest it has ever been.

> Members of the newly recruited Disruption Team discussing their operations



The new officers in 2022/2023 will focus on tackling violence in all its forms, including violence against women and girls, domestic abuse and drug-driven violence and crime prevention work, including boosting Town Centre Teams. This investment in officers has been complemented by additional investment in support staff and technology to improve efficiency and ensure our officers can be visible in their communities rather than stuck behind desks. Investments in smartphones, body-worn video and tasers have equipped our officers to log or process crimes while working within communities. New applications have improved access to guidance and support, making a huge difference in areas such as the use of Domestic Violence Prevention Orders. Body-worn video has drastically improved the level of evidence gathered, especially in domestic abuse cases, leading to stronger cases being presented at court.

Investment in technology has also helped to improve the accessibility of the force with online chat, Report It Online and 101 now making the force more accessible than ever. While this has had a significant impact on call waiting times, which have reduced from 40 minutes to eight minutes over the last four years, it has a bigger impact on the quality and consistency of intelligence received by the force. The force was assessed as Outstanding for its data quality by HMICFRS in 2021, meaning that it has an excellent grip on the level of crime happening in the county and receiving accurate reports from the public. This is vital as the intelligence received from the public informs the intelligence led, targeted intervention that is the most effective way of tackling crime and anti-social behaviour.

**Neighbourhood policing is at the core of prevention work and our investments in Town Centre Teams, community policing and volunteers, such as Specials, has had a significant impact on the level, visibility and quality of activity across the county.**

During the year, Essex Police worked with the policing districts and their Community Safety Partnerships to identify areas of high demand where focused, highly visible neighbourhood policing activity could make a significant difference and developed a programme of activity that brings partners together and effectively deploys the 1,500 volunteers (Specials, Active Citizens, Police Cadets, Accredited Persons) to target local areas at periods of known high demand.

One successful example of this type of deployment is Street Weeks where the large-scale deployment of multi-agency teams focus on a specific area 24/7 for a week to tackle repeat criminal and anti-social behaviour, build community support and leave a lasting legacy. There have been 12 deployments over the last two years, reaching more than 25,000 people face-to-face. These activities have led to a demonstrable reduction in anti-social behaviour, have solved repeat offending, increased safeguarding opportunities, and also driven an increase in the membership of Neighbourhood Watch, Special Constabulary, Volunteer Police Cadets and Citizens in Policing. They have also had a measurable positive impact on local levels of public confidence.

The activity supports the work of Community Safety Engagement Officers, who were recruited as part of our investment programme to provide greater visibility and communication with local communities and strengthen our ability to respond to identified local issues. These officers are based in each local policing district and work with partners in preventing identified local issues, such as shoplifting, nuisance motorcycles or intimidating behaviour. Specialist teams are also deployed to help this continued investment in prevention activity with focused activity from Roads Policing Teams, the Rural and Business Teams and more depending on the evidence-based demand in the local areas.

> One of the new officers out on patrol as part of a Street Week programme to tackle persistent offenders







> New officers at their passing out parade at Essex Police Headquarters

# REDUCING DRUG DRIVEN VIOLENCE





**Violence has no place in our society. And yet it accounts for roughly half of all crime in our county. It is a failure on behalf of the perpetrator, in their relationships with others, or ability to cope with their circumstances, and it can be stopped. We must get violent crime down, whether it is by bringing serial and vicious perpetrators to justice, taking weapons and drugs off of our streets, or by protecting and supporting those at risk.**



Drug-driven violence is behind 40% of the homicides, while also being a significant cause of serious violence and knife crime. Gangs that exploit people and coerce them into a life of crime are preying on some of the most vulnerable people in our society. We must

crack down on drug-driven violence, knife crime and gangs, protect the vulnerable people these gangs prey on and deal with the hardened criminals whose activities increase violence in our communities.

Our strategy to tackle drug-driven violence has been to invest both in prevention, through our Violence and Vulnerability Partnership, 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 combined with additional central government funding, to support the National Drug 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

> Working with partners Knife Bins are located across the country to provide a safe and secure way for people to dispose of knives and help reduce the number of dangerous weapons on our streets.



to drugs is either falling or steady across the county, the number of county line related homicides are at their lowest level of several years and the level of risk associated with county lines has fallen dramatically since October 2021.

In 2021 alone, the Serious Violence Unit seized more than 100 weapons and £569,000. 97 vulnerable individuals were identified and safeguarded and 37 people were referred to national organisations for support as the suspected victim of modern-day slavery. Comparing the 12 months to August 2021 to the average over the previous three years, the team collectively increased the number of people arrested from an average of 429 a year to 625, charged 578 compared to an average of 315, secured convictions on 92.5% of those charged compared to 73.4% over the last three years and secured an average sentence of 4.9 years compared to 14 months.

## IN 2021 ALONE, THE SERIOUS VIOLENCE UNIT SEIZED:

100+  
Weapons

£569,000



97 Vulnerable individuals safeguarded



37 People were referred to national organisations for support as the suspected victim of modern-day slavery.

**In summary, our extra investment has resulted in significantly stronger enforcement, better cases being presented at court and more weapons, drugs, money and criminals being taken off the street for longer.**

Supporting this enforcement activity, a number of innovative prevention activities have also been undertaken to suppress drug-driven violence and make the operating environment for gangs extremely hostile. These focused activities range from co-ordinated, highly targeted activities on specific county lines, to using contacts in drug dealers phones to warn people of the dangers of drugs. One exceptionally successful tactic which was developed in Essex and has since been picked up by central government is short, targeted high visibility patrols. The tactic identifies hot spots within the county which see the most street violence. This violence tends to correlate with areas of high footfall where there is a high likelihood of interactions between individuals and where minor confrontations escalate and/or where excessive alcohol is consumed. In Essex, 79 harm spots across seven major towns were identified and each received 15 minute, high visibility patrols at regular intervals over 266 days. This led to a significant reduction in violence over the period, especially in areas where patrols were strictly adhered to and where they were well targeted at the times and locations where violence was most likely.

This strong activity led by Essex Police is complemented by the work of our Violence and Vulnerability Partnership, where we take a public health approach

to tackling violence with long-term investment across a wide partnership of organisations in Essex.

Following detailed work undertaken last year to map and understand the journey our most prolific offenders take, this year we have been able to isolate and focus on specific periods of risk, such as the time between arrest and

**Together, this partnership:**

- supports community and voluntary sector organisations to provide activities to those at risk of becoming involved in violence, drugs or gangs
- delivers and funds interventions in identified locations with key groups at times where they are open to changing their lives
- supports professionals, such as teachers or youth workers, to ensure they have the right resources to respond to vulnerable people appropriately
- runs communications campaigns to target vulnerable groups and reduce the risk of them being exploited
- uses data and insights to inform our approach

conviction. Increased visibility and interventions during this period offer the opportunity to drastically reduce the number of individuals that spiral into repetitive violent behaviour.

We have also completed a community listening project with young people at risk of being groomed into a life of crime. This project provided valuable insight into areas of vulnerability which our young and vulnerable people exhibit.

This work, along with additional insight and research, has helped us to target our Vulnerability Community Safety Grants to groups and certain localities where the risk of exploitation is higher. With this fund, we have continued to identify a range of organisations which engage with young, vulnerable people. This can range from counselling or therapeutic support, to 1-2-1 coaching or increased provision of sports clubs and social activities.

These combined activities and collective approach to tackling the root causes of violence have started to turn the tide of violent crime in Essex. However, there is still much to do with violence with injury up by 2.9% over the 12 months to March 2022 compared to the 12 months to March 2020, the last year where the COVID pandemic did not have an effect on the statistics.





# PROTECTING VULNERABLE PEOPLE AND BREAKING THE CYCLE OF DOMESTIC ABUSE >>>>>>



**Protecting those at greatest risk and reducing the number who become victims of crime is essential to driving down the level of harm in our communities. Domestic abuse accounts for 33% of all violent crime in Essex and in 2021/2022 24,284 cases of violence against the person related to domestic abuse were recorded. This is an increase of 5.4%. These crimes account for a huge volume of the vulnerable people who become victims of crimes committed against them by partners or other family members and as such breaking the cycle of domestic abuse is an important focus to reduce vulnerability in Essex.**

In Essex, our work to tackle domestic abuse is co-ordinated by the Southend, Essex and Thurrock Domestic Abuse Board (SETDAB). The board is chaired by Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Jane Gardner and works with partners to enable everyone to live a life free from all forms of domestic abuse. The board has a comprehensive strategy, which was refreshed during 2021/2022 to provide a sharper focus following further detail about the Domestic Abuse Act.

#### The SETDAB strategy focuses on achieving five outcomes:

##### Outcome

1

Children and young people can recognise and form healthy relationships.

##### Outcome

2

People experiencing and at risk of experiencing domestic abuse are supported to be and feel safe.

##### Outcome

3

Everyone can rebuild their lives and live free from domestic abuse.

##### Outcome

4

Supporting and disrupting perpetrators to change their behaviour and break the cycle of domestic abuse.

##### Outcome

5

Communities, professionals and employers are able to recognise domestic abuse at the earliest opportunity and have the confidence to take action.

The Commissioner, along with SETDAB partners, commissions a range of services to support victims from Victim Support who offer the first line of support to more specialist services such as Next Chapter, Safe Steps and Changing Pathways which is 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 a seven-day-a-week, single point of access; the Compass helpline, which delivers 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 also offers a single point of contact for victims of abuse to engage through, ensuring help and advice can be found in a consistent and accessible way.

Essex Police have an important role in safeguarding victims, reducing vulnerability and tackling perpetrators. During 2021/2022, the number of domestic abuse cases reported to them increased by 1,596 cases or 3.9%. In addition, 26% of these cases involved stalking or harassment and 41% were repeat victims. All cases reported are graded as standard, medium or high risk dependent on the circumstances. Over the year, the number of high risk incidents has grown by more than 23.4%, while medium risk cases have increased by 7% and standard risk cases by 1.6%.

This increased level of severity is a concern and may relate to under-reporting of lower or medium risk incidents during the COVID-19

lockdowns, resulting in further escalation prior to being reported to the police.

During the year, the force has launched DA Today, an internal daily update on current cases, which provides additional focus and drive to ensure that attendance at domestic abuse incidents is treated as a priority by local policing teams. The force aims to attend all domestic abuse incidents within 24 hours of being reported, excluding calls graded as emergency or priority which receive an immediate response. Over the last quarter of 2021/2022, Essex Police has attended 88% of domestic abuse incidents within 24 hours. This timely response combined with increased focus by local policing teams and tighter governance has helped to support the capture of better evidence and helped cases to be progressed more successfully.

Wherever possible, the force will pursue prosecutions through the criminal justice system. However, in circumstances where this is not possible, the force focuses on opportunities to improve the safeguarding of victims through use of alternative powers, including Domestic Violence Protection Notices and Orders (DVPNs and DVPOs), Stalking Protection Orders (SPOs) and the application of the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS) Clare's Law. In the 12 months to October 2021, 278 DVPNs and 214 DVPOs were issued, with 77% of the DVPOs being accepted and enforced by the courts.

Significant additional officers have been invested in our response to domestic abuse over the last few years, including the development of new Domestic Abuse Problem Solving Teams. These

new teams work alongside the established Domestic Abuse Investigations Teams to manage the most prolific domestic abuse perpetrators and the most vulnerable victims. The team is focused on working with these individuals in a sustained manner to identify ways to resolve recurring incidents to prevent future harm and reduce repeat victimisation.

The work of these Domestic Abuse Problem Solving Teams complements a number of perpetrator behaviour change programmes commissioned by the Commissioner. These are designed to confront and change dangerous behaviour before it can cause more harm. In Essex, this work is delivered by The Change Project. The Commissioner has provided £170,000 to deliver the programme which has had more than 280 referrals in the last year and has been able to deliver a 95% reduction in physical violence. This is important work and is vital to driving down the number of people affected by domestic abuse in our county.

Breaking the cycle of domestic abuse requires changes throughout society and this broad partnership work has been evident throughout the year. Partners across Essex joined together to raise awareness of domestic violence and encourage victims to come forward and seek help. Linking activity into White Ribbon Day on 25th November 2021, 16 days of actions were co-ordinated across the country where partners showed their support for eradicating violence against women. This gained significant positive publicity, building awareness of the support available and promoting reporting.

In January, the Essex Chambers of Commerce-led Business Crime Strategic Board hosted a conference for businesses on domestic abuse and what they can do to help support members of their staff who are affected. More than 100 businesses were represented and further events to follow up on the theme have been planned in the coming 12 months.

Perhaps one of the most difficult aspects of domestic abuse to resolve are challenges around housing and how the provision of housing can help victims take the step to end abusive relationships. This has been a significant area of focus for SETDAB over the year, with local agreements being established to provide better support for victims.

> An officer takes a call from the public in the Police Control Room







# REDUCING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS





**No woman should feel afraid in their own community or be scared to go out, but the sad truth is that many women and girls do. That is not acceptable, and it is important for us as a society to change that.**

Over the last year, since the horrific murder of Sarah Everard in March 2021, the Commissioner has spent time listening to women and girls, the organisations that support victims of male violence against women and working with partners, such as Essex County Council, to get a much better understanding of how women and girls feel in different areas and places across Essex.

Following these conversations, the Commissioner made a clear commitment in the Police and Crime Plan 2021-2024 to support a cultural change within society and provide strong, consistent and vocal support for the safety of women and girls, whether they report crimes against them or not.

Over the last year, working with council partners, education providers and local communities, the Commissioner has identified several areas where women and girls feel unsafe and successfully secured additional government funding, through the Safer Streets fund, to improve them. The latest area of focus is in Chelmsford, where the Commissioner secured £550,000.

This funding is being used to improve street lighting and fencing, encourage local volunteering to manage

the surrounding landscaping, fund a university student-based initiative to create community solutions to safety concerns, run a series of community safety days, fund youth engagement in the area and develop a digital engagement programme. Other activities involve engagement with schools, football clubs and theatre groups to generate a conversation about safety and actions and what we can all do to help spaces feel and be safer for everybody.

As well as supporting this cultural change, the Commissioner has continued to support victims of crime as set out in the domestic abuse chapter above. This continued investment in support services includes specialist services such as counselling, advocacy and therapeutic support. It also includes the increased funding for Independent Sexual Violence Advisors, so victims get the support and help they need to move on.

Notwithstanding the huge amount of work that is currently under way to support victims and make our spaces and places safer for women and girls, the level of violence against women and girls is increasing while the level of successful

> A specialist officer working with a victim of domestic abuse



prosecutions is still woefully inadequate.

While COVID-19 lockdowns have made the year-on-year statistics difficult to interpret, there has been a 12.2% increase in violence against the person incidents committed against women when you compare the year to March 2020 (before the pandemic impacted stats) and the 12 months to March 2022. Over the same period, there was a 27.5% increase in the number of sexual offences committed against females.

While this pattern is one that is being experienced across the country, it is not acceptable, and it is an area that will need significant focus in future years to reverse this trend.

# IMPROVING SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME

> > > > > >



**While we are working hard to prevent crime and reduce the number of people who suffer the impact of crime, where somebody becomes the victim of crime it is important that they receive the support they need to recover. As well as the vital support offered through Essex Police in the form of updates and support from officers investigating cases and working directly with those affected, the Commissioner also oversees a range of general and specialist services to help victims to cope and recover.**

> A police officer engages with the public while out on patrol



For the last few years, Victim Support have delivered the general support service provided to all victims of crime in Essex. They receive around 10,000 referrals per quarter, of which between 1,500 and 2,000 choose to engage directly. This service continues to make a significant difference to those who choose to engage, with more than 70% of victims showing clear signs of being better able to cope, feeling safer and being more informed after receiving support.

**VICTIM SUPPORT RECEIVE AROUND 10,000 REFERRALS PER QUARTER OF WHICH BETWEEN 1,500 AND 2,000 CHOOSE TO ENGAGE DIRECTLY.**

For victims of sexual offences, the Commissioner engages Synergy to provide Independent Sexual Violence Advisors and community support. Over the last year, this service has seen a significant increase in demand with the number of new victims increasing from 750 in the first quarter of 2020/2021 to 1,047 over the same period in 2021/2022. Thanks to the dedication of the team at Synergy, the positive impact of the service on victims has been maintained even under this extra demand with well over 90% of victims showing improved signs of being able to cope, communicate their needs effectively and feeling safer.

The Commissioner also provides funding for Compass who run a 24/7-hour domestic abuse helpline and Changing Pathways and Next Chapter who provide Independent Domestic Violence Advisors, community outreach and refuge. All three services are provided in partnership with Essex County Council and other partners, and form part of the strong and countywide response to domestic abuse set out in the section above and overseen by the Southend, Essex and Thurrock Domestic Abuse Board.

During the year, the Commissioner was successful in securing £832,863 to invest in Independent Domestic Abuse Advisors (IDVAs) and Independent Sexual Abuse Advisors (ISVAs). This funding has allowed these services to expand their delivery and provide a positive response to the impact of COVID-19. This funding from the National ISVA and IDVA Fund and Critical Support Fund was shared between Victim Support, domestic abuse charities Changing Pathways and Next Chapter, and the consortium of rape and sexual abuse specialist support services, Synergy Essex.

The funding meant that two additional caseworkers could be recruited at Victim Support to work with standard and medium risk victims of domestic abuse, providing telephone and face-to-face support. At Changing Pathways, the money was invested in five specialist domestic abuse advocates, including expanding the service to include an advisor for young people. Synergy used the additional funding to increase capacity for Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs).

For many victims, having professionally mediated communication with the perpetrator of the crime that affected them is a positive way to help them to cope and recover. For perpetrators, this can also offer a life-changing experience as they come face-to-face with the people their actions have impacted and feel the emotional cost of their actions.

The Essex Restorative and Mediation Service, which is delivered from the Commissioner's team, has made a significant difference to victims and perpetrators. During 2021/22, they received 368 referrals, an increase of 24% compared to 2020/21. 16% (57) of cases resulted in all parties communicating either face-to-face or indirectly. In total, the service contacted 532 victims and 253 perpetrators. 74% of referrals were from Essex Police, 14% from councils or housing agencies, 7% from probation (majority victim liaison officer referrals), 3% Youth service and 2% were self-referrals.

Throughout the year, the service has continued to grow its involvement with domestic abuse cases, having opened up the service to domestic abuse victims in 2020/2021. Over the year, domestic abuse referrals increased from 14 to 38 this year (171% increase) and hate crime referrals increased from 22 to 24 (9% increase).

The service continues to receive positive feedback, with 73% of people who provided feedback saying that the process had a positive impact on them and 89% saying they were satisfied with the service they received. All of the perpetrators who provided feedback said they would behave differently going forward. Essex Restorative and Mediation Service was also shortlisted for Team of the Year at the Essex Police Awards.

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*A victim of crime giving evidence.*

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# PROTECTING RURAL AND ISOLATED AREAS

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**As part of the wider investment and growth of Essex Police, a Rural Engagement Team was developed in 2017. Working with Community Policing Teams and Local Policing Teams across rural areas of the county, this team has built understanding of rural crime within Essex Police, promoted and improved direct engagement with rural communities and significantly improved the confidence rural communities have in the force.**

During 2021/2022, Essex Police has had a significant impact on several rural crimes such as hare coursing, wildlife crime, heritage crime, as well as continuing to reduce the number of unauthorised encampments across Essex by more than 60%.

Working with neighbouring forces, a new co-ordinated approach to tackling hare coursing, including the increased use of community protection legislation, more engagement from rural communities and internal training, has led

### REDUCTION IN THE NUMBER OF FLY TIPPING INCIDENTS REPORTED



to a 25% reduction in the number of incidents. This focus will continue to develop with specialist officers reviewing all incidents across the county and using detailed analysis to identify hot spots and target resources effectively.

A similar reduction has been achieved with regards to fly tipping where effective partnership work with local councils and the Environment Agency has led to a reduction in the number of reported incidents, from 385 in the 12 months to March 2018 to 349 in the 12 months to March 2022. While this shows a positive trend, concerns remain about under-reporting, with local rural communities indicating there is a far bigger problem than what is actually reported. Increased work around encouraging the reporting of incidents along with the government's proposed changes to fly tipping will continue to be a focus in the next years.

In the 12 months to February 2022, there have been 202 unauthorised encampments across Essex, a significant reduction from the 530 in the 12 months to 2018. This reduction has been the result of years of close co-operation between

> A member of the specialist Rural Crime Team at a rural show engaging with the rural community.



partners and sustained engagement with rural communities leading to positive and productive long-term relationships.

While these successes show the improvement in tackling these specific areas of rural crime, our engagement with rural communities clearly demonstrates that there is still much to be done. Overall confidence in Essex Police from rural communities is at 82.9% for the 12 months to December 2021. This is an improvement of 4.5% over the previous 12-month period and 2.9% above the general confidence levels. This is a significant turnaround from five years before and indicates the significant positive impact that investing in a dedicated specialist team has achieved.



# PREVENTING DOG THEFT

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**Incidents of dog theft across Essex has been relatively small, however, over the last 18 months a national increase in these thefts has resulted in a significant increase in reported incidents and the fear of theft.**

The force has reacted swiftly to this trend and proactively engaged with the recommendations from the National Pet Taskforce, introduced a process for all cases to be reviewed by a specialist officer, established the ability to proactively respond to reports of pet theft and established strong working relationships with the RSPCA, Dog Watch and Crimestoppers to promote prevention measures.

Work has been undertaken to improve the recording of incidents of pet thefts with stronger processes introduced in the force control room and national learnings introduced wherever possible.

The Rural Engagement Team have increased the engagement with pet owners attending country shows and other engagement opportunities to share best practice in preventing the theft of pets. This activity and advice has also featured strongly across the Commissioner and Essex Police's communication channels.

> Officers from the Rural Engagement Team working with communities to help prevent dog theft



# PREVENTING BUSINESS CRIME, FRAUD AND CYBER CRIME >>>>>>



**Increased online activity since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic combined with higher levels of social isolation have led to an increase of 26% in the number of cybercrime or cyber enabled crimes reported in the 12 months to December 2021, compared to the 12 months to December 2020. At the same time, due to the lower levels of social interactions, there has also been a reduction in face-**

**26%**

**RISE IN THE NUMBER  
OF CYBERCRIME OR  
CYBER ENABLED CRIMES**

reported in the 12 months to  
December 2021

### **to-face fraud of 22%.**

In 2021, these offences accounted for 10,883 cases, the majority received via Action Fraud (the national fraud reporting process). 63% of these cases are cyber enabled, 93% were against individual victims and 7% were against organisations.

While the reported loss to victims in Essex is £45.2m, we know that the impact of these crimes is much more significant with businesses suffering loss of earnings while they can't operate effectively, and vulnerable victims suffering

significant emotional and financial turmoil.

Working with businesses and wider communities, Essex Police and the Commissioner undertake a range of activities to build awareness of the dangers of fraud and cybercrime and how individuals and businesses can protect themselves from becoming victims.

The Essex Chamber of Commerce-chaired Business Crime Strategic Board provides strategic level support and engagement with the Essex Police Business Crime Team to help share best practice, identify areas of focus and build resilience within the business community.

Essex Police's Fraud Prevention Officers also work within communities and with individual victims to provide advice and guidance to help to build resilience and provide warnings around current scams and threats. Regular fraud alerts were introduced in 2019 and grew in importance significantly during the pandemic as a way of highlighting specific scams.

The Strategic Business Board also has a wider role working with the Business Crime Team in tackling all business crime and has been effective in identifying areas of focus, establishing relationships between the police and different sections of the businesses community, and supporting proactive operations to target persistent offenders and disrupt repeat patterns

*Business Crime Team out and about promoting their 'open for business and closed for crime' campaign*



of criminal activity, such as shoplifting.

Under the leadership of the Essex Chamber of Commerce, the board has also stepped outside of this narrow focus and worked with the police and the wider business community to raise awareness of domestic abuse and how businesses can support staff who are being affected by this crime.

One area of significant focus over the last year has been in tackling violence against shop workers where the Business Crime Team-led campaign Open for Business, Closed for Crime helped to improve the level of reporting as businesses recognised the offences against their staff as well as against their business. This campaign has led to a 124.5% increase in reported offences and has given us a much better picture of what is happening and how to tackle it.

# IMPROVE SAFETY ON OUR ROADS

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## Working through the Safer Essex Roads Partnership (SERP), Essex Police and the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex continue to promote safer driving behaviours and robustly target those who cause the most harm.

During 2021/2022, 846 people were killed or seriously injured on our roads in Essex and 48 of these lost their lives. While this number is over 40% lower than the average between 2002 - 2009 and continues the long-term trend of fewer people being killed or seriously injured, it is still far too high.

The investment in extra officers in 2020 continues to make a significant contribution to the strength and scale of roads policing across the county. This has resulted in greater capacity to improve road safety and disrupt those people intent on using our roads to commit other forms of crime, such as drug dealing or human trafficking.

Targeted enforcement at speed hotspots, either through the use of mobile speed cameras, permanent cameras or disruptive activity such as Community Speed Watch deployments, continues to be successful in addressing behaviours at specific sites. However, while work continues to tackle the wider issues of inappropriate and excessive speeds being used, this continues to be a significant cause of incidents.

Raising awareness of dangerous driving behaviour and educating high risk drivers continues to be a key priority and during

2021/2022, SERP has delivered a wide range of targeted engagement activity to reach these groups. This ranges from 24 Vision Zero days where a single town or area with a high rate of bad behaviour is focused on with all vehicles entering the areas being stopped and provided with advice, to engagement via schools or freshers fairs where young drivers can be reached.

Several programmes have been developed/specifically designed for young people, from class-based activities to online theatre. These have reached more than 20,000 students during the year at key points in their education

Motorcyclists are engaged through Better Biking courses, which help riders to build expertise and better identify risks, while the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service Fire Bike Scheme also goes out and proactively meets with bikers at high risk areas to raise awareness of specific areas of danger.

While this engagement activity, combined with increased enforcement, is making a difference and as a result we are seeing reducing numbers of deaths and serious injuries, SERP as a group are also taking a broader look at how they can achieve our shared vision to have zero deaths on our roads by 2040.

The development of Essex over the next five years will significantly impact road users with



large infrastructure projects planned on the A12, Lower Thames Crossing, Bradwell B as well as numerous smaller projects. These have the potential to increase risk to road users, but done well could also have a positive impact on driver behaviour.

Essex Police work closely with local planning authorities and Essex County Council Highways to promote the inclusion of technology in new infrastructure developments to enforce speed limits on new housing developments and infrastructure projects. These developments will increasingly lead to a shift across Essex in driver behaviour.

In particular, the force, through SERP, promote increased use of average speed systems within the design and build stage of projects and look



for opportunities to reduce the risk of collisions. This drive has been supported by the inclusion of Essex Police, Essex County Fire and Rescue Service and the East of England Ambulance Service within the Essex Design Guide. This is the first time the emergency services have been represented in the guide and provides early guidance to developers on designing safer communities.

At a national level, the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner has been working with other Police and Crime Commissioners across the country to influence government policy so that emergency services are included as statutory consultees on all new building projects. This change would significantly increase the ability for our emergency services to shape our road network, removing risk and preventing deaths and serious injuries.

While these structural improvements will make our main road routes through the county significantly safer, we know that 49% of road deaths occur on rural roads. In these areas, mobile targeted enforcement or prevention activity is a key area, including the significant role undertaken by Community Speed Watch Groups.

There are more than 102 active Community Speed Watch Groups across Essex, with 950 volunteers. Together, these groups provide the data that results in an average of 1,265 warning letters being sent out each month. While this in itself is impressive, the real difference is being made by the impact this visible activity has on the countless other drivers who see the activity and moderate their driving behaviour as a result.

These groups operate predominately in rural areas and provide a highly visible deterrent. During the year, Essex Police have managed to significantly increase their attendance alongside Speed Watch groups to enforce speed limits.

This mobile targeted enforcement approach will grow in the coming few years with the introduction of a revised Speed Management Strategy which will provide a much greater focus on rural roads as a response to recent revisions of the Highway Code and in line with Essex County Council's Speed Management Strategy.

> Safer Essex Roads Partnership using specialist vehicles to engage with young people







# ENCOURAGING VOLUNTEERS AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT





**Working with our communities to prevent crime, support victims and ensure criminals have no place to operate is a vital part of effective policing. In Essex, we are proud to have the second largest Special Constabulary in the country, with only the Metropolitan Police having a larger number of volunteers. These 478 officers provide vital operational support to the force, while providing a unique and durable link to the communities we serve. The Special Constabulary has also proven attractive as a route for ethnic minority officers to join the force with 5.7% of the current Specials self-identifying as coming from an ethnic minority.**

The Special Constabulary has also been an important source of recruits into the regular constabulary, with 269 officers making the step from a Special to a Regular over the last five years.

We have also continued to see the benefit of the close relationships we have built with our local businesses and councils. Essex has 100 officers in the Special Constabulary who are supported by the businesses they work for and are provided with time off to perform their Special duty. 51 businesses across Essex are already signed up to this scheme, with a further 66 businesses at different stages of joining. This is by far the largest Employer Supported Policing Scheme in the country and represents well over 50% of all businesses signed up across England and Wales.

Our parish and town councils have also shown their support by sponsoring Specials in their

communities. We have 12 Community Special Constables on active duty receiving financial and engagement support from their local council, with a further 20 officers in the pipeline. This scheme has proven to be very popular with requests from councils far exceeding the volunteers available from within their community. During the last two years, we have worked hard with councils to better align their appetite to support this initiative via the availability of people within their communities to make the commitment to step up and volunteer.

The Commissioner and Essex Police have also continued to support wider forms of volunteering, such as Active Citizens, Police Cadets and Accredited Persons who are provided with specific policing powers while working for different organisations such as councils. As set out under the further investment in crime prevention section, in total there are more than 1,500 volunteers directly connected to Essex Police who are integrated into days of action and other general proactive, prevention activity.

This number grows significantly when you include the members of the public who volunteer for other groups, such as Street Pastors, Crimestoppers and Neighbourhood Watch. All of these groups are supported and work closely with Essex Police while maintaining their own independence. Neighbourhood Watch alone has more than 100,000 members across Essex and provides a vital connection to communities. The Essex Association of Local Councils also provides important connections linking the active positive forces within communities with information about preventing crime and working together to improve our communities.

Within the Commissioner's office, there are also about 50 volunteers working in the Essex Restorative and Mediation Service, Independent Custody Visiting Scheme and the Dog Welfare Scheme. These volunteers provide a valuable service to the public and are highly regarded in the office and across the force for their professionalism, dedication and specialist skills.

During the year, the Essex Restorative and Mediation Service trained ten new volunteers, upskilled four volunteers to take advanced cases, and provided refresher training to 32 volunteers. To thank the volunteers for their contribution, three events were organised this year for the volunteers: a Christmas meal, a family afternoon at Hylands House and our annual Volunteer Appreciation Event. This event is a thank-you to our volunteers and includes an opportunity to hear from and meet experts across criminal justice and dog welfare and also includes an awards ceremony with categories for long service, special mention and people's choice. In addition, we also thank our volunteers with a small token gift and thank-you letter during Volunteer Week each year.

> *Volunteers sharing crime prevention advice in communities*



# SUPPORTING OUR OFFICERS AND STAFF



**The officers, staff and volunteers who work for Essex Police and the Commissioner's office do a great job in difficult circumstances. Their dedication, commitment and professionalism has shone through over recent years as they have been tested by the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic.**

In this light, both the Chief Constable and Commissioner in their distinct roles have pushed hard for better recognition of the contribution they have made and greater support. This includes strong support for the doubling of sentences for those who attack emergency workers, close engagement with central government about the proposed police covenant and support for Specials gaining the protection and support offered by members of the Police Federation.

The Chief Constable personally chairs the force's Diversity, Inclusion and Equality Group and has taken strong individual leadership of the force's drive to increase representation from a diverse range of communities and people and promote confidence within those communities. Over the last two years, this focused work has resulted in a gradual increase in the numbers of ethnic minority officers representing the force, from 3.7% in February 2020 to 4.4% in 2022. Confidence levels among non-white residents has also increased, with 77% of people self-identifying as non-white stating that they think Essex Police do a good or very good job. This is compared to 80% of people identifying as white, and reflects a 2% reduction in the gap

between these groups over the 12 months to January 2022.

The recruitment activity also continues to have a positive impact on the number of women within Essex Police, with a continued increase in recent years up to 35% of all officers by the

end of December 2021. This is the highest it has ever been. Whilst steady progress is being made in relation to representation, it is also a positive sign that the number of officers and staff leaving Essex Police is at its lowest level since 2013.

> A Essex Police officer out on patrol in Rural Maldon.





# INCREASING COLLABORATION

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**Working together with other emergency services in Essex and other police forces and partners regionally and nationally, helps Essex Police and the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex to provide the best possible service to residents.**

The benefits of collaboration were evident throughout the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, with our Chief Constable BJ Harrington co-chairing the Essex Resilience Forum with Deputy Chief Fire Officer Rick Hylton. This emergency response brought together agencies across Essex, including councils, health and the voluntary sector and re-enforced the excellent relationships that were already in place.

Building on this culture of collaboration has allowed us to continue to unlock resources to reinvest and improve the service we offer to the public. The Emergency Services Collaboration Programme was established in 2017 following the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner taking on the governance of Essex Fire and Rescue Service.

**Since October 2017, the programme has seen the successful introduction of a number of collaborative projects, including -**

- **The Tri-Service Rural Community Prevention Officer project** which has been piloted during the year in the Dengie. This project uses a single officer to provide visibility, prevention activities and advice, as well as other community-based support, to residents on behalf of all three emergency services. Initial feedback suggests this has had a positive impact on local engagement with residents and has resulted in financial benefits to all services
- **Harwich and Dovercourt – 2021** saw agreement for the co-location of Essex Police and Essex Fire and Rescue services at the current Dovercourt Fire Station which will result in a new, purpose-built facility for Essex Police on the site, including dedicated collaborative spaces. Essex Police will benefit from a capital receipt from the sale of the current Harwich Police Station, which requires considerable maintenance and investment
- **The Essex Joint Education teams** have been delivering safety education to all schools in Essex since 2019. The teams provide a wide range of

training inputs, including cyber safety, arson and hoax call prevention, knife crime prevention, gang awareness, road safety, hate crime prevention, and anti-social behaviour prevention. This provides a consistent and combined approach on community safety issues to all Essex schools and is anticipated to deliver savings of around £1.8m between 2017 and 2027

- **Collapsed Behind Closed Doors** is a project that utilises the expertise and specialist equipment of Essex County Fire and Rescue Service to access individuals that may be trapped behind locked doors or inaccessible locations. This results in time savings for police officers and paramedics and results in injured people being assessed quicker, possibly avoiding hospital treatment or increasing the timeliness of them being transported to receive medical assistance. As well as improving outcomes for the public, this project is delivering savings in excess of £600k over the ten-year length of the collaboration programme

In total, it is estimated that through improved efficiency and effectiveness, the programme can generate savings of about £13m over ten years. This financial benefit leads to stronger investment in the three services, improved services to the public and, ultimately, safer and more secure communities.

While the Emergency Services Collaboration programme continues to deliver strong savings and improved services, we are also continuing to maximise the benefits of collaboration between Essex Police and Kent Police and engage effectively with all seven forces regionally. The relationship between Essex and Kent is a strong partnership that has been in place for more than ten years, with combined support services such as Human Resources, the Serious Crime Directorate, as well as other integrated strategic and operational activities. Both forces recognise the improved strength they have together to deliver for their public and positively impact national and regional policing. This is evident in the integrated IT projects that have continued to be delivered over the last year and the increased focus on tackling violence and homicide where both forces have been able to learn about, and improve upon, their tactical responses together.

# 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/](http://www.essex.pfcc.police.uk/scrutiny/essex-police-performance/)

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

Crime, including violent crime, has risen. This is in line with the national trend for crime increase and has been primarily influenced by the Government's easing of restrictions on gathering and movement in relation to COVID-19.

## POLICE AND CRIME PLAN

FURTHER  
INVESTMENT  
IN CRIME  
PREVENTION

REDUCING DRUG  
DRIVEN VIOLENCE

PROTECTING  
VULNERABLE  
PEOPLE AND  
BREAKING  
THE CYCLE OF  
DOMESTIC ABUSE

REDUCING  
VIOLENCE  
AGAINST WOMEN  
AND GIRLS

IMPROVING  
SUPPORT FOR  
VICTIMS OF CRIME

PROTECTING  
RURAL  
AND ISOLATED  
AREAS

PREVENTING  
DOG THEFT

IMPROVE SAFETY  
ON OUR ROADS

ENCOURAGING  
VOLUNTEERS  
AND COMMUNITY  
SUPPORT

SUPPORTING  
OUR OFFICERS  
AND STAFF

INCREASING  
COLLABORATION

Police and Crime Plan Priorities	Police Priority Indicators	12 months to Mar 2020	12 months to Mar 2021	12 months to Mar 2022	Number Difference 2021/22	% Difference 2021/22	Direction of Travel 2021/22
<b>Priority 1 - Further Investment in Crime Prevention</b>	Percentage of people who have confidence in policing in Essex (internal survey) <sup>1</sup>	64.7	76.3	80.1	3.8	-	Improving
	Confidence Interval <sup>2</sup>	1.1	0.9	0.9			
	Number of all crime offences	167,266	148,135	165,518	17,383	11.7	Deteriorating
	Harm (Crime Severity) Score - All Crime <sup>3</sup>	13.9	12.0	14.3	2.3	-	Deteriorating
<b>Priority 2 - Reducing Drug Driven Violence</b>	Number of drug related homicides <sup>4</sup>	6	6	3	-3	-	Improving
	Percentage of people who have confidence that the policing response to drug crime is improving (internal survey) <sup>1</sup>	-	-	61.3	-	-	--
	Confidence Interval <sup>2</sup>	-	-	2.3			
<b>Priority 3 - Protect Rural and Isolated Areas</b>	Number of rural crime offences	26,395	22,984	24,228	1,244	5.4	Deteriorating
	Harm (Crime Severity) Score for Rural Crime	8.9	7.1	8.8	1.7	-	Deteriorating
	Percentage of people who have confidence in policing of rural areas in Essex (internal survey) <sup>1</sup>	64.2	78.4	82.9	4.5	-	Improving
	Confidence Interval <sup>2</sup>	2.1	1.8	1.7			
<b>Priority 4 - Improving safety on our roads</b>	All people killed or seriously injured (KSI) in road collisions <sup>5</sup>	820	648	846	198	30.6	Deteriorating
	Number of driving under the influence of drink and/or drugs on Essex roads	3,694	3,883	2,885	-998	-25.7	Deteriorating
	Number of driving related mobile phone crime on Essex roads <sup>6</sup>	1,530	485	448	-37	-7.6	Deteriorating
	Percentage of people who have confidence that the policing response to policing the roads is improving (internal survey) <sup>1</sup>	68.2	75.5	63.9	-11.6	-	Deteriorating
	Confidence Interval <sup>2</sup>	1.1	1.0	1.1			
<b>Priority 5 - Encouraging Volunteers and Community Support</b>	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) <sup>1</sup>	-	-	61.6		-	-
	Confidence Interval <sup>2</sup>	-	-	2.7			
<b>Priority 6 - Improving our services to support victims of crime</b>	Number of repeat victims of crime	42,764	41,886	47,684	5,798	13.8	Deteriorating
	Percentage of victims of crime who have confidence in policing in Essex (internal survey) <sup>1</sup>	52.7	63.5	61.0	-2.5	-	Stable
	Confidence Interval <sup>2</sup>	3.5	3.0	3.5			
<b>Priority 7 - Violence against women and girls</b>	Number of violence against the person (including Stalking & Harassment offences) against females	35,443	36,168	39,769	3,601	10.0	Deteriorating
	Number of sexual offences against females	4,005	3,723	5,105	1,382	37.1	Deteriorating
	Number of sexual offences against females solved <sup>7</sup>	254	274	281	7	2.6	Improving
	Number of violence against the person (including Stalking & Harassment offences) against males	27,669	26,797	31,031	4,234	15.8	Deteriorating
	Number of sexual offences against males	644	597	855	258	43.2	Deteriorating
	Number of sexual offences against males solved <sup>7</sup>	46	41	42	1	2.4	Improving
	Percentage of females who feel safe walking alone in their area after dark (internal survey) <sup>1</sup>	-	-	41.2	-	-	-
	Confidence Interval <sup>2</sup>			2.1			
	Percentage of males who feel safe walking alone in their area after dark (internal survey) <sup>1</sup>	-	-	74.1	-	-	-
	Confidence Interval <sup>2</sup>			2.0			

**Note 1** - Question from the independent survey commissioned by Essex Police. Results are for the period 12 months December 2021 versus the 12 months to December 2020

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

**Note 3** - Crime Severity Score measures 'relative harm' of crimes by taking into account both the volume and the severity of offences, and by weighting offences differently. National data for the 12 months to January 2022 have been used in order that comparisons can be made to Essex's Most Similar Group of Forces (MSG)

**Note 4** - The methodology used for identifying these investigations are drug related is subjective and based on the circumstances presented. These figures will include investigations where the victim or the suspect are involved Drug Use, Possession or Selling

**Note 5** - 'Killed or Seriously Injured' (KSI) refers to all people killed or seriously injured on Essex's roads, regardless of whether any criminal offences were committed. 'Causing Death/Serious Injury by Dangerous/Inconsiderate Driving' offences refers to the number of crimes of this type

**Note 6** - In 2019, the definition as to what constituted "use" of a mobile phone in relation to driver-related mobile phone offences was subject to a legal challenge. This resulted in a ruling, which held that while "use" included accessing the interactive functions of the mobile phone it did not extend to solely accessing the device's internal functions. Few mobile phone offences were subsequently prosecuted from this point. In 2021, however, the law was changed: it is now illegal to "hold" a phone or sat nav when driving or riding a motorcycle

Police and Crime Plan Priorities	Police Priority Indicators	12 months to Mar 2020	12 months to Mar 2021	12 months to Mar 2022	Number Difference 2021/22	% Difference 2021/22	Direction of Travel 2021/22
<b>Priority 8 - Dog Theft</b>	Number of dog thefts <sup>8</sup>	64.7	76.3	80.1	3.8	-	Improving
	Percentage of people who have confidence that the policing response to dog theft is improving (internal survey) <sup>1</sup>	1.1	0.9	0.9			
	<i>Confidence Interval</i> <sup>2</sup>	167,266	148,135	165,518	17,383	11.7	Deteriorating
<b>Priority 9 - Business Crime, Fraud and Cyber Crime</b>	Number of business crime offences	23,601	15,929	18,802	2,873	18.0	Deteriorating
	Number of business crime offences solved <sup>7</sup>	4,553	2,860	2,780	-80	-2.8	Deteriorating
	Number of fraud crime offences						Improving
	Number of fraud crime offences solved <sup>9</sup>						Deteriorating
	Number of cyber crime offences						Deteriorating
	Number of cyber crime offences solved <sup>9</sup>						Improving
	Percentage of people who have confidence that the policing response to tackling business crime offences is improving (internal survey) <sup>5</sup>	77.0	78.0	79.0	1.0	-	DoT
	<i>Confidence Interval</i> <sup>2</sup>	3.4	3.5	3.6			
	Percentage of people who have confidence that the policing response to tackling fraud is improving (internal survey) <sup>5</sup>	77.0	78.0	79.0	1.0	-	DoT
	<i>Confidence Interval</i> <sup>2</sup>	3.4	3.5	3.6			
<b>Priority 10 - Protecting vulnerable people and supporting victims of crime</b>	Number of domestic abuse offences	27,801	28,951	30,894	1,943	6.7	Deteriorating
	Number of domestic abuse offences solved <sup>7</sup>	3,058	3,455	3,140	-315	-9.1	Deteriorating
	Number of child abuse offences	5,470	5,397	6,282	885	16.4	Deteriorating
	Number of child abuse offences solved <sup>7</sup>	301	315	395	80	25.4	Improving
	Percentage of people who have confidence that the policing response to protecting children and vulnerable people is improving (internal survey) <sup>1</sup>	83.2	89.7	86.3	-3.4	-	Deteriorating
	<i>Confidence Interval</i> <sup>2</sup>	1.0	0.8	0.9			
<b>Priority 11 - Staff</b>	Ethnic Minority employees: percentage of total workforce <sup>9</sup>	3.7	4.2	4.4	0.2	-	Improving
	• % of all Police <sup>11</sup>	3.2	3.7	4.2	0.6	-	DoT
	• % of all staff (excluding PCSOs) <sup>11</sup>	3.7	4.4	4.5	0.2	-	DoT
	• % of all PCSOs <sup>11</sup>	2.5	0.9	1.0	0.0	-	DoT
	• % of all specials <sup>11</sup>	6.9	6.6	6.0	-0.8	-	DoT

**Note 7** -Solved outcomes are crimes that result in: charge or summons, caution, crimes taken into consideration, fixed penalty notice, cannabis warning or community resolution

**Note 8** -This is the number of theft offences in which dogs were stolen, and not necessarily the number of dogs which were stolen

**Note 9** – Ethnic minority employees as a percentage of the total workforce



# 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. Jane Gardner is the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner.**

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

## 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, 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

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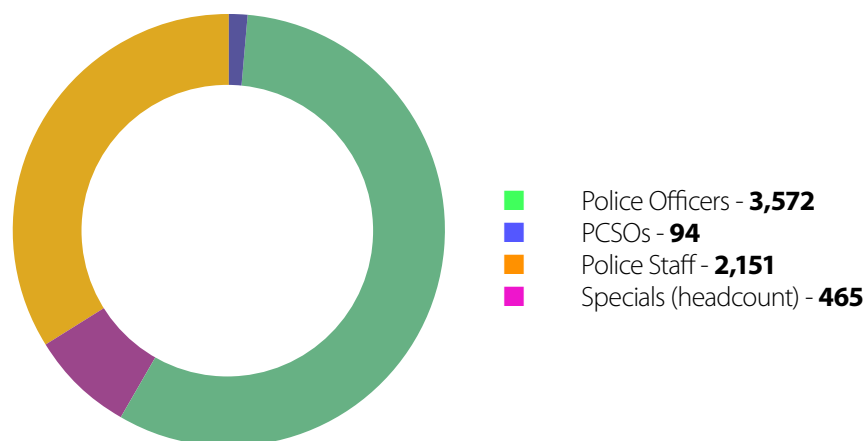
## Our Workforce

Essex Police continues to grow and during the 2022/23 year the police officer establishment will grow by 200 additional officers, 180 of which are as a result of the government's ambition to recruit an additional 20,000 police officers nationally. At the end of 2021/22 the force had recruited 17 additional officers above the established budget of 3,555 to assist in meeting the 2022/23 target of bringing the total number of officers to 3,755 FTE by March 2023.

2022/23 will be the final year of the government's national uplift programme and any further growth from 2023/24 onwards would need to be funded by increases to the council tax precept or from savings elsewhere within the force.

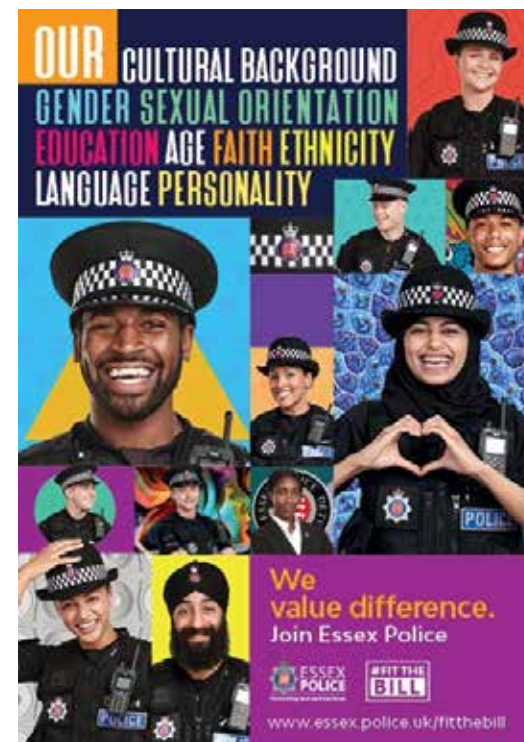
In addition to making the most of our own workforce, partnership working and collaboration permeates throughout the force and is fully embedded within both force business planning and delivering services. The force uses a wide variety of different models and approaches to maximise the benefits working 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. During 2021/22 our police officer strength numbers increased by 159 FTEs to 3,572. The chart below shows the make-up of the workforce for the group as at 31st March 2022.

### Our Workforce - FTEs at 31st March 2022



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 2021/22 compared to previous years, ethnic minority and female proportions have remained strong. The officer ethnic minority position was 4.17% (as a proportion of all officers) as at 31st March 2022 compared to 3.72% a year earlier and female officers represented 35.84% as at 31st March 2022 compared to 34.53% on 31st March 2021.





# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

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## Financial Overview

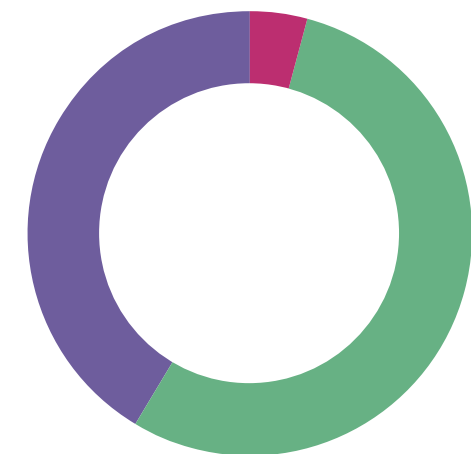
Essex Police's Diversity, Equality and Inclusion In recognising the respective responsibilities of the PFCC and Chief Constable all assets, liabilities and contracts are in the name and ownership of the PFCC whereas most police staff along with police officers and PCSO's are employed by the Chief Constable.

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

## Where the Money Comes From

The chart below shows an analysis of the PFCC's key sources of funding in 2021/22 totalling £330.3m. The Home Office core grant paid to the PFCC accounted for 55% of the total funding. These grants and income raised by council tax funded the net revenue budget for 2021/22 of £330.3m.

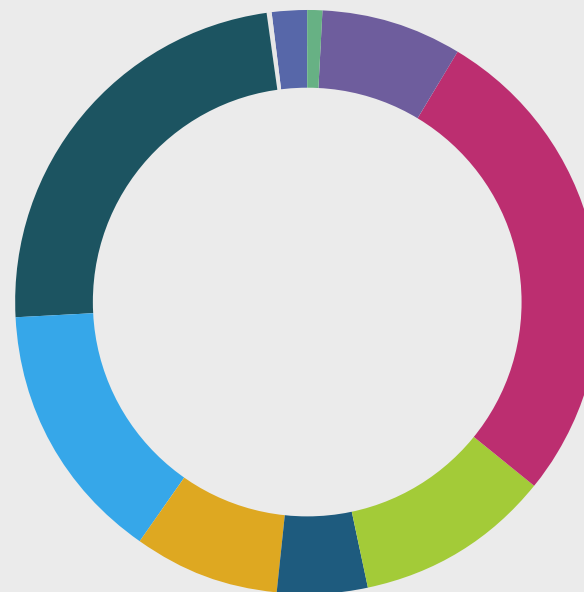
### Funding Sources 2020/22



Home Office **£182.565m**      Council Tax **£134.610m**  
 Specific Grants **£13.125m**

## What the Money is Spent on

The graph below shows an analysis of the Group's net revenue expenditure totalling £327.589m.



National Policing - **£3.051m** (£2.701m, 20/21)  
 Control Room and Incident Management - **£25.288m** (25.711m, 21/22)  
 Local Policing - **£89.709m** (£86.480m, 20/21)  
 Crime and Public Protection Command - **£25.055m** (£30.878m, 20/21)  
 Custody and Criminal Justice - **£16.160** (£16.920m, 20/21)  
 Operational Policing Command - **£27.186m** (23.119m, 20/21)  
 Serious Crime Directorate - **£46.816m** (43.931m, 20/21)  
 Support Service Directorate - **£77.091m** (£69,418m, 20/21)  
 Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner - **£1.648m** (£3.442m, 20/21)  
 Central Costs - **£5.585m** (£5.408m, 20/21)

**Total - £327.589m**



# FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE



## Financial Performance

The Chief Constable has operational control of police officers, PCSOs and police staff (excluding PFCC staff). 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 tables overleaf show budgeted and actual net expenditure, with the latter also being 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 Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

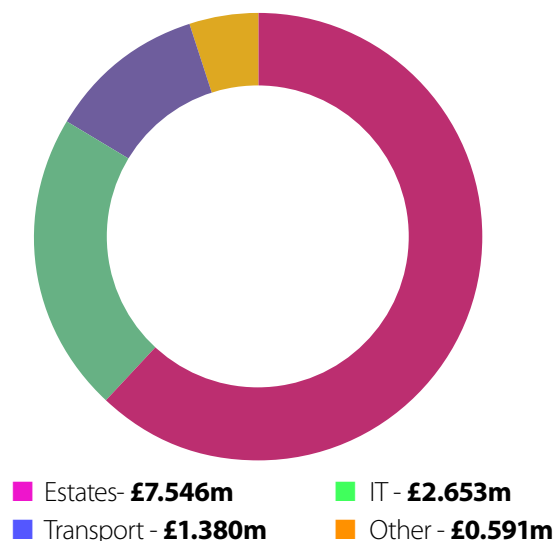
The net expenditure budget of £330.712m, as approved at the Police and Crime Panel in February 2021, included planned contributions of £0.402m from reserves with the remainder of £330.310m funded from general grants and council tax. The actual position for the year was a surplus of £2.711m. The PFCC Group underspent by £1.720m against the latest approved budget with this, less a £0.064m budgeted withdrawal from the reserve, resulting in a net contribution of £1.656m transferred to the General Reserve for future use, and £1.055m transferred to earmarked reserves for specific operations and projects in future years.

Group - 2021/22 Financial Performance	Original Budget	Virements	Current Budget	Actual	Variance over / (under)
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>Employees</b>					
Police Officer pay and allowances	196,955	5,698	202,653	204,178	1,525
PCSO pay and allowances	3,574	9	3,584	3,351	(233)
Police staff pay and allowances	87,709	2,379	90,088	89,980	(108)
Ill-health/medical pensions	4,496	(409)	4,087	4,243	156
Training	1,882	42	1,924	1,935	11
Other employee expenses	1,526	(790)	736	439	(297)
	<b>296,143</b>	<b>6,930</b>	<b>303,073</b>	<b>304,126</b>	<b>1,054</b>
<b>Other Service Expenditure</b>					
Premises	9,978	221	10,199	9,491	(707)
Transport	5,805	96	5,901	6,254	353
Supplies & services	36,871	3,364	40,235	38,081	(2,154)
Third party payments	9,347	(1,602)	7,746	7,756	10
	<b>62,001</b>	<b>2,080</b>	<b>64,081</b>	<b>61,582</b>	<b>(2,499)</b>
<b>Gross Operating Expenditure</b>	<b>358,144</b>	<b>9,010</b>	<b>367,154</b>	<b>365,709</b>	<b>(1,445)</b>
<b>Income</b>	<b>(29,690)</b>	<b>(12,377)</b>	<b>(42,067)</b>	<b>(42,447)</b>	<b>(380)</b>
<b>Net Cost of Services</b>	<b>328,454</b>	<b>(3,368)</b>	<b>325,087</b>	<b>323,261</b>	<b>(1,825)</b>
<b>Other Expenditure / (Income)</b>					
Other Expenditure / (Income)	77	-	77	(12)	(89)
Capital & other adjustments	2,181	2,160	4,340	4,340	-
	<b>2,258</b>	<b>2,160</b>	<b>4,417</b>	<b>4,328</b>	<b>(89)</b>
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>330,712</b>	<b>(1,208)</b>	<b>329,504</b>	<b>327,589</b>	<b>(1,915)</b>
<b>Sources of Funding</b>					
Police grant	(126,258)	6,930	(119,328)	(119,328)	-
Formula funding grant	(56,307)	(6,930)	(63,237)	(63,237)	-
Council tax precept	(134,406)	-	(134,406)	(134,406)	-
Council tax support grant	(10,992)	-	(10,992)	(10,992)	-
Council tax freeze grant	(2,133)	-	(2,133)	(2,133)	-
Collection fund surplus	(214)	-	(214)	(204)	10
	<b>(330,310)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(330,310)</b>	<b>(330,300)</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>(Surplus)/Deficit before Transfer to Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>(1,208)</b>	<b>(806)</b>	<b>(2,711)</b>	<b>(1,905)</b>
<b>Transfer to/(from) Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>798</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>870</b>	<b>1,055</b>	<b>185</b>
<b>Transfer to/(from) the General Reserve</b>	<b>(1,200)</b>	<b>1,136</b>	<b>(64)</b>	<b>1,656</b>	<b>1,720</b>

## Capital Expenditure

A capital investment programme amounting to £19.079m for 2021/22 was approved in February 2021 to maintain the infrastructure needed to support an effective and efficient police service. By March 2022 capital approvals had been updated to £12.170m reflecting decisions to reprofile schemes into future years. 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 ongoing issues with the National Vehicle Framework agreement and worldwide shortages of semi-conductor chips. The £12.170m invested during 2021/22 is shown in the chart below.

### Capital Expenditure 2021/22 (£m)



## Estates

Of a total spend of £7.546m, £3.481m related to the purchase of a depot at Boreham which had previously been leased, £1.878m on completion of refurbishment works at Chelmsford Police Station and the remainder primarily spent on the maintenance and refurbishment of the force estate.

## IT

Investment in IT of £2.653m included expenditure on:

- £1.419m 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; and
- £0.929m on the migration of a data centre

## Transport

Investment in Transport of £1.380m included expenditure on:

- £1.315m for the annual fleet replacement programme; and
- £0.019m on maintenance of the Marine Unit's rigid inflatable boat (RIB)

## Other

This includes investment in body armour of £0.214m, automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) of £0.147m, and firearms and associated component parts of £0.071m.

The force has a capital investment programme totalling £132m over the six year period commencing 2021/22. There are three main areas of spend, Estates, Transport and Information Technology. The programmed investment will support the vision and strategic priorities within the Police and Crime Plan. The main element of spend relates to Estates, with a forecast investment of £77m and Information Technology with a forecast investment of £36m. This requirement is linked to a historic lack of investment in the estate leading to ongoing requirements for modernisation and maintenance, and includes a key project to significantly redevelop and modernise the force HQ site in Chelmsford. The investment in IT relates to a wide range of national and locally led projects with the overriding objective to provide more efficient digital solutions for all aspects of operational policing and their support services.



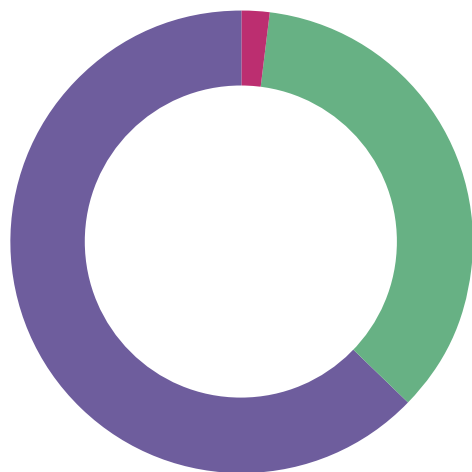


## Capital Funding

Capital resources available to fund capital investment come from four main sources, primarily from capital receipts, government grants and contributions, and revenue contributions. If capital investment exceeds these available resources the force can borrow to finance its capital investment providing it can demonstrate that it is complying with the Prudential Code of Practice which requires any borrowing to be affordable, prudent and sustainable. There was a need to finance 2021/22 capital investment with £7.614m of prudential borrowing but due to the level of cash resources held it has been possible to fund this spend from internal borrowing thereby avoiding interest payments. It is anticipated that there will be a need to externally borrow from 2022/23 onwards to fund future investment plans.

Capital financing resources applied in 2021/22 are shown below.

### Capital - Financing Sources £m



Capital grant and other contributions - **£0.251m**

Capital receipts - **£4.305m**

Prudential Borrow - **£7.614m**

Future capital expenditure is planned to increase over the coming years as investment in Estates and IT takes place with capital expenditure forecast to be in excess of £118m over the next five years, with indicative prudential borrowing of £76m over the same period. The annual revenue cost of borrowing to finance the capital programme is forecast to reach £4.6m per annum by 2026/27.

## Reserves

The revenue reserves are key to the financial strategy of the force, 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 and maintain a General Reserve position of approximately 3% of net revenue expenditure over the medium term
- For the PFCC to apply a prudent approach to reserves
- For earmarked reserves to be created and held for significant events, change programmes and related costs. This includes transformation and saving programmes

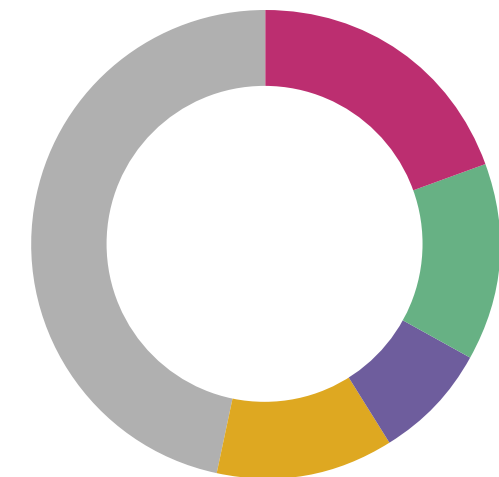
### General Reserve

The General Reserve is held to provide a working balance to protect the force against unexpected cost pressures. The balance on the General Reserve as at 1st April 2021 was £13.162m. The 2021/22 contribution to the General Reserve of £1.656m increases the balance to £14.818m, 4.5% of net revenue expenditure.

## Earmarked Reserves

Included under this heading are revenue earmarked reserves, including the Future Capital Funding Reserve as described in the Balance Sheet and further referred to as the PFCC's earmarked reserves, and which total £17.107m at 31st March 2022. Included within these reserves is £2.565m held on behalf of third parties, an example of which is a reserve to hold receipts received through the Asset Recovery Incentive Scheme (ARIS) to fund crime reduction-related expenditure. The level of reserves alongside the General Reserve are shown in the chart below.

### Useable Reserve Reserves as at 31st March 2022



- Operational Reserves - **£6.233m**
- Reserves held for specific projects - **£4.385m**
- Reserves held by Essex Police but managed as third party reserves - **£2.565m**
- Carry Forward Reserves - **£3.924m**
- General Reserve - **£14.818m**

## Pension Liabilities

Accounting standards require that the total future liabilities for the cost of pension payments to past and present police officers and police staff are fully reflected in the Balance Sheet. Accordingly, the Balance Sheet figures included within the accounts (see note 42) includes net liabilities of £193.569m (2020/21 £249.309m) for police staff and £3,297.849m (2020/21 £3,328.893m) for police officers.

The PFCC 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's arrangements for funding the police staff pension deficit, therefore, mean that the financial position of the PFCC remains sound.

> Officers and firefighters working together to manage safety on the road



# Future Trends and Risks

## Trends in Crime and the Force's Long Term Vision

There is a high and increasing 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 2022, 165,518 offences were recorded, an 11.7% increase (17,383 additional offences) compared to this period in 2021 and a 1% decrease (1,748 fewer offences) compared to this period in 2020. The increase in crime over the last year has primarily been influenced by the Government's easing of restrictions on movements and gatherings in relation to COVID-19.

Prevention remains a key focus of the force building on investment already made during 2019/20 to 2021/22 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 Strategy (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 2021/22 £4.4m savings were delivered with £2.9m of these recurring annually and there continues to be an ambitious savings programme with £4.7m programmed to be delivered in 2022/23. This is in the context of funding challenges from being one of the lowest funded forces in the country.

## 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 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 in recent months, driven by both domestic and global factors, impacting the costs of supplies and services, is expected to result 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 the review of the Essex Police estate to generate capital receipts to fund other vital capital investment and reduce annual revenue estate running costs.

On 1st April 2022 Just Stop Oil (JSO) begun sustained protest activity at petrochemical distribution sites in West Essex and petrol station forecourts. During April and into May 2022 large numbers of JSO protestors disrupted multiple sites in Essex simultaneously, using a wide range of tactics to cause disruption. This was a significant development for Essex Police post year-end with forecast costs of the operational response anticipated to be approximately £6m. The Chief Constable and the PFCC are working together and seeking financial assistance from the Home Office, the extent of which is not known at the time of writing. Any costs not recompensed by the Home Office will need to be met from reserves which would in turn create financial pressures in future years as reserves are replenished.



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:

- **Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (EMSCP)**
  - Cost will continue to escalate due to the continuing delays of the national ESMCP and the Emergency Services Network in delivering a credible, comprehensive, and fit for purpose communications solution
- **Electrification of the Vehicle Fleet** – The Government's ban on the sale of petrol and diesel engine vehicles comes into force in 2030. To meet the target the force needs to take action now to build charging or fuelling infrastructure whilst investing in compliant vehicles presenting with a considerable cost pressure
- **Reducing drug driven violence** – Challenges in relation to drug driven violence if underlying issues are not addressed, competing priorities amongst partners with limited resources to dedicate to this priority, and external factors with the risk of the number of people killed or seriously injured not improving
- **Protecting vulnerable people and breaking the cycle of domestic abuse** – A risk of increase in harm to victims with the potential for more domestic homicides. 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.









# EQUALITY ACT 2010

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# 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](http://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.

### Good governance core principles

- ✓ **Focusing** on the purpose of the PFCC and Chief Constable and on outcomes for citizens and service users;
- ✓ **Ensuring** that both the PFCC and Chief Constable perform effectively in clearly defined functions and roles;
- ✓ **Promoting** the values of the PFCC and Chief Constable and demonstrating the values of good governance through behaviour;
- ✓ **Taking informed**, transparent decisions and managing risk;
- ✓ **Developing** the capacity and capability of the PFCC to be effective, and
- ✓ **Engaging** stakeholders and making accountability real

## Governance Structure



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



**Roger Hirst**



### Chief Constable

- Maintains the Queen'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



**Ben-Julian Harrington**  
Chief Constable

### 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 2021-22

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



**Demand Management**



**Comprehensive Spending Review 2021**



**Public confidence and victim satisfaction**



**Blue light collaboration**



**Recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic**



**Government's PCC Review**



**Police and Crime Plan 2021 – 2024**













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

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