



Essex County Council

Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel

14:00	Thursday, 08 December 2022	Committee Room 1 County Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH
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For information about the meeting please ask for:

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3	Questions to the Chairman from members of the Public The Chairman to respond to any questions relevant to the business of the Panel from members of the public. Please note that members of the public wishing to ask a question must email democratic.services@essex.gov.uk by noon on the day before the meeting and that questions must relate to an item on the agenda for the meeting.	
4	HMICFRS Inspection of the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service - Progress Report Report EPFCP/30/22	14 - 72
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13	Forward Work Plan Report EPFCP/37/22	192 - 193
14	Date of Next Meeting To note that the next meeting will be held on Tuesday 7 February 2023 at 10:00am.	
15	Urgent Business To consider any matter which in the opinion of the Chairman should be considered in public by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) as a matter of urgency.	

Exempt Items

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

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

That the press and public are excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the remaining items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information falling within Schedule 12A to the Local

Government Act 1972, the specific paragraph(s) of Schedule 12A engaged being set out in the report or appendix relating to that item of business.

16 Urgent Exempt Business

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

Agenda item 1

Committee: Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel

Enquiries to: Sophie Campion, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Membership, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest

Recommendations:

To note

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

Membership

(Quorum: 7)

Representing

Councillor D Dadds
Councillor F Ricci
Councillor K Barber
Councillor R Savage
Councillor J Lager
Councillor M Lilley
Councillor P Stalker
Councillor R Playle
Councillor M Garnett
Councillor M Heard
Councillor A Williams
Councillor I Shead
Councillor L McWilliams
Councillor G Collins
Councillor M Sutton
John Gili-Ross
Sheila Murphy
Councillor J Deakin
Councillor A McGurran

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

Minutes of the meeting of the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel, held in Committee Room 1 at County Hall, Chelmsford on Thursday 29 September 2022

Present:**Councillor**

David Dadds
Keith Barber
Russ Savage
Mike Garnett
Mark Heard
Ian Shead
Lynda McWilliams
Gary Collins
Maggie Sutton
Aidan McGurran

Representing

Basildon Borough Council
Brentwood Borough Council
Castle Point Borough Council
Harlow District Council
Maldon District Council
Southend-on-Sea City Council
Tendring District Council
Thurrock Council
Uttlesford District Council
Co-opted Member for Balanced Appointment

Co-opted Independent Members

John Gili-Ross (Chairman)
Sheila Murphy

Also in attendance

Gemma Bint	Democratic Services Officer
Pippa Brent-Isherwood	Chief Executive, Office of the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (OPFCC)
Sophie Campion	Senior Democratic Services Officer, Secretary to the Panel
Jane Gardner	Deputy Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
Roger Hirst	Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC)
Darren Horsman	Strategic Head of Policy and Public Engagement, OPFCC
Rick Hylton	Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive, Essex County Fire and Rescue Service
Janet Perry	Chief Financial Officer, OPFCC
Andy Prophet	Deputy Chief Constable
Emma Tombs	Democratic Services Manager

1 Membership, Apologies and Declarations of Interest

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

1. The membership of the Panel was noted.
2. The following apologies were noted:
 - Cllr Lager, Chelmsford City Council
 - Cllr Ricci, Braintree District Council
 - Cllr Playle, Essex County Council
 - Cllr Stalker, Epping Forest District Council

- Cllr Lilley, Colchester Borough Council
- Cllr Williams, Rochford District Council
- Cllr Deakin, co-opted Member

3. The following declarations were made by Members:

- Councillor Lynda McWilliams declared a Code Interest as her son was currently a serving police officer and her granddaughter was a serving special police officer. Councillor McWilliams participated fully in the meeting.
- Councillor Mark Heard declared a Code Interest as his son was currently a serving police officer. Councillor Heard participated fully in the meeting.

2 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 July 2022 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following minor amendment:

- Page 5, Minute 7, 4th bullet point – amend 'Birmingham' Trent University to read 'Nottingham' Trent University.

3 Questions to the Chairman from members of the Public

There were none.

4 Balanced Appointment Objective

The Panel received report EPFCP/24/22 which updated the Panel on the response received from the Home Office in relation to achieving the Balanced Appointment Objective and recommended that the Panel make the necessary appointments.

The Chairman, on behalf of the Panel, thanked Cllr Lee Scordis for his work on the Panel.

Resolved:

1. That the co-opted members of the panel to achieve the balanced appointment objective were with immediate effect Councillor Aidan McGurran (Labour) and Councillor Jude Deakin (Liberal Democrat).
2. That the co-options remain in place until a further report is received by the Panel as soon as practicable after the elections held in May 2023, ideally at the Annual Meeting of the Panel, in order to make any co-options that may be needed to achieve political balance at that time.

5 Essex County Fire and Rescue Service Annual Report and Statement of Assurance

The Panel received report EPFCP/25/22 which provided the Panel with the draft Essex County Fire and Rescue Service Annual Report and Statement of Assurance 2021-2022.

Prior to the Panel meeting, a workshop had been held with Panel Members to provide feedback to the Commissioner on an earlier draft of the report. The feedback had been incorporated and the changes were listed in the covering report. The Panel had a statutory duty to review and scrutinise the report and make a report or recommendations.

During the discussion the following points were raised:

- Targeted diversity and recruitment. It was explained that recruitment was open to all, however there was a focus on helping to broaden representation and ensure that the service better reflected all communities within Essex.
- In response to further questions about the recruitment process, it was explained that the aim was to reach a wider pool of potential candidates to boost applications from minority groups. Tools such as targeted advertising were used. However, all potential candidates had to meet the required standards for employment and were subject to the same assessments and recruitment processes. There were no specific targets set, the overall aim was to be representative of the community.

Resolved:

That members of the Police, Fire and Crime Panel noted the draft Essex County Fire and Rescue Service Annual Report and Statement of Assurance 2021-2022 and provided feedback to the Commissioner.

6 Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Annual Report

The Panel received report EPFCP/26/22 which provided the Police, Fire and Crime Panel with the PFCC's draft Annual Report for 2021 - 2022.

Prior to the Panel meeting, a workshop had been held with Panel Members to provide feedback to the Commissioner on an earlier draft of the report. The feedback had been incorporated and the changes were listed in the covering report. The Panel had a statutory duty to review and scrutinise the report and make a report or recommendations.

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

- More detail on the reserves held on behalf of partners and third parties was provided which related almost exclusively to the proceeds of crime or moneys held pending clarification.
- Police legitimacy and working within the justice system in terms of police effectiveness. The Commissioner explained that legitimacy was fundamental to British Policing. The Police are part of the justice system and if that system is compromised then police effectiveness is frustrated. Issues around sentencing were acknowledged and areas of change

following lobbying were identified. The Covid pandemic had resulted in significant delays within the court system, particularly in Crown Court.

- The Commissioner clarified some of the aims of increasing collaboration, particularly around the prevention agenda.
- Concern was raised regarding how the Plan priorities linked with priorities in local areas and the appropriateness of a four year plan. In response it was explained that the Police and Crime Plan was a strategic long-term plan for change. In the previous Police and Crime Plan there had been a focus on particular issues such as anti-social behaviour, where targeted interventions and strategies had been successful in reducing those crimes. The current Police and Crime Plan focussed on priorities such as drug-driven violence, domestic violence and violence against women and girls, where more resource was needed. A workshop session to better understand the current Police and Crime Plan priorities was suggested by the Commissioner, which the Panel welcomed.
- Concern was expressed regarding how the priorities fit with the crime data and in particular detection and solved rates. In response it was explained that the crime data shows red in the violent crime areas which are the areas of focus in the 12 priorities and where the most resource is being committed and interventions were needed. The area of dog theft, although having a low number of occurrences, was an area of significant public concern and through the priority, work had already been done to improve the situation with little resource required. In other areas of crime, interventions and resources were already in place to tackle those areas and reduce the numbers.
- On public satisfaction and confidence figures, particularly for those that have experienced crime and anti-social behaviour, the Commissioner outlined the external surveys that were undertaken and other sources of feedback. Reporting on victim feedback and the gap in confidence was an acute area of focus for the service.
- On vision zero, the Commissioner confirmed that he considered that zero deaths from road traffic was achievable. Every death was preventable by changing behaviours and environments and also ensuring active and passive safety in vehicles.
- Concern was raised that the priorities in the Police and Crime Plan 2021-2024 did not include local, visible and accessible policing and that as a result intelligence and knowledge was being lost. Also, the impact on public satisfaction and confidence when the police did not attend incidents. The Commissioner advised that he considered that local, visible and accessible policing was captured within the Plan as part of the first priority on investing more in preventing crime. The Commissioner set out his commitment to crime prevention and how he saw that being achieved through resources, problem-solving interventions and partnership working.
- The Commissioner clarified that changing the long-term strategic plan was a complex process that would require a further round of public consultation and was not something that he was minded to do.
- Specific issues for rural and isolated communities were raised. The Commissioner advised that new legislation had helped for some issues

and the Rural Engagement Teams had been hugely successful and doubled in size. Partnership working was also key in this area.

- Issues were raised regarding investigative skills and solved rates. In response it was explained that a key element was ensuring that crimes were being reported and that had improved. The Commissioner explained some of the challenges with investigating, building a case and taking certain cases to court, particularly where a victim was unwilling to pursue the case. The work that was being done to address these challenges was also explained.
- The issue of police visibility and the benefits of PCSO's was raised. In response the Commissioner outlined what had been done to improve police visibility, particularly with the introduction of the Rural Engagement teams and Town Centre teams and the work being done to tackle crime in hotspot areas.

The Panel developed a number of points of feedback which were recommended to the Commissioner for consideration of inclusion in the final version of the report:

- Clarify the reference to the comparison trend period from five year to four year on page 5 of Annex A – PFCC Annual Report.
- Change the reference to a “longer term downward trend” on page 5 of Annex A.
- Corrections to the error messages on page 8 of Annex A.
- Correction to the number of new officers on page 11 of Annex A.
- Clarify the baseline in the Safer Essex Roads Partnership and alter 2002-2009 to 2005-2009 on page 35 of Annex A.
- Include the increase in collaboration priority in the performance data table on page 47 of Annex A.
- Highlight local, visible and accessible policing in the priorities.

It was agreed that further information would be provided to the Panel on the following issues:

- Detail on attendance and non-attendance by Police for particular crimes would be fed into the Panel's focussed work on this issue.
- Detail on the numbers of funded PCSOs
- Clarification regarding the rules governing the funded PCSOs.

Resolved:

That members of the Police, Fire and Crime Panel noted the draft Annual Report for 2021-2022 and provided feedback to the Commissioner that he will consider for inclusion in the final version of the report which will be provided to members of the Panel 48 hours prior to publication.

7 2023-24 Budget - Baseline Challenge

The Panel received report EPFCP/27/22 which laid out the background issues, the current assumptions, and the baseline challenge in setting the 2023/24 budgets for both Essex Police and Essex Fire and Rescue Services.

The Commissioner introduced the report highlighting the challenges to the budget, including pay negotiations and the current assumptions.

During the discussion the following points were raised:

- Whether the reversal of the National Insurance increase would assist with the budget. It was explained that funding had been made available for that increase on the employers side and it was unknown whether that funding would be rolled back, or could be used to invest in services.
- Whether there were schemes in place to assist employees with the current cost of living crisis. It was confirmed that the service was doing what it could to assist employees, however the uncertainty around funding made it difficult to make long-term commitments. Work had been done on reviewing mileage rates and ensuring that staff were aware of schemes and assistance available. It was acknowledged that staff were feeling the pressure and that moving forward a focus on ensuring a fair funding settlement would be key.

Resolved:

The Panel noted the background issues, the current assumptions, and the baseline challenge, in setting the 2023/24 budgets for Essex Police and Essex Fire and Rescue Services.

8 Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's Decisions Reports

The Panel received and raised questions on report EPFCP/28/22 which provided information about financial and strategic decisions made by the PFCC.

The Panel sought further clarification on the following decisions:

Appendix A – Police Decisions

- 071 - PAC Stage 2 Capital Bid – no details provided
- 073 - Licence to Alter Building – no details provided
- 082 - Purchase of software – no details provided

Appendix B – Fire and Rescue Decisions

- 027 - Renewal of the Firelink Contract 2022/23

The Commissioner explained that the decisions which contained no detail were due to operational sensitivities, but if there was a specific question from a Panel Member, information could be provided to that Member in a written or hard copy format. Assurance was given regarding the robust process followed to ensure that the publication status was as open and transparent as possible.

In response to a general query about recovering the cost of a drug-driving lab report from a perpetrator who had been convicted, the Commissioner agreed to look into the situation.

Resolved:

That the Panel received and noted the report.

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

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

- A letter from the new Home Secretary to Policing leaders had been received setting out the ambitions and focus.
- The Commissioner was pleased with progress in delivering expansion which will be at 3,755 by the end of March 2023. It was noted that there was a higher level of transfers out of Essex Police to other police services mainly due to the incentive payment that the Metropolitan Police was offering to transferees, which was an additional challenge.
- There was a further uplift from the Ministry of Justice in terms of victim support services and for male rape support. Additionally further funding underpinning serious violence interventions.
- Progress would be reported to the Panel at its next meeting regarding the HMICFRS Report.

Resolved:

That the verbal report was noted.

10 National Association of Police, Fire and Crime Panels Update

The Panel received a verbal update from the Chairman of the Panel on a recent Local Government Association Police (Fire) and Crime Panels webinar covering a number of issues.

Resolved:

That the verbal report was noted.

11 Forward Work Plan

The Panel received report EPFCP/29/22 setting out the planned business of the Panel.

Resolved:

That the Panel received the report, agreeing the addition of an item discussed under the agenda item on the PFCC's Annual Report, to hold a workshop to better understand the current Police and Crime Plan priorities.

12 Date of Next Meeting

The Panel noted that the next meeting would take place on Thursday 8 December 2022.

There being no urgent business, the meeting closed at 4:50pm.

Chairman

Report title: HMICFRS Inspection of the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service - Progress Report	
Report to: Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel	
Report author: Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority (PFCCFRA)	
Date: 8 December 2022	For: Noting
Enquiries to: Pippa Brent-Isherwood (Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer) pippa.brent-isherwood@essex.police.uk 01245 291613	
County Divisions affected: All Essex	

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to review how the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service (ECFRS) is addressing the issues raised in its latest inspection by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) and how the PFCC is monitoring and ensuring progress against this.

2. Recommendations

The Police, Fire and Crime Panel is invited to note the contents of the report, identifying any areas that require further clarification or comment.

3. Context / Summary

Background

HMICFRS's second full inspection of the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service was undertaken in September / October 2021. The fieldwork took place over a six-week period through a blend of virtual and on-site interviews, desktop reviews and focus groups. This second inspection was brought forward by a year compared with the inspectorate's original timetable, thereby shortening the time available to the service to demonstrate improvements since the previous inspection in 2019. This meant, for example, that, although the service demonstrated improved identification and understanding of the risks it faces, this had not yet translated into tangible reductions in risk by the time inspectors returned. Whilst not published until July 2022, the timing of the fieldwork also means that the report reflects the position of the service over a

year ago, as the service, and indeed the country, were beginning to emerge from the coronavirus pandemic.

The inspection framework monitors each fire and rescue service's effectiveness, efficiency and how well it looks after its people. HMICFRS's categories of graded judgement are:

- Outstanding
- Good
- Requires improvement
- Inadequate

The full report is attached for the Panel's reference at Appendix 1. Although the inspectorate rated the service as "Requires Improvement" across all three areas of the assessment, it recognised that the service is good at understanding fire and other risks and acknowledged the improvements made in learning from operational activity both locally and nationally. Inspectors noted that the service has plenty of trained incident commanders and assesses them regularly and properly. This allows the service to manage the whole range of incidents it faces safely, assertively and effectively. However, a lack of staff training has limited the number of specialist staff and firefighters who are equipped to respond to certain major incidents, such as marauding terrorist attacks (MTAs). In addition, Fire Control staff are not consistently involved in the service's debriefing and exercising arrangements.

The report acknowledges the positive progress made in understanding what the service needs to do both in terms of preventing harm and protecting the public and describes the robust system the service uses to inform the public about ongoing incidents and to keep them safe during and after the response. The report notes how the service uses data and intelligence received from partner organisations to target Home Fire Safety Checks based on risk and vulnerability, and how it effectively targets and educates people who display fire-setting behaviour through a range of interventions. However, inspectors found an inconsistent level of understanding about vulnerability across the workforce.

Inspectors found that the service now has clear prevention and protection, enforcement, estate and fleet strategies, which clearly support delivery of its Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP). They found that ECFRS has responded positively and proactively to the learning from the Grenfell Tower tragedy, including through the development of its Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP), and that the fire safety audits sampled were of a high standard. However, the cause of concern relating to fire protection work issued to the service following its initial inspection remains open due to shortfalls in the service's resources and skills to deliver its RBIP, the limited quality assurance of protection activity, low levels of enforcement activity, and lack of proactive engagement with businesses to promote fire safety.

Inspectors recognised that the service now has a much more detailed understanding of its financial position and that there is increased rigour amongst senior managers in the scrutiny of how resources are allocated

compared with what they found in 2019. They also found a strong emphasis on improving the environmental performance of the service's buildings and reducing its carbon footprint. However, the inspectorate remains concerned about the service's use of resources and how this aligns with risk across the domains of prevention, protection and response. Inspectors also commented that the service's use of reserves is not sustainable, and that its reserves strategy does not clearly set out how reserves will be utilised to promote new ways of working.

In relation to how well the service looks after its people, the report reflects the significant improvements made since 2019, particularly in promoting the right organisational values and culture (which was graded as "Inadequate" during the previous inspection). As such, the cause of concern issued to the service following the first inspection in relation to values and culture has been closed. The inspectorate found that the service has effective wellbeing policies, which are well understood by staff, and provides a significant range of support to support both the physical and mental health of its workforce. There is also an effective performance management system in place, which allows the service to develop and assess the individual performance of all staff effectively. However, the service still needs to do more to increase the diversity of its workforce and to address disproportionality in recruitment and retention in order to make the workforce representative of the community it serves, including by encouraging applicants from diverse backgrounds into middle and senior level positions.

Overall, the findings of the inspection reflect the priorities and areas for improvement set out in the Fire and Rescue Plan 2019 – 2024, including the need to increase the level of prevention and protection work done by staff on stations to reduce risks to the public, to invest more in the training of fire protection staff, and to continue to embed the positive values and culture it has introduced so that everybody in the service knows what is expected and required of them. As such, the inspection confirmed the PFCC's own assessment of where the service is doing well and the areas in which it needs to continue to progress.

Progress to Date

As well as retaining the cause of concern relating to fire protection, HMICFRS identified 26 areas of improvement that the service is expected to demonstrate progress against ahead of the next inspection cycle. The number of areas of improvement identified within each pillar is shown below:

Pillar	Number of areas of improvement
Effectiveness	9
Efficiency	7
People	10

The service already had plans in place to enhance its work in these areas by the time the report was published, has made good progress since the inspection took place, and is clear about what it needs to do next. This improvement activity is incorporated within the service's Annual Plan, which in

turn is aligned with the Fire and Rescue Plan. Progress in delivering the Annual Plan is monitored through the service's Continuous Improvement Board and the PFCC's Performance and Resources Board on a quarterly basis. An initial report specifically on the service's progress in responding to the findings of the inspection report and its ongoing action plan was also reported to the PFCC's Strategic Board in September 2022. This report is summarised at Appendix 2. Highlights in respect of progress include:

- Values and ethics have been incorporated into key people processes (including recruitment) and Learning and Development content.
- Succession plans have been developed across the service and skills gaps are being reviewed.
- Monthly analysis is now undertaken into incidents where the service's response standards have not been met, to identify how response times might be improved.
- A dedicated Prevention and Protection Analyst took up post in June 2022 to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of targeted prevention activity.
- A training package is being procured to enable operational crews to inspect low and medium risk rated buildings as part of the Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP).
- A Prevention Board has been established to monitor and review progress against the Prevention Strategy and evaluate its effectiveness.
- A Business Engagement Lead has been employed.
- An app has been developed and implemented to assist in identifying organisations that are persistently responsible for false alarms due to apparatus (FADA) and facilitate the targeting of early engagement and education activity.
- A senior leadership development programme has been put in place.
- A specific programme of learning has been developed and delivered for Control operators.
- A new e-learning package on safeguarding and identifying vulnerable people has been launched for all staff and completion is being monitored. Reporting of safeguarding concerns has increased as this has been rolled out.
- A training package on Marauding Terrorist Attacks (MTAs) has been developed for support staff that is due to be rolled out in Quarter 4 of this financial year.
- The benefits (including financial) of collaboration projects are captured and monitored through a dashboard that is reported to each meeting of the Essex Emergency Services Collaboration Strategic Governance Board chaired by the PFCC. The programme is currently projected to deliver £12.9m of the £15.1m efficiency savings target, halfway into the 10-year programme. "Wave 2" of the programme is currently being developed.
- The restructured Procurement Team is now fully recruited to, and the service's first Procurement Strategy has been approved, allowing the service to adopt a centralised, category management approach to procurement.

On 26 October 2022, at the invitation of the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, colleagues from the PFCC's office and Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service carried out an independent peer review of the service's progress in addressing the cause of concern identified by HMICFRS specifically around protection activity. This found that robust plans were in place and that there was a clear commitment to delivering the actions required to close the inspectorate's concern. Good progress had been made in terms of recruitment and training, however there are still insufficient resources to meet the Risk Based Inspection Programme, and more work still needs to be done to clarify the rationale for some of the performance targets. The review also scrutinised the very high proportion of "satisfactory" outcomes from audits, which may suggest that the targeting of audits is flawed and could be a product of their focus on the most high-risk buildings. The peer review also found a varying appetite for enforcement activity across the county and some inconsistencies in the application of quality assurance processes across the service.

11 actions arose from the peer review, relating to areas including:

- The management information available to the service, its alignment with HMICFRS's requirements and the service's ability to benchmark itself against other services nationally. Issues were also identified around the triangulation of evidence and the consistency of the narrative across the service in terms of the direction of travel against the Protection Strategy.
- Resource and succession planning for the department over the next six to 12 months, given anticipated retirements.
- The feasibility of delivering the Risk Based Inspection Programme.
- Partnership working with other organisations, such as Trading Standards and the Health and Safety Executive.
- The quality assurance strategy and process.
- The consistency of the approach to enforcement across the county, as well as relative to other fire and rescue services.

A new Assurance Strategy, incorporating a quality management policy, was already in development prior to the peer review, and is due to be presented to the PFCC's Strategic Board for approval later in December 2022. Seven inspecting staff are currently working towards Level 4 training and will be fully qualified by the end of December. Efforts are being made to recruit more Level 4 competent staff, but in the context of significant competition from the private sector. The NFCC is now assisting with recruitment nationally to help services maintain their resilience through anticipated retirements etc. In the meantime, further training is being procured and the service is recruiting a second Business Engagement Officer to support this activity. Various Power BI datasets and dashboards are being developed, and the RBIP is being re-written based on research from elsewhere (particularly Essex's "family group" of services) as well as the service's capacity to deliver audits. As part of this, the service is revisiting its rationale for targeting buildings to audit and is also clarifying the process to be undertaken where unsatisfactory audits are completed. All this work is due to be delivered by January 2023, when HMICFRS is due to re-visit the service.

The peer review was followed by a “deep dive” into delivery of the service’s Prevention Strategy on 22 November. This heard that the restructure of the central team designed to support delivery of the strategy better - which was being implemented as HMICFRS’s fieldwork was being completed - is now fully recruited to. Four additional Fire Bike team members were also recruited between March and October 2022.

Alongside other activities, the new Prevention Team developed a dedicated summer / water safety lesson and delivered this through multiple platforms and channels, including social media. A new risk modelling tool has been developed in partnership with the Essex Centre for Data Analytics for Accidental Dwelling Fires (ADFs), which is allowing ECFRS to understand trends over time and to target Home Fire Safety Checks, door knocking exercises and Safe, Well and Secure events more effectively. A recent evaluation of the impact of Home Fire Safety Checks confirmed that, as a higher number of safety checks are completed in an area, there is a reduction in the number of properties that suffer ADFs. 78% of participants said they had learned how to stay safe from fire in the home during their visit and just over half (52%) said they had already done something differently which would enable them to live more safely at home as a result. 97% said they would recommend the service to friends and family.

The new Prevention and Protection Analyst has also completed analysis of risks relating to water and drowning and shared this with partners at a specially themed meeting of Safer Essex in November 2022. This will now inform the development of a broader partnership approach to water safety across the county which, amongst other things, will identify water related incident hotspots and develop and implement innovative solutions to reduce incidents in those areas. The service is also collaborating with Essex County Council and Essex Police on the sharing of data to produce a vulnerability matrix to support the targeting of other educational programmes. A full training review has been completed for the team and a new training plan is in place for 2022/23.

Actions relating to the “people” pillar of the inspection framework are captured within the service’s People Strategy. Progress in delivering this is monitored through an internal governance board, on which the PFCC is represented, and reported on a regular basis to the PFCC’s Performance and Resources Board.

The risks associated with the potential non-delivery of the areas for improvement identified through the inspection process and the Fire and Rescue Plan are also captured in the service’s strategic risk register, which is subject to additional scrutiny and assurance via the independent Audit Committee.

Next Steps

The service is due to receive a revisit from HMICFRS to follow up on the cause of concern relating to “protecting the public through fire regulation” and the progress made in this regard during the week commencing 16 January 2023. Ahead of this, work will continue to focus all competent resource on auditing high risk premises and to support Inspecting Officers to complete their Level 4

Diplomas, which will further increase capacity to complete audits.

Other immediate next steps, due for completion by the end of the financial year, include:

- Further work to develop bespoke station plans focusing on local risks and community needs. Station plans will have measurable targets for delivery and progress will be incorporated into station management performance dashboards.
- A peer review of the organisational risk management process.
- Reviews of the Prevention, Protection and Response Strategies to ensure clear links to organisational risks and the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) priorities. This work will be followed by reviews of the structures of the Prevention, Protection and Response Teams to ensure a clear rationale for the allocation of resources to activities.
- Further progression of collaborative projects to achieve their projected benefits including the roll-out of the Tri-Service Rural Community Officer pilot currently operating in the Dengie peninsula to the Uttlesford district.
- Production of a Capital / Treasury Management Strategy.
- Development of a strategic approach and process to understand the skills needed to carry out specific roles in certain locations to deliver the IRMP.
- Development of an approach around direct entry and accelerated development to support the service's leadership and wider resourcing arrangements.
- Review of the Dignity at Work Policy, which includes how the service will manage any instances of bullying, harassment and discrimination.
- Widening exercising around Marauding Terrorist Attacks (MTAs) across the workforce, including support staff, with effect from Quarter 4 of this financial year.
- Development of a business engagement plan linked to the Protection Strategy.

The service's third full HMICFRS inspection is expected in 2023/24.

4. Appendices

Appendix 1: Fire & Rescue Service 2021/22 – Effectiveness, efficiency and people: An inspection of Essex County Fire and Rescue Service

Appendix 2: HMICFRS Inspection: Findings and progress

Fire & Rescue Service 2021/22

Effectiveness, efficiency and people

An inspection of Essex County Fire and Rescue Service



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About this inspection

This is our third inspection of fire and rescue services in England. We first inspected Essex County Fire and Rescue Service in July 2019, publishing a report with our findings in December 2019 on the service's effectiveness and efficiency and how it looks after its people. Our second inspection, in autumn 2020, considered how the service was responding to the pandemic. This inspection considers for a second time the service's effectiveness, efficiency and people.

In this round of inspections of all 44 fire and rescue services in England, we answer three main questions:

1. How effective is the fire and rescue service at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks?
2. How efficient is the fire and rescue service at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks?
3. How well does the fire and rescue service look after its people?

This report sets out our inspection findings for Essex County Fire and Rescue Service.

What inspection judgments mean

Our categories of graded judgment are:

- outstanding;
- good;
- requires improvement; and
- inadequate.












Good is our expected graded judgment for all fire and rescue services. It is based on policy, practice or performance that meet pre-defined grading criteria, which are informed by any relevant [national operational guidance](#) or standards.







If the service exceeds what we expect for good, we will judge it as outstanding.

If we find shortcomings in the service, we will judge it as requires improvement.

If there are serious, critical or systemic failings of policy, practice or performance of the FRS, then consideration will be given to a graded judgment of inadequate.

Overview

Question	This inspection	2018/19
 Effectiveness	 Requires improvement	Requires improvement
Understanding fires and other risks	 Good	Requires improvement
Preventing fires and other risks	 Requires improvement	Requires improvement
Protecting the public through fire regulation	 Requires improvement	Requires improvement
Responding to fires and other emergencies	 Requires improvement	Good
Responding to major and multi-agency incidents	 Requires improvement	Good
Question	This inspection	2018/19
 Efficiency	 Requires improvement	Requires improvement
Making best use of resources	 Requires improvement	Requires improvement
Future affordability	 Requires improvement	Good

Question	This inspection	2018/19
 People	 Requires improvement	Requires improvement
Promoting the right values and culture	 Requires improvement	Inadequate
Getting the right people with the right skills	 Requires improvement	Requires improvement
Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity	 Requires improvement	Requires improvement
Managing performance and developing leaders	 Requires improvement	Good

HM Inspector's summary

It was a pleasure to revisit Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, and I am grateful for the positive and constructive way that the service engaged with our inspection.

I am satisfied with some of the improvements in performance of Essex County Fire and Rescue Service in keeping people safe and secure from fires and other risks, but there are more areas where the service still needs to improve.

We were pleased to see that the service has made progress since our 2019 inspection with developing an effective planning framework and aligning its strategic plans, assessing and modelling risk, learning from operational activity, improving its culture and adopting service values, and providing out-of-hours support for technical fire safety advice.

But we were disappointed to see that the service hasn't made the progress we expected since our 2019 inspection. For example:

- the service isn't aligning resources to risk, including meeting its prevention and protection strategies;
- the service hasn't addressed future financial challenges and appropriate use of resources;
- workforce productivity still needs to increase;
- the service isn't meeting its own response standards;
- it hasn't implemented national operational guidance;
- it doesn't fully understand and address equality issues;

- it doesn't address disproportionality in recruitment and retention;
- it needs to do more to drive out all unacceptable behaviour and tackle bullying and harassment; and
- it needs to make sure staff are trained well enough to carry out all their responsibilities.

These are the findings I consider most important from our assessments of the service over the last year.

During our inspection in 2019, we found that significant improvement in the organisational culture was required. I do not underestimate the scale of that challenge and I am encouraged by the improvements that are being made, but there is still work to do. The service has a clearly defined set of values, which are now more widely understood, but it must make sure they are fully embedded and that all staff understand what is expected and behave appropriately to maintain a professional and effective service to the public, and a working environment where all staff feel safe and supported.

The service's resources need to better align to risk across prevention, protection and response. We found that although the service has addressed the previous area for improvement in identifying and understanding the risks it faces, this has not yet translated into the reduction in risk the service has stated it will achieve. The service still doesn't have enough resources to meet its risk-based inspection programme and the [cause of concern](#) from 2019 remains. I am disappointed to see the lack of involvement by station-based staff in prevention work.

I have asked the inspection team to revisit the service to review the progress being made against the cause of concern and areas for improvement, and to monitor overall progress through continuous engagement.



Roy Wilsher

HM Inspector of Fire & Rescue Services

Service in numbers



Response

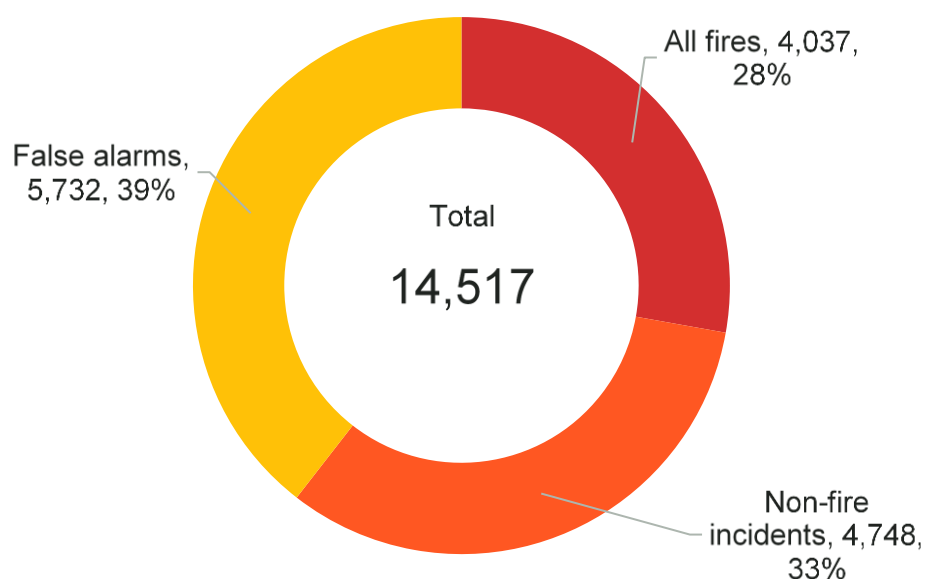
	Essex	England
Incidents attended per 1,000 population Year ending 30 June 2021	7.82	9.36
Home fire safety checks carried out by fire and rescue service per 1,000 population Year ending 31 March 2021	2.75	4.47
Fire safety audits per 100 known premises Year ending 31 March 2021	5.30	1.70
Average availability of pumps Year ending 31 March 2021	85.0%	86.4%



Cost

Firefighter cost per person Year ending 31 March 2021	£23.30	£23.73
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Incidents attended in the year to 30 June 2021

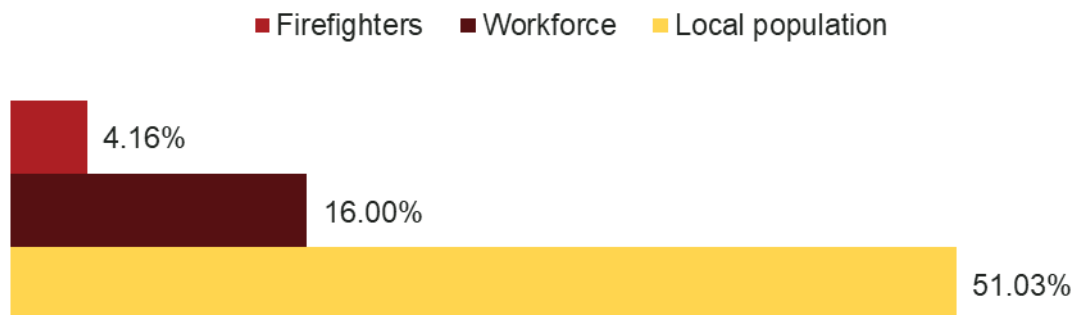




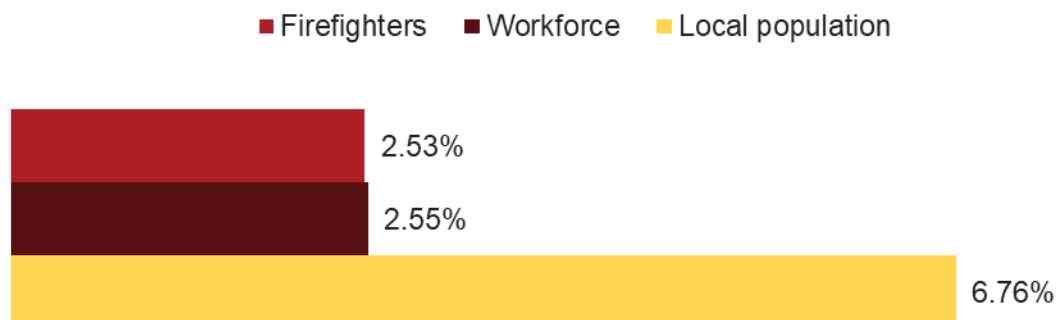
Workforce

	Essex	England
Five-year change in total workforce 2016 to 2021	0.54%	-1.60%
Number of firefighters per 1,000 population Year ending 31 March 2021	0.62	0.62
Percentage of firefighters who are wholetime Year ending 31 March 2021	56.3%	64.4%

Percentage of population, firefighters and workforce who are female as at 31 March 2020



Percentage of population, firefighters and workforce who are from ethnic minority backgrounds as at 31 March 2020



For more information on data and analysis throughout this report, please view the [‘About the data’ section of our website](#).

Effectiveness



How effective is the service at keeping people safe and secure?



Requires improvement

Summary

An effective fire and rescue service will identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue risks its community faces. It should target its fire prevention and protection activities to those who are at greatest risk from fire and make sure fire safety legislation is being enforced. And when the public calls for help, it should respond promptly with the right skills and equipment to deal with the incident effectively. Essex County Fire and Rescue Service's overall effectiveness is good.

We are encouraged by the work the service has done since our last inspection to identify and better understand the risks it faces, including the tools it is using to do this. It must continue working to make sure that all risk information is up to date and available to staff who need it, particularly the information gathered from its protection activity.

It now has clear prevention and protection strategies based on its [integrated risk management plan \(IRMP\)](#), but there has been very little improvement in allocating resources to carry out the work it has identified as needing to be done. The cause of concern from our last inspection remains, as the service still doesn't have enough trained specialist staff to carry out fire safety audits of its highest-risk premises and it isn't meeting its own targets.

The service is still not meeting its own response standards. It must better align its resources to risk. The service is implementing a new response strategy and it must make sure it has the right resources in the right place at the right time.

Only staff at a few locations are trained and able to respond to marauding terrorist attack-type incidents, but all emergency responders could be required to attend this type of incident and if firefighters aren't following the same procedures as other responders then public safety could be compromised.

Understanding the risk of fire and other emergencies



Good (2019: Requires improvement)

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service is good at understanding risk.

Each fire and rescue service should identify and assess all foreseeable fire and rescue-related risks that could affect its communities. Arrangements should be put in place through the service's prevention, protection and response capabilities to prevent or mitigate these risks for the public.

Area for improvement

The service should ensure it gathers and records relevant and up-to-date risk information.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

The service knows the risks it faces

The service has assessed an appropriate range of risks and threats after a thorough IRMP process. When assessing risk, it has considered relevant information collected from a broad range of internal and external sources and data sets.

The service makes good use of a [risk modelling](#) tool to identify current hazards and risks. This tool is available to managers. They can use it to see overall risk scores through a county-wide map, and can focus on command area, district or station. It contains links to guidance on the reason for each risk and the relevant data sources.

But the service could do more to identify and understand future risks, such as how new and proposed developments will impact its plans.

The service has consulted local communities and started a constructive dialogue. It has used various consultation methods to understand risks and explains how it intends to mitigate them. For example, it created a British Sign Language video to explain the consultation.

But it didn't:

- share the outcomes of the consultation by the same methods;
- show the consultation's overall effectiveness; or
- assess how effective the activities were.

The service has an effective IRMP

After assessing relevant risks, the service has recorded its findings in an easily understood IRMP for 2020 to 2024. The IRMP corresponds well to the service's planning framework, as well as to plans at departmental level. It describes how the service should effectively resource prevention, protection and response activity, so it can mitigate or reduce the risks and threats the community faces now. We are encouraged that the service has addressed this area for improvement, which we established in our last inspection.

The service gathers and communicates information about the highest risks well

The service routinely collects and records risk information about people, places and threats it has identified as involving the highest risk. It has established processes and systems to gather site-specific risk information, which it makes readily available to response staff, although not all records are up to date. This lets them identify, reduce and mitigate risk effectively.

The service continues to communicate urgent risk critical information effectively to fire stations.

Where appropriate, the service passes risk information to other organisations such as police, health and social services, and local authorities.

The service must keep risk information up to date

We are concerned that during our review, not all site-specific risk information records were up to date. Some of the out-of-date records are classed as high or very high risk.

During our last inspection, we established gathering and recording relevant and up-to-date risk information as an area for improvement. The service has not fully addressed this. It is vital that firefighters attending emergency incidents have current and reliable risk information to resolve incidents safely and effectively.

The service should improve the way it records and shares information gathered by protection teams

We are disappointed to find that the risk information collected by protection teams isn't always shared throughout the service. And risk information from protection work isn't always updated. This means not all staff can access it and understand it, so the service can't effectively identify, reduce and mitigate risk. More work is needed so staff in response roles can access all the information they need.

The service uses feedback from operational activity to help it better understand risk

The service routinely updates risk assessments and uses feedback from local and national operational activity to inform its planning.

Our review of incident debriefs found the service has incorporated recommendations for learning into development and training for staff.

The service continually updates the data it uses to determine risk. This allows it to focus its activities where they will make the most impact. It also means the service can regularly review its emergency response options.

The service has used learning from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry to reduce risk

During this round of inspections, we sampled how each fire and rescue service has responded to the recommendations and learning from Phase 1 of the Grenfell Tower fire inquiry.

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service has responded positively and proactively to learning from this tragedy. At the time of our inspection, the service was on track to having assessed the risk of each high-rise building in its service area by the end of 2021.

It has carried out a fire safety audit of buildings it has identified as high risk and all high-rise buildings that have cladding similar to the type installed on Grenfell Tower. It has also collected and passed relevant risk information to its prevention, protection and response teams.

Preventing fires and other risks



Requires improvement (2019: Requires improvement)

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service requires improvement at preventing fires and other risks.

Fire and rescue services must promote fire safety, including giving fire safety advice. To identify people at greatest risk from fire, services should work closely with other organisations in the public and voluntary sector, and with the police and ambulance services. They should provide intelligence and risk information with these other organisations when they identify vulnerability or exploitation.

Areas for improvement

- The service should make sure it allocates enough resources to meet its prevention strategy.
- The service should make sure staff understand how to identify vulnerability and safeguard [vulnerable people](#).
- The service should evaluate its prevention activity so it understands what works.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

The service's prevention strategy isn't achieving the stated risk reduction

The service's prevention strategy is clearly linked to the risks identified in its IRMP. But this doesn't yet translate into the reduction in risk the service has stated it will achieve.

We are, however, encouraged to see that the service is developing a clear prevention strategy to guide its work. It now needs to effectively use its resources to achieve its aims.

The service's focus on those most at risk is improving

The service is improving the way it focuses its activity on those most at risk. It is moving towards a more risk-based approach, prioritising people and targeting its response. It is continuing its work on embedding a person-centred approach.

Of the 5,109 [home fire safety checks \(HFSCs\)](#) carried out by the service in 2020/21, 2,954 (58 percent) were targeted at households with a person over the age of 65 and/or a person with disabilities. This is similar to the proportion across all services in England (57 percent).

The service isn't carrying out enough prevention activity in local communities

Firefighters could do more to contribute towards prevention activity. The service has committed to more HFSCs by firefighters, but it hasn't yet achieved its aims. We found only limited examples of station-based staff carrying out other activities – such as road and water safety work – in their local communities. These activities are identified in the service's strategy. As a result, [vulnerable people](#) and others may not be getting the support they need.

The service is completing fewer HFSCs per 1,000 people in the service area than the rate across all services in England. It carried out 5,109 HFSCs in 2020/21. This is 2.8 per 1,000 people in the service area, compared to 4.5 per 1,000 people throughout all services in England. The service has committed to increasing the number of person-centred HFSCs by firefighters and developing a more inclusive approach.

Firefighters show little awareness or understanding of station or district prevention planning. We did find some examples of good local prevention initiatives, but they were infrequent. These initiatives were mainly driven by the enthusiasm and commitment of individual staff members, rather than being part of a structured service approach.

Not all on-call stations are contributing to prevention work. The service allows some stations to opt out for reasons of availability and capacity.

Partnership working helps the service understand risk and plan prevention activity

The service receives data and intelligence from organisations it works with. This allows it to base HFSCs on risk and vulnerability.

It is a member of the [Safer Essex Roads Partnership](#), leading the FireBike and Community Speed Watch initiatives. The service uses data from its partner

organisations to inform its plans. Safer Essex Roads Partnership has recently launched Vision Zero – a programme that aims to reduce the number of road deaths in Essex to zero.

The service has increased prevention work since the easing of pandemic restrictions

We considered how the service had adapted its prevention work during our COVID-19 specific inspection from 28 September to 13 October 2020. At that time, we found it had adapted its public prevention work well. Over the period of the pandemic that we reviewed, the service conducted fewer HFSCs and [safe and well visits](#) than it would normally carry out.

Since then, we are encouraged to find that the number of in-person safe and well visits and HFSCs has risen. The service's reporting shows station staff completed 151 HFSCs in the first quarter of 2021, compared with just 2 in the first quarter of 2020. Officers in the central prevention team have increased the number of safe and well visits they have carried out in the first quarter of 2021 by 41 percent, compared with the same period in 2020.

The service tackles fire-setting behaviour

The service works closely with the police and other local partners to share information and support a multi-agency approach to fire-setting behaviour. It has a dedicated arson reduction manager. In Maldon and Dengie, a tri-service officer (fire and rescue, police, and ambulance) works as part of a pilot scheme to reduce arson on farms and in rural communities.

The service targets and educates people who show signs of fire-setting behaviour, using a range of suitable and effective interventions. This includes visiting schools as part of its education programme and running the Juvenile Fire-Setters intervention scheme. Its website includes information on arson prevention.

Staff in the central prevention team are skilled and confident in carrying out safe and well visits

Well-trained officers in the central prevention team have the right skills and confidence to make safe and well visits. These visits cover an appropriate range of hazards that can put vulnerable people at greater risk from fire and other emergencies. But we are disappointed to find that station-based staff aren't carrying out safe and well visits.

Not all staff understand vulnerability or have the confidence to respond to safeguarding concerns

The service must make sure all staff know how to identify vulnerability and [safeguard](#) vulnerable people. We found an inconsistent level of understanding about vulnerability. Many staff we interviewed told us they have been trained to act appropriately and promptly in response to safeguarding concerns. They said they feel confident, know how to identify safeguarding concerns and are aware of the processes to follow. But some staff are less confident; they said they are not aware of the processes and don't feel adequately trained to raise concerns.

The service works well with others to reduce the number of fires and other risks

The service works with a wide range of organisations to prevent fires and other emergencies. These include local authority teams, the NHS, police, BOC Home Oxygen Service and other members of the Safer Essex Roads Partnership.

Despite a strong relationship with adult social care, the service doesn't make a significant number of referrals. In 2019/20, it made referrals from 4 percent (329 of 7,694) of visits.

Other organisations make referrals to the service so it can give home safety advice to reduce the risk of fire. The number of referrals from and into the service has increased since the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions. Closer working with the NHS and police has also resulted in a recent increase in referrals from those partners. The service acts appropriately on the referrals it receives.

The service routinely exchanges information with other public sector organisations about people and groups at greatest risk. It uses the information to challenge planning assumptions and target prevention activity. It has contributed to specific interventions in vulnerable communities and helped a resettlement project for refugees.

As part of its response to COVID-19, the service co-chaired the [Essex Resilience Forum \(ERF\)](#), along with the Essex Strategic Coordination Group and the multi-agency information cell. The service is an active member of the ERF, and leaders told us this helps the service to be fully engaged in multi-agency responses.

The service needs to keep improving the way it evaluates its prevention strategy

In 2019 we recommended that the service should evaluate its prevention work so it:

- understands the benefits; and
- makes sure it is reducing risk in local communities.

We have seen progress. Some prevention activities take account of feedback from the public, other organisations and other parts of the service (for example, the service's education programmes). But the service needs to do more work to understand the overall impact of its prevention strategy.

The service hasn't formally reviewed its prevention partnerships. Without this evaluation, it can't demonstrate the partnerships' effectiveness.

Protecting the public through fire regulation



Requires improvement (2019: Requires improvement)

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service requires improvement at protecting the public through fire regulation.

All fire and rescue services should assess fire risks in certain buildings and, when necessary, require building owners to comply with fire safety legislation. Each service

decides how many assessments it does each year. But it must have a locally determined, risk-based inspection programme for enforcing the legislation.

Cause of concern

The service has insufficient resources to meet its risk-based inspection programme. It is currently not meeting its targets. As a result, partially skilled operational staff are carrying out high-risk visits, although the service acknowledges that these are not audits. There is an absence of quality assurance of audits and visits. There is a low amount of enforcement activity. There is limited proactive engagement with businesses to promote fire safety.

Recommendation

By 30 November 2022, the service should develop and implement a clear strategy for how it will effectively meet its obligations in relation to ensuring compliance with fire safety. This should include ensuring it has appropriately trained resources, a consistent use of enforcement powers; and a mechanism to assure itself on the quality of its inspections.

Area for improvement

The service should ensure it works with local businesses and large organisations to share information and expectations on compliance with fire safety regulations.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

The service has a protection strategy linked to its IRMP

The service's protection strategy is clearly linked to the risk it has identified in its IRMP.

Staff from all parts of the service are involved in protection activities, and when needed, they feed back information effectively. For example, operational crews carry out fire safety visits at lower-risk premises and refer them to specialist fire safety officers when they need to. The service then uses information from these visits to adjust planning assumptions and direct activity.

The service aligns activity to risk, but it can't resource it well enough

The service's risk-based inspection programme focuses on the highest-risk buildings. The service collects data and uses it to establish which buildings are highest risk and should be included in the inspection programme. It also actively manages its Building Risk Review programme and has identified more premises to add to it.

In 2020/21 the service carried out 2,612 protection audits, equating to 5.3 per 100 known premises. This is higher than the average across services in England of 1.7 per 100. But worryingly, we found that the service doesn't have enough trained specialist

staff to carry out protection activities at its highest-risk premises. At 31 March 2021, the service had recruited an additional 11 fire protection staff; although due to training requirements only 19 staff were competent to undertake high-risk inspections compared to 31 in 2016.

The service isn't consistently auditing the highest-risk buildings it has identified in the timescales it has set. The service told us it only inspects 18 percent of very high-risk premises as often as it should, according to its set timescales. For high-risk premises, the proportion is only 33 percent. From April to August 2021, the service was 541 audits behind its target, with the situation becoming worse each month. As a result, the cause of concern from our last inspection remains.

The service has adapted its protection activities since the easing of pandemic restrictions

We considered how the service had adapted its protection activity during our COVID-19 specific inspection from 28 September to 13 October 2021. At that time, we found it had adapted its protection work well. Since then, we are encouraged to find audits have continued and the service identifies the changing risk profile as restrictions ease. It is working to mitigate those changing risks, for example, in relation to fires in food and drinks venues.

The service has carried out fire safety audits at high-rise buildings

The service has carried out audits at all high-rise buildings it has identified as having cladding similar to the type installed on Grenfell Tower. It makes information gathered during these audits available to response teams and control operators, so they can respond more effectively in an emergency.

At the time of our inspection, the service was on track to have visited all the high-rise, high-risk buildings it had identified in its service area by the end of 2021.

The fire safety audits we sampled were completed to a high standard

We reviewed a range of audits carried out across the service of different types of premises. This included audits:

- which were part of the service's risk-based inspection programme;
- which were carried out after fires at premises where fire safety legislation applies;
- where enforcement action had been taken; and
- at high-rise, high-risk buildings.

The audits we reviewed were completed to a high standard in a consistent, systematic way. They were in line with the service's policies. The service should ensure it makes all relevant information from the audits available to operational teams and control room operators.

There is not enough quality assurance or evaluation of protection activity

The service carries out limited quality assurance of its protection activity. There is no formal quality assurance of inspecting officers' work or that of other staff. And it doesn't routinely collect equality data as part of its inspection programme.

It doesn't have good evaluation tools in place to:

- measure its effectiveness; or
- make sure all sections of its communities get equal access to the protection services that meet their needs.

Enforcement activity has increased, but it still needs work

During our last inspection in 2019, we were disappointed to find staff were reluctant to act when premises repeatedly breached fire safety. There is now a growing appetite within the service for enforcement, but there is still work to do.

In the year ending 31 March 2021, the service issued 313 informal notifications and 11 enforcement notices. It didn't issue any alteration notices or prohibition notices, and it didn't undertake any prosecutions.

The service responds promptly to building consultations

The service responds to most building consultations on time. This supports its statutory responsibility to comment on fire safety arrangements at new and altered buildings. The service responded to 95 percent (1,060 of 1,110) of all building consultations received in 2020/21 within the 15-day time frame.

The service works with other organisations to regulate fire safety

The service works closely with other enforcement agencies to regulate fire safety, and it routinely exchanges risk information with them. It works with local authority partners when responding to building consultations and through its Building Risk Review programme.

We found the service communicates effectively with the relevant people during the enforcement process. It also engages with those who have an interest in public safety through [safety advisory group](#) meetings.

The service isn't proactively engaging with businesses to promote fire safety compliance

In our last inspection, we recommended the service improves the way it works with local businesses and large organisations to share information and expectations on compliance with fire safety regulations. It does engage with businesses through its [primary authority scheme](#) but still needs to do more. Therefore, the area for improvement remains.

The service isn't doing enough to reduce unwanted fire signals

The service takes limited action to reduce the number of unwanted fire signals (any fire alarm signal other than a genuine fire or test signal). There is a process for staff to follow, and the service supports and advises businesses. But in the year ending 31 March 2021 it attended 99 percent (1,472 of 1,485) of automatic fire alarm calls and the total number of fire-related false alarms remains steady.

This means engines may not be available to respond to genuine incidents because they are attending false alarms. It also creates a risk to the public, with more fire engines travelling at high speed on the roads.

The service has effective out-of-hours support for technical fire safety advice

In our last inspection, we recommended the service improves its arrangements for giving specialist protection advice out of hours. We are encouraged to see it has addressed this. The service now has arrangements in place.

Responding to fires and other emergencies



Requires improvement (2019: Good)

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service requires improvement at responding to fires and other emergencies.

Fire and rescue services must be able to respond to a range of incidents such as fires, road traffic collisions and other emergencies in their area.

Areas for improvement

- The service should make sure its response strategy provides the most appropriate response for the public in line with its [integrated risk management plan](#).
- The service should make sure its operational staff have good access to relevant and up-to-date cross-border risk information.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

The service needs to make sure resources are well aligned to risk

The service recognises its response strategy isn't clearly linked to the risks identified in its IRMP. Leaders couldn't always explain the rationale for the location of all the service's fire engines and response staff, or their working patterns.

But we are encouraged to see the service is implementing a new response strategy to make sure resources are better aligned with risk. For example, it has identified core stations to help manage its resources. This should help the service have staff and engines in the right place at the right time.

The service is converting four of its day-crewed stations to an on-call duty system. This is ongoing. It based this decision on data and risk analysis from the IRMP process.

The service isn't meeting its own response standards

There are no national response standards of fire and rescue services' performance for the public. But the service has set out its own response standards in its IRMP.

Its current response standards are:

- to attend 90 percent of all operational incidents within 15 minutes; and
- to attend all potentially life-threatening calls in an average of 10 minutes or less.

The service doesn't meet its standards.

In the year to 31 March 2021, the service's average response time to potentially life-threatening calls was 10 minutes and 23 seconds. This has improved since our last inspection, when it was an average of 10 minutes and 48 seconds (between 1 April 2018 and 31 December 2018).

In 2020/21, the service attended 86 percent of all operational incidents within 15 minutes. This is the same percentage as in 2018.

Home Office data shows that in the year to 31 March 2021, the service's average response time to all [primary fires](#) was 9 minutes and 44 seconds. This is in line with the average for significantly rural services in England (9 minutes and 45 seconds).

To support its response strategy, the service aims to have 66 engines available at 5.00pm, 6.00pm and 7.00pm each day. The service didn't meet this target for any months in the 2020/21 period.

During the 2020/21 period, on average, 85 percent of engines were available across the service. This figure was 98.6 percent for wholetime engines and 79.2 percent for on-call engines.

The service's crewing model isn't helping it meet the fire standards it has set. In our last inspection, we reported that staff can book leave at short notice, meaning the service had to find cover. This is still a problem.

We are also concerned that in 2020/21, there were 27 instances where there was a failure to mobilise a fire engine due to problems with the mobilising system. This can result in resource being drawn from elsewhere to cover and delays in attending incidents.

Staff understand how to command incidents safely

There are trained incident commanders in the service, and it assesses them regularly and properly. At 31 March 2021, there were more accredited incident commanders (439) in the service than the number required (314). This lets the service safely, assertively and effectively manage the whole range of incidents it could face, from the small and routine to complex multi-agency incidents.

As part of our inspection, we interviewed incident commanders from different parts of the service. Those we interviewed are familiar with risk assessing, decision making and recording information at incidents in line with national best practice. They are also familiar with the [Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles \(JESIP\)](#).

Fire control isn't involved enough in all the service's activities

[Fire control](#) staff aren't consistently involved in the service's debrief and assurance activity. For example, the service asks control staff to give written feedback following incidents, but it doesn't often invite them to attend debriefs. And it doesn't consistently pass information from debriefs to control staff.

The service doesn't often involve control staff in exercises and there is no control-specific exercise schedule. Control management wants to increase the team's involvement.

The service needs to be able to handle simultaneous fire survival guidance calls

The service hasn't sufficiently reviewed its ability to give fire survival guidance to many callers simultaneously, as we would have expected it to. This was identified as learning for fire services after the Grenfell Tower fire. The service has provided some fire survival guidance training, but not all control staff are confident they could give fire survival guidance to many callers simultaneously. The service plans to address this with more training.

Fire control has systems to exchange real-time risk information with incident commanders, other responding partners and supporting fire and rescue services. Maintaining a good awareness of emergency incidents as they are happening helps the service give the public accurate and tailored advice.

Staff can easily access risk information

We sampled a range of risk information, including:

- permanent long-term records;
- temporary short-term records;
- what is in place for firefighters responding to incidents at high-risk, high-rise buildings; and
- what information fire control holds.

All the records we checked were detailed. Staff could easily access and understand them.

Firefighters can access risk information through [mobile data terminals](#) and control staff have access to the same risk information as firefighters responding to incidents.

Not all cross-border risk information is available to crews

Firefighters need risk information so they can respond safely and effectively to incidents. The service's crews can't access cross-border risk information from neighbouring services in London and Kent. When we visited fire stations in Essex, we found cross-border information for other services wasn't always available on mobile data terminals.

The service is good at evaluating operational performance

As part of the inspection, we reviewed a range of emergency incidents and training events.

In response to our last inspection, the service introduced a new debrief policy. It now has an effective system for staff to use so they can learn better from operations.

We are pleased to see the service routinely follows its policies to make sure staff command incidents in line with operational guidance. Staff update internal risk information with the information the service receives. Formal and informal debriefing after operational incidents is embedded in the service. And leaders tell staff what the service has learned from operational incidents. It holds debrief reports centrally and makes them available to all staff via the intranet.

We are encouraged to see the service is contributing towards, and acting on, learning from other fire and rescue services and operational learning gathered from other emergency service partners. For example, after a fire in a silo at an Essex grain terminal, the service shared its learning with Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service, as there is a similar facility in that area.

The service hasn't yet implemented national operational guidance

It is disappointing to see there has been a delay in the service adopting [national operational guidance](#), which has not yet been implemented. It plans to implement it fully by 2023.

The service is good at communicating incident-related information to the public

The service has good systems in place to tell the public about ongoing incidents, and to help keep them safe during and after incidents. It uses a range of social media platforms, as well as traditional press releases. It has improved the accessibility of its website.

It has good communication arrangements with partner organisations across the county. For example, it is part of the warn and inform group in the [local resilience forum](#).

Responding to major and multi-agency incidents



Requires improvement (2019: Good)

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service requires improvement at responding to major and multi-agency incidents.

All fire and rescue services must be able to respond effectively to multi-agency and cross-border incidents. This means working with other fire and rescue services (known as intraoperability) and emergency services (known as interoperability).

Areas for improvement

- The service should ensure that its procedures for responding to terrorist-related incidents are understood by all staff and are well tested.
- The service should make sure it participates in a programme of cross-border exercises, sharing the learning from these exercises.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

The service is prepared for major and multi-agency incidents

The service has effectively anticipated and considered the reasonably foreseeable risks and threats it may face. These risks are listed in both local and national risk registers as part of its IRMP.

There is a wide range of significant risks in the county, including [Control of Major Accident Hazards sites](#). In our inspection, we found the service has established policies, plans and procedures for declaring and responding to major incidents, including a multi-agency response.

It is also familiar with the significant risks neighbouring fire and rescue services might face, and that it might reasonably be asked to respond to in an emergency. Firefighters in Essex have access to some risk information from neighbouring services up to 10 kilometres over the border. It can't access risk information from neighbouring fire and rescue services in London and Kent.

A lack of staff training has the potential to negatively affect how the service can respond to some major and multi-agency incidents

We inspected the service's arrangements for responding to different major incidents, including marauding terrorist attacks. It hasn't trained all firefighters to respond to marauding terrorist attack-type incidents and currently relies on a limited number of staff.

Only specialist officers, and firefighters considered part of the exclusive response team, are trained and able to respond to these incidents. This could affect how firefighters work alongside other blue light responders. If they aren't following the same procedures, public safety could be compromised.

The service works well with other fire and rescue services

The service supports other fire and rescue services responding to emergency incidents. It has procedures in place and it manages them through its emergency planning team. It is intraoperable with these services and can form part of a multi-agency response.

The service has successfully deployed to other services and has used [national resilience assets](#). For example, it provided a high-volume pump for wide-scale flooding incidents and it has mobilised tactical advisors.

Incident commanders have been trained on JESIP

Incident commanders are trained in and are familiar with the JESIP. In our inspection, we found crew and [watch](#) managers were less confident with JESIP than more senior officers.

The service gave us strong evidence that it consistently follows these principles.

It also showed it had participated effectively in the local resilience forum during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Some, but not all, staff take part in cross-border exercises

The service participates in cross-border exercises with neighbouring fire and rescue services. This means they can work together effectively to keep the public safe. They consider risks presented by major events, where the service could give support or ask for help from neighbouring services. We are encouraged to see the service uses feedback from these exercises to inform risk information and service plans.

But the service isn't doing enough to make sure all staff, including those in fire control, have opportunities to take part in cross-border exercises. It isn't making sure all staff are confident enough to respond to cross-border incidents. We established this as an area for improvement in our last inspection, and the service still needs to address it.

The service is an active member of the ERF

The service has good arrangements in place to respond to emergencies with other organisations in the ERF. These arrangements include comprehensive plans for Control of Major Accident Hazards sites, as well as specific risk information for sites that pose additional risks.

The service is a valued partner in the forum. It has representatives on the forum's management board, strategic and tactical co-ordinating groups and subgroups. It also takes part in regular training events, and it uses the learning to develop planning assumptions for responding to major and multi-agency incidents.

The service uses national learning

The service keeps itself up to date with [national operational learning](#) from other fire services and [joint organisational learning](#) from other blue light partners, such as the police service and ambulance trust. It uses this learning to inform planning assumptions that it makes with its partners.

Efficiency



How efficient is the service at keeping people safe and secure?



Requires improvement

Summary

An efficient fire and rescue service will manage its budget and use its resources properly and appropriately. It will align its resources to the risks and priorities identified in its [integrated risk management plan \(IRMP\)](#). It should try to achieve value for money and keep costs down without compromising public safety. It should make the best possible use of its resources to achieve better results for the public. Plans should be based on robust and realistic assumptions about income and costs. Essex County Fire and Rescue Service's overall efficiency requires improvement.

We found that the service still lacks resource planning that clearly links to strategic priorities, so it cannot rationalise how it allocates resources to prevention, protection and response activities.

The service has made improvements to the way it scrutinises its budgets, with senior managers having better oversight of financial plans. But it must address the future financial challenges it faces, and plan for the anticipated £4m cumulative budget shortfall by 2025. The service's use of [reserves](#) is not sustainable, and it does not make clear how it uses reserves to promote better ways of working.

The workforce could be more productive. The arrangements for managing performance are weak and don't clearly link resource use to the IRMP and the service's strategic priorities. Station plans are too generic and not widely understood by staff.

Collaboration opportunities with emergency service partners are actively pursued through regular group meetings and established working relationships. We heard examples of joint working with emergency service partners and were told about plans to create a joint police and fire workshop facility. At the time of the inspection, though, we found little evidence of significant efficiencies through collaboration, and no clear evidence of collaborations offering value for money.

The service now has a digital and data strategy that guides developments in information and communication technology. Since our last inspection, new systems to improve how it records and uses information have been implemented. We look forward to seeing how these improve effectiveness and efficiency.

Making best use of resources



Requires improvement (2019: Requires improvement)

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service requires improvement at making best use of its resources.

Fire and rescue services should manage their resources properly and appropriately, aligning them with the services' risks and statutory responsibilities. Services should make best possible use of resources to achieve the best results for the public.

The service's budget for 2021/22 is £74m. This is a 1.4 percent increase from the previous financial year.

Areas for improvement

- The service needs to show a clear rationale for the resources allocated between prevention, protection and response activities. This should be linked to risks and priorities set out in its [integrated risk management plan](#).
- The service should assure itself that its workforce is productive.
- The service should assure itself that it makes the most of collaboration opportunities and that they are value for money.
- The service should make sure that it is taking action to reduce non-pay costs and can demonstrate how it is achieving value for money.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

The service's plans don't effectively support its objectives, but it is making improvements

We are disappointed to see that the service still can't show a clear rationale for the resources allocated between prevention, protection and response activities. The service's plans (including allocating resources to prevention, protection and response activities) still aren't consistent with the risks and priorities identified in its IRMP. For example, the service is behind on its risk-based inspection programme due to a lack of competent staff, and it isn't carrying out enough activity to meet all the priorities set out in its prevention strategy.

But we are encouraged to see the service is less often allocating resources based on previous funding allocations. As part of the improvements it has made so far, the service is giving budgets greater scrutiny. It has removed areas of historic underspending and the 2021/22 budget better reflects actual cost estimates. But it doesn't always use sound scenarios to inform plans.

The service is overseeing its financial plans better, with greater engagement from senior leaders. It now reviews and updates its [medium-term financial plan](#) quarterly. This lets the service incorporate in-year changes and revised assumptions into current plans. It can also continually monitor them.

There is increased rigour in the scrutiny processes for deciding how the service will allocate resources in the future. For example, the service has plans to change its crewing model; it is in the process of converting four day-crewed stations to the [on-call](#) duty system. It is also carrying out a restructure of the prevention team. This shows the service is getting better at approaching financial planning and IRMP planning together.

We found that the service has financial controls in place through its monitoring and scrutiny arrangements. This reduces the risk of misusing public money.

The service could do more to make sure its workforce is productive

The arrangements for managing performance are weak and don't clearly link resource use to the IRMP and the service's strategic priorities. Station plans are too generic; staff don't widely understand them or use them effectively to improve performance.

As we found in our last inspection, the service should do more to make sure its operational workforce is as productive as possible. This includes considering new ways of working and more engagement in prevention work. It still isn't using its firefighters well to meet its targets. The service feels there is capacity that it could use for this purpose. It should make sure it does use it.

Staff raised concerns about the use of regular overtime and how often staff have to move between stations to support the crewing of fire engines. This is likely to be negatively affecting how efficiently the service uses its time to fulfil its priorities.

There have been some improvements to managing performance. For example, senior managers use Microsoft Power BI dashboards to make sure they are better informed about all their responsibilities. Staff have welcomed the recent investment in new technology. They feel it will improve capacity and operational performance.

The service can't yet show its collaboration efforts are resulting in efficiencies

The service can't yet show significant improvements in the way it uses collaboration to make efficiencies. This was an area for improvement in our last inspection, and it still needs addressing.

We are encouraged though to see it is actively exploring opportunities to work with other emergency responders. The service has established working relationships with emergency service partners and it aims to collaborate further. Examples of collaboration beyond the fire sector are:

- sharing premises with other blue light services;
- creating a pilot tri-service officer role; and
- providing a cost-recovery service to the ambulance trust.

The service is planning a joint fleet workshop with the police, and is aiming to phase in a fully collaborative approach to maintenance and workshop facilities. The service also plans to invest further in fleet maintenance equipment for servicing ambulances for the East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust. The budget for 2021/22 contains a £10,000 proposal to upgrade hydraulic lifts.

The service should make sure it monitors, reviews and evaluates the results and value for money of its collaborations, and uses them to learn and make decisions.

The service has business continuity plans in place

The service has good continuity arrangements in place for areas where threats and risks are high. It regularly reviews and tests these threats and risks, so staff are aware of the arrangements and their associated responsibilities. We are pleased to find [fire control](#) is using business continuity plans well. Control regularly tests fallback procedures, and it used its control business continuity plans when the pandemic affected staffing.

The service can't show it is giving value for money

The service doesn't have a clear understanding of how its costs compare to other similar fire and rescue services. There are no metrics in place to measure value for money. The service doesn't currently collect or monitor any financial metrics. Nor has it done any [benchmarking](#) of costs to identify areas of comparatively high or low costs. This means it can't be sure it is giving value for money.

Procurement isn't centralised within the service; different departments have their own procurement staff. This means the service is unlikely to be making the best use of its resources and may not be getting the most efficient results from procurement. We found an improved approach in some areas to developing robust business cases for growth and investment, but it is not clear the whole service is systematically following this approach.

Making the fire and rescue service affordable now and in the future



Requires improvement (2019: Good)

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service requires improvement at making the service affordable now and in the future.

Fire and rescue services should continuously look for ways to improve their effectiveness and efficiency. This includes transforming how they work and improving their value for money. Services should have robust spending plans that reflect future financial challenges and efficiency opportunities, and they should invest in better services for the public.

Areas for improvement

- The service needs to better understand the financial challenges it faces. It should strengthen the assumptions that underpin its plans to manage the risk of fire and other risks now and in the future.
- The service should have a clear and sustainable strategic plan for the use of its reserves which promotes new ways of working.
- The service needs to assure itself that it is maximising opportunities to improve effectiveness and efficiency through the better use of technology.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

The service isn't addressing future financial challenges

The service has a limited understanding of future financial challenges, which weakens its ability to mitigate its main or significant financial risks. The service anticipates a cumulative budget shortfall of £4m by 2025, and there are currently no plans to tackle this.

The service budgets to spend more than its income during every year of the current medium-term financial plan. The service uses both general and earmarked [reserves](#) every year to balance the budget.

Its planning assumptions aren't robust, realistic or prudent. It doesn't adequately recognise the wider external environment or the inclusion of scenario planning for future spending reductions, or opportunities to invest in service improvements.

The opportunities the service has identified to make savings or generate further income are limited. It doesn't yet have any plans to make sustainable savings that will bring its spending in line with its income.

The service's use of reserves isn't sustainable

The service's plan for using its reserves isn't sustainable. It doesn't say how it will use reserves to promote new ways of working.

The current plan will see the general reserve drop to just £240,000 by 2024/25. This is risky for the service, particularly as all areas of the budget that were traditionally subject to underspending have been stripped out. The service's reserves strategy, published in March 2021, says 3 percent of net revenue expenditure is the adequate level of general reserve. But £240,000 is only 0.3 percent.

Total earmarked reserves will also fall to £4.8m by 2024/25. This means the service has no cushion to protect it from unforeseen spending. And there is no financial headroom to invest in improvement and innovations.

Fleet and estates strategies support future service provision

The service's estate and fleet strategies have clear links to the IRMP. This includes work associated with converting day-crewed stations to on-call. Both strategies make the most of opportunities to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

The service manages its estates well, with rigorous performance monitoring in place. There is also a strong emphasis on improving the environmental performance of buildings and reducing the service's carbon footprint.

It also actively manages its fleet and replaces engines after 15 years. A few years ago, the service tried out some collaborative engine procurement and specification work with Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, but it has now abandoned this approach.

The service regularly reviews both strategies so it can assess the impact of any changes in estate and fleet provision, including the effect on risk.

There are some ambitious projects listed in the service's capital programme, but they are all at very early stages of development. None are fully costed or funded. High-value capital projects such as the proposed joint fleet workshop with the police will rely upon the service selling assets.

The service needs the capability and capacity to make future technical changes

The service actively considers how changes in technology and future innovation may affect risk. It also seeks to exploit opportunities to improve efficiency and effectiveness presented by changes in technology. This is aligned to the service's IRMP through its digital and data strategy, which also guides how it develops its information and communications technology (ICT).

We are encouraged that since our last inspection the service has been implementing new systems to improve how it records and uses information. This includes information for training and development, and for prevention and protection records. But the service should make sure its systems are improving effectiveness and efficiency as intended. This was an area for improvement in our last inspection, and that area for improvement remains.

We found the ICT service is improving, with a more efficient service desk and an internal ICT liaison arrangement, pairing departments with specific ICT staff members. There is a strategy and business case to plan investment in ICT. The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex approved the scope and funding of this project in March 2021, and the service is working on the detail.

The service must make sure it has the capacity and capability it needs to achieve sustainable change, and that it routinely seeks opportunities to work with others to improve efficiency and give better services in the future.

The service takes advantage of opportunities to secure external funding and generate income

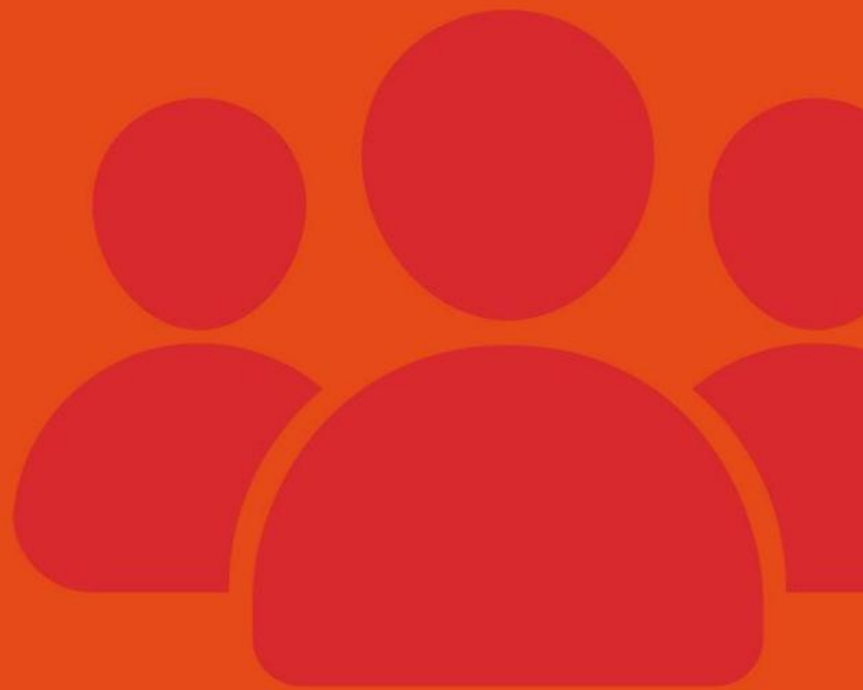
The service actively considers and exploits opportunities for generating extra income.

It has secured some external funding and support to bring about improvements to the service it gives the public. This includes:

- sponsorship from several sources for its Firebreak intervention programme;
- the donation of a car from a manufacturer;
- the donation of fire bikes from a local motorcycle dealer;
- support from Essex Police for the service's education programme; and
- a local authority grant for the provision of smoke alarms.

The service has recently ceased its trading arm as it found the risks and responsibilities outweighed the benefits. The company is in the process of voluntary liquidation.

People



How well does the service look after its people?



Requires improvement

Summary

A well-led fire and rescue service develops and maintains a workforce that is supported, professional, resilient, skilled, flexible and diverse. The service's leaders should be positive role models, and this should be reflected in the behaviour of staff at all levels. All staff should feel supported and be given opportunities to develop. Equality, diversity and inclusion are part of everything the service does and its staff understand their role in promoting it. Overall, Essex County Fire and Rescue Service requires improvement at looking after its people.

We are encouraged to find that the culture of the service is improving since our last inspection, as it continues to address previous failings. Senior leaders have been more visible to staff and are driving the change. But there is still lots more work to do, for example, the service needs to make sure that its values are fully embedded, and that staff feel able and supported to challenge unacceptable behaviour. The service must review the effectiveness of its policies and do more to tackle bullying, harassment and discrimination. More needs doing to improve support for victims and to remove barriers to reporting problems.

The service must do more to increase the diversity of its workforce. More work is needed to address disproportionality in recruitment and retention to make the workforce representative of the community.

Workforce planning must take full account of the skills and capabilities needed for the service to be able to meet the requirements of its IRMP. Staff need to be appropriately trained, particularly to carry out their managerial responsibilities, and should have easy access to resources. Staff in specialist roles should be afforded opportunities to undertake [continuing professional development](#). The service doesn't manage temporary promotions well. We found evidence of them being in place for longer than they should be.

The service should improve how it manages career pathways and make sure its processes to identify, develop and support high-potential staff and aspiring leaders are open and fair.

Promoting the right values and culture



Requires improvement (2019: Inadequate)

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service requires improvement at promoting the right values and culture.

Fire and rescue services should have positive and inclusive cultures, modelled by the behaviours of their senior leaders. Health and safety should be promoted effectively, and staff should have access to a range of wellbeing support that can be tailored to their individual needs.

Areas for improvement

- The service should make sure all staff understand and demonstrate its values.
- The service should monitor secondary contracts to make sure working hours are not exceeded.
- The service should make sure that its absence/attendance procedures are consistently applied.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

The culture is improving, but the service has more work to do

We are encouraged by the cultural improvements the service has made since our last inspection. The service has a clearly defined set of values, which are now more widely understood, but we found places where they are not fully embedded and we are keen to see sustained progress over the long term.

There is a better working culture in parts of the service, with staff more engaged in decisions that affect them. Staff in fire stations gave examples of the most senior leaders being more visible and listening to their concerns and suggestions.

The experiences of individuals at fire stations depend on the behaviours of others. We found that the service doesn't always challenge unacceptable behaviours that aren't in line with its values, and middle managers don't always deal with problems as they arise. These include accounts of bullying. This affects staff wellbeing.

Staff told us there are still some divisions between different teams, such as between [on-call](#) and [wholetime](#) members of staff, and those who are operational and non-operational.

The service should make sure the right information and support is available to staff, so it empowers them to be confident to challenge negative behaviours when they happen.

The service needs to do more to make sure it effectively implements the new national [Core Code of Ethics](#).

The service promotes mental and physical health and wellbeing

The service has effective wellbeing policies available to staff, who understand the policies well. A significant range of wellbeing support is available to support both physical and mental health. For example, the service offers [trauma risk management](#) following significant incidents. Support is available through line managers, [occupational health](#), counselling and therapy, including cognitive behaviour training. The service also provides a mental health first aid course, fitness testing, medicals and health screening.

When pandemic restrictions meant some staff were working remotely, the service adopted a way of communicating with them digitally.

The service has Dignity at Work Champions, who offer peer support to staff. Not all staff were aware of this, but those who have used the support – and those who offer it as champions – spoke positively about the initiative.

Most staff understand and have confidence in the wellbeing support processes available. Of the respondents to our survey, 93 percent (340 of 366) told us they feel able to access services to support their mental wellbeing.

We found that managers understand the welfare arrangements for staff and can implement these when needed. In our survey, 80 percent (294 of 366) of respondents told us they had had a conversation about their health and wellbeing with their manager. The majority of these (251 of 294) have a conversation at least once a month. But this still leaves 20 percent of respondents who have not had a conversation at all.

Staff understand and have confidence in health and safety policies

The service continues to have effective health and safety policies and procedures, which staff understand well. It learns from health and safety events and has reporting and monitoring mechanisms.

These policies and procedures are readily available and promoted well to all staff. The service updates staff on health and safety issues through bulletins, which are now available through the pdrPro system (software for fire and rescue services).

Our survey showed that 92 percent (338 of 366) of respondents felt their personal safety and welfare were treated seriously at work. Representative bodies agree the service manages the health and safety of its staff well. Both staff and the representative bodies who replied to our survey have confidence in the service's approach to health and safety.

A health and safety issue was raised by staff on several occasions that breathing apparatus communications are not as reliable or effective as they could be. This included reports of muffled sounds, interference and low range. The service should make sure its breathing apparatus communication equipment is fit for purpose and staff have confidence in it.

The service needs to make sure it adheres to working time regulations

During our last inspection, we found the service didn't adequately oversee staff working hours. And there was a lack of reliable information about secondary employment. This is despite the service having a policy on working time restrictions for people employed on multiple contracts.

Secondary employment is low compared to other fire and rescue services. At 31 March 2021, 0.2 percent of wholetime firefighters had a dual contract with another service, 15.4 percent had a dual contract in Essex, and 6.6 percent had other external employment.

In this inspection, we found local managers were aware of the policy. But we are still not confident the service can be sure all staff are well rested and safe to work. It also needs to be sure it is adhering to the [Working Time Regulations 1998](#).

The service manages and records absence inconsistently

The service must make sure it applies its absence management policy consistently. Staff and managers don't widely understand the policy, and there is no equality impact assessment for it. The service needs to make sure it trains staff with absence management responsibilities so they can carry out their duties competently.

As part of our inspection, we analysed some case files to consider how the service manages and supports staff through absence. From those files, we found several inconsistencies in the way the service carries out and records return to work interviews, and in the way it records contact during absence.

The service actively monitors sickness absence trends, and human resources and managers now have a more collaborative approach to managing absence. In the year ending 31 March 2021, the number of days or shifts lost to long-term sickness was 28 percent lower than during the previous 12 months (8,223 compared to 11,467). The number of days or shifts lost to short-term sickness was 46 percent lower than during the previous year (2,631 compared to 4,896).

Getting the right people with the right skills



Requires improvement (2019: Requires improvement)

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service requires improvement at getting the right people with the right skills.

Fire and rescue services should have a workforce plan in place that is linked to their IRMPs, sets out their current and future skills requirements and addresses

capability gaps. They should supplement this with a culture of continuous improvement that includes appropriate learning and development throughout the service.

Areas for improvement

- The service should make sure its workforce plan takes full account of the necessary skills and capabilities to carry out the IRMP.
- The service needs to assure itself that all staff are appropriately trained for their role. It needs to ensure all staff keep their skills up to date and have a consistent method of recording when they have received training.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

The service should make sure it has the skills and capabilities it needs

The service does some workforce planning, but it doesn't take full account of the skills and capabilities it needs to be able to meet the requirements of its IRMP. We found limited evidence that the service's planning allows it to fully consider workforce skills and overcome any gaps in capability. For example, there are skills shortages in prevention and protection work, and limited training capacity for control staff.

Since our last inspection, the service has started using pdrPro, a system for managing workforce capabilities. It is introducing the system in phases. Information from before April 2021 is held in the Task system, which the service used before moving to pdrPro.

The service doesn't manage temporary promotions well, and we found evidence of them being in place for longer than they should be. At 31 March 2021, 111 people were on temporary promotions. The average length of these temporary promotions was 420 days, with the longest being 1,812 days.

The service must make sure succession planning meets its needs and enables continuity in critical roles, including on-call staff. Recruitment, promotion and progression processes must be effective and carried out at the right pace. The service can't yet be sure it has an accurate understanding of the skills and competence of all its staff.

The service needs to improve its culture of learning and development

Although the service provides some learning and development, it doesn't always meet the needs of staff or indeed the service. For example, there is no formal exercise programme for control staff and senior officers.

There aren't good enough processes in place to let staff access the resources they need to do their job well. The service provides general information inconsistently, meaning staff don't always have access to it. Some staff in specialist roles (both operational and non-operational) say they struggle to maintain competence and carry out continuing professional development for their areas of expertise.

The training records we reviewed showed the service is planning and recording risk-critical operational training. But the service doesn't have a consistent approach to training staff in their managerial duties, such as [safeguarding](#), equality, diversity and inclusion, and absence management.

The service introduced a Leadership, Resourcing and Succession process in early 2021. This includes assessments and individual development plans for staff working towards promotion. This process is new, and so far the take-up has mostly been by operational staff. At the time of our inspection, there were no examples of anyone having completed their development and progressing through to the resource pool for deployment to other roles.

Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity



Requires improvement (2019: Requires improvement)

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service requires improvement at ensuring fairness and promoting diversity.

Creating a more representative workforce will provide huge benefits for fire and rescue services. This includes greater access to talent and different ways of thinking, and improved understanding of and engagement with their local communities. Each service should make sure equality, diversity and inclusion are firmly understood and demonstrated throughout the organisation. This includes successfully taking steps to remove inequality and making progress to improve fairness, diversity and inclusion at all levels of the service. It should proactively seek and respond to feedback from staff and make sure any action taken is meaningful.

Areas for improvement

- The service should make sure issues identified through its staff survey are appropriately addressed and that actions taken are communicated to staff in a timely way.
- The service should review how effective its policy on bullying, harassment and discrimination is in reducing unacceptable behaviour towards its staff.
- The service should make improvements to the way it collects equality data to better understand its workforce demographic and needs.
- To identify and tackle barriers to equality of opportunity, and make its workforce more representative, the service should ensure diversity and inclusion are well understood and become important values of the whole of the service.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

The service should continue improving how it seeks and acts on staff feedback and challenge

The service has made some progress in addressing the area for improvement established in 2019 relating to improving its engagement with staff. Senior leaders are keen to hear feedback from staff. The service does have some ways of gathering staff feedback, such as:

- the staff survey;
- independently run focus groups;
- a portal the service used when it developed its values and behaviours;
- staff networks; and
- staff representative bodies.

But staff say they don't feel well informed about outcomes or changes as a result of their feedback. In the staff survey, only 55 percent of staff felt confident in the feedback mechanisms.

We are pleased to find improvements in the way the service and representative bodies engage. It has developed a Working Well Together initiative and a Failure to Agree mechanism. There are also bi-monthly Joint Negotiation and Consultation Committee meetings between service managers and local representative bodies.

The service must do more to tackle bullying, harassment and discrimination

The service has produced a new grievance policy since our last inspection. But it could go further to improve how well staff understand bullying, harassment and discrimination, including their own responsibilities for eliminating it. Staff told us there are still problems caused by senior colleagues, as well as a lack of support for victims and barriers to reporting. They also said the service doesn't resolve issues quickly enough.

In our survey, 14 percent of respondents (53 staff members) told us they had been subject to bullying or harassment over the past year. And 25 percent (92 staff members) said they had been discriminated against in the same period. Out of those 92 people, 48 hadn't reported the discrimination. Reasons they cited for not reporting this behaviour to the service included feeling like nothing would happen, and fear of victimisation and labelling.

Although the service does have clear policies and procedures, staff have limited confidence in its ability to deal effectively with cases of bullying, harassment and discrimination, as well as with grievances and discipline. In the survey, staff members reported the service took no action in 23 of 44 bullying and harassment cases that had been formally or informally raised with it. The service should review how effective its policies are.

The service needs to do more to address disproportionality in recruitment and retention

Senior leaders show willingness to make the workforce more representative. But the service's limited equality data means it hasn't yet made enough progress in improving both race and gender diversity throughout the service.

We found that the service has directed recruitment campaigns at under-represented groups. For example, it has information on a dedicated recruitment site with case studies and videos to promote and improve the diversity of the workforce. As well as general virtual Q&A sessions with local people, it has also held some sessions specifically for women and members of the community from ethnic minority backgrounds. A recent diversity review has produced recommendations on how the service can improve.

At 31 March 2020, only 2.5 percent of staff members stated their ethnicity as from ethnic minority backgrounds, compared to 6.8 percent of the local population. Also at 31 March 2020, 16 percent of staff members declared as female, as did 4.2 percent of firefighters. At 31 March 2020, 44.8 percent of staff hadn't declare their ethnicity, so the service couldn't fully understand its diversity. We are pleased to see that data for 31 March 2021 shows this value has decreased to 24.2 percent.

The service needs to encourage applicants from diverse backgrounds into middle and senior-level positions. It isn't making the most of opportunities to make its workforce more representative. This was an area for improvement from our last inspection, and it remains after this inspection. The service could make better use of exit interviews to understand why staff leave the organisation. It could then learn from this.

The service must keep improving its approach to equality, diversity and inclusion

The service must make sure the workforce understands how it should continue to embed equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI). It should ensure it can offer the right services to its communities, and that it can support staff with [protected characteristics](#).

Equality data has improved since our last inspection, but it is still not as complete as it could be, so the service still doesn't have a good understanding of EDI issues. Since our last inspection, it has started assessing equality impact through its people impact assessments. But it doesn't always properly assess or act on the impact on people with protected characteristics. The service hasn't completed people impact assessments for many of its main policies yet. It could be engaging more with internal and external networks to guide this work.

So it can improve its approach to EDI, the service must make sure staff, particularly managers, are competent, skilled and willing to challenge negative behaviours and inappropriate use of language. The service has tried to improve its communication to the workforce, and it launched a monthly newsletter called *Inclusion Insights* in April 2021. Also, specific staff networking groups feed into the Inclusion and Diversity Action Group, which is chaired by the chief fire officer.

The service has networking forums for under-represented groups. These are actively used to contribute to issues such as recruitment, retention, and development.

But we found there are still examples of people reporting being treated unfairly, including those with protected characteristics. Staff cite a lack of managerial action in some of these cases.

The service hasn't clearly set EDI training requirements in policy, and it can't be sure managers are competent in identifying issues and responding well when they arise.

Managing performance and developing leaders



Requires improvement (2019: Good)

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service requires improvement at managing performance and developing leaders.

Fire and rescue services should have robust and meaningful performance management arrangements in place for their staff. All staff should be supported to meet their potential, and there should be a focus on developing staff and improving diversity into leadership roles.

Area for improvement

The service should put in place an open and fair process to identify, develop and support high-potential staff and aspiring leaders.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the service's performance in this area.

The service has a good individual performance management process

There is a good performance management system in place, which allows the service to effectively develop and assess the individual performance of all staff. Staff have annual appraisals with a six-monthly review. We are pleased to see there has been an increase in the number of completed appraisals since our last inspection. The figure is now 79 percent for wholetime staff, 84 percent for on-call staff, 82 percent for control staff and 81 percent for support staff.

In our staff survey, 90 percent (329 of 366) of respondents reported that they have had a personal development review in the past 12 months, and 65 percent (213 of 329) of respondents felt that the reviews were meaningful. Staff feel confident in the service's performance and development arrangements.

The service needs to ensure fairness in recruitment and promotion processes

The service needs to do more to make sure and demonstrate its recruitment and promotion processes are fair. Our analysis of promotion processes found the service carries out interviews and assessments in accordance with the selection criteria, and it records and retains information. But there is a distinct lack of staff confidence in promotion processes being applied consistently, and not all staff clearly understand career pathways and opportunities.

On-call supervisory managers can't transfer on to the wholetime duty system at the same level. This means the service doesn't make full use of these existing skills.

The service needs to improve how it develops leadership and high-potential staff

The service needs to improve how it actively manages the career pathways of staff, including those with specialist skills and those progressing to leadership roles.

The service has some talent management schemes in place to develop leaders and high-potential staff, such as the Leadership, Resourcing and Succession process, but it needs to improve the accessibility of these schemes. For example, there aren't enough ways of identifying and removing barriers for people with specific learning needs. This has resulted in inconsistencies, and it undermines staff perception of fairness in the processes.

The service should consider putting in place more formal arrangements to identify and support members of staff to become senior leaders. There is a significant gap in its succession planning. This area for improvement, established in our last inspection, still needs to be addressed.

HMICFRS Inspection: Findings and progress

HMICFRS said	Progress to date	Future activity planned	Timescales	Responsible Lead
The service should ensure it gathers and records relevant and up-to-date risk information	Gathering and recording of risk information is now monitored by Station Auditors and Station Managers using performance dashboards. This provides clear oversight of when reviews are due, and which are overdue, broken down by station.	Peer review of the organisational risk management process.	Q4 2022/23	Assistant Director, Prevention, Protection and Response Delivery
	Risk information is stored in a central repository once gathered and made available to essential systems (e.g. Control and Mobilising Systema and Mobile Data Terminals on appliances) in a timely manner.	Development and implementation of a new assurance process for all operational activity and risk information		
	Future risk, new and proposed developments are now considered centrally by a tactical team, and all findings and responses to relevant consultations are shared with our blue-light partners.			
The service should make sure it allocates enough resources to meet its Prevention Strategy	Group Managers and Station Managers can monitor, review and manage activity undertaken to deliver the Prevention Strategy and reassign resources as required. This is underpinned by Group and Station Plans that specifically refer to activity to be carried out by operational crews in the prevention space.	Action to increase further the number of home safety checks completed by operational crews	Q3 2022/23	Assistant Director, Prevention and Protection
	Monthly prevention meetings review and monitor progress against delivery of the Prevention Strategy.	Continue to support the countywide Vision Zero initiative		
	Road and Water Prevention Team in place and operating a calendar of events and engagements.			
	Vision Zero, a key multi-agency initiative delivered under the auspices of the Safer Essex Roads Partnership (SERP), has been identified as an ECFRS change project with a supporting delivery plan			
	The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's deep dives into Home Fire Safety Visits by operational crews and implementation on the Prevention Strategy demonstrated a whole systems approach with demonstratable grip.			
The service should make sure staff understand how to identify vulnerability and safeguard vulnerable people	New e-learning package on safeguarding and identifying vulnerable people has been launched for all staff.	Achieve full compliance with the Safeguarding Fire Standard by introducing a strategy on the service's approach to DBS checks for all staff	Q4 2022/23	Assistant Director, Prevention and Protection
	Safeguarding Fire Standard implemented and the current compliance rate is at 95%	Explore a partnership with Norfolk FRS for safeguarding services		
	Reporting of safeguarding concerns has increased as a result of the above activity	Safeguarding information dashboard to be created to allow greater monitoring of safeguarding activity, including the number of referrals in / out.		
The service should evaluate its prevention activity so it understands what works	Prevention Board established to monitor / review progress against the strategy and its effectiveness	Review the effectiveness of the prevention partnerships and strategy (ongoing through the Prevention Board)	Q4 2022/23	Assistant Director, Prevention and Protection
	A dedication Prevention and Protection Analyst has been employed. Work priorities are being structured in connection with the Prevention Strategy with dedicated review cycles of analysis produced to evaluate the effectiveness / impact of targeted prevention activity (e.g. relating to deliberate fires)			
	The Essex County Fire and Rescue Service is an active member of the National Chief Fire Council's Evaluation Group which is developing consistent evaluation processes for the fire and rescue community.			

The service should ensure it works with local businesses and large organisations to share information and expectations on compliance with fire safety regulations	<p>Business engagement lead has been employed.</p> <p>False Alarm Due to Apparatus (FADA) App developed and implemented by Performance and Analytics to assist with the identification of organisations that are repeat offenders with unwanted fire signals to allow for early engagement and education.</p>	<p>Develop a business engagement plan linked to the protection strategy that demonstrates planned engagement themes and methods as well as defined measures to evaluate success</p>	Q4 2022/23	Assistant Director, Prevention and Protection
The service should make sure its Response Strategy provides the most appropriate response for the public in line with its Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP)	<p>Core Station Policy implemented and coverage reporting in place for strategic stations to enable immediate identification of stations that require additional resources to maintain coverage</p> <p>Deep dive monthly analysis carried out into incidents where we have not met our response standards to identify causes and learning</p> <p>Fire survival training rolled out to Control staff</p> <p>New fully agnostic 999 mobilising system procured for implementation in 2023</p> <p>Link to animation re mobilisation here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m33PWfattvo</p>	<p>Develop a suite of performance measures and business processes aligned to the delivery of the Response Strategy.</p> <p>Implementation of the new workforce management system, including a crewing availability app and new mobilising system to ensure we have state of the art technology contributing to delivery of the Response Strategy.</p> <p>Centralise all resource management resources into a resource management unit to enable more effective utilisation and greater flexibility of resources, supported by creation of a single crewing policy.</p> <p>Continual review of the effectiveness of Response Strategy</p>	Q2 2023/24	Assistant Director, Response
The service should make sure its operational staff have good access to relevant and up-to-date cross-border risk information	<p>Mobile Data Terminals hold cross border risk information for Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, Kent and Hertfordshire</p>	<p>Work with the London Fire Brigade (LFB) to source supply of risk information to ensure that crews have access to cross border risk information from the LFB via the mobile data terminals.</p>	Q4 2022/23	Assistant Director, Prevention, Protection and Response Delivery
The service should ensure that its procedures for responding to terrorist-related incidents are understood by all staff and are well tested	<p>Mandatory Marauding Terrorist Attack (MTA) training rolled out to operational staff</p> <p>Training package developed and launched for non-specialist personnel attending a Marauding Terrorist Attack (MTA)</p> <p>National Interagency Liaison Officer (NILO) input including response to MTAs (Operation Plato) included in all Control Officer basic training courses (two to date).</p> <p>Regular programme of MTA related exercises being delivered. Operational staff, non-specialist responders and Control staff all participate in MTA exercises.</p> <p>MTA training package developed for support staff.</p>	<p>Continually review and strengthen MTA response</p> <p>Continue to deliver MTA related exercises incorporating all staff</p> <p>Monitor completion of all MTA training packages</p>	Q4 2022/23	Assistant Director, Prevention, Protection and Response Delivery
The service should make sure it participates in a programme of cross-border exercises, sharing the learning from these exercises. Some but not all	<p>Five cross border exercises have been delivered (with London, Herts, and Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Services)</p> <p>Exercise planning, delivery and attendance monitored through the Operations Assurance Group</p> <p>Cross border exercises are undertaken against a common risk and will be both live and tabletop exercises.</p>	<p>Service Level Agreement (SLA) agreed with Kent to facilitate live exercises, information sharing and risk information. Initial exercise in the Dartford Tunnel planned.</p> <p>Currently developing a programme of risk based cross border exercises to enable pre-planning of resources and be able to evidence that all operational staff are regularly attending exercises.</p>	Q4 2022/23	Assistant Director, Response

staff take part in cross-border exercises		Cross border exercises planned for all staffing groups		
The service needs to show a clear rationale for the resources allocated between prevention, protection and response activities. This should be linked to risks and priorities set out in its IRMP.	<p>Increased activity in both Home Fire Safety Visits (Prevention) and Risk Based Inspection Visits (Protection) by operational crews.</p> <p>Training package implemented to enable operational crews to inspect low and medium risk rated buildings as part of the service's Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP)</p>	<p>Review Prevention, Protection and Response Strategies to ensure clear links to risks and Integrated Risk Management Plan priorities.</p> <p>Review structures of the Prevention, Protection and Response Teams to evidence clear rationale for the resources allocated to activities</p>	Q4 2022/23	Assistant Director, Response
The service should assure itself that its workforce is productive	Information dashboards produced to measure performance and activity are available to the Extended Leadership Team, Group Managers, Station Managers and Watch Managers. A performance dashboard is regularly scrutinised at the Continuous Improvement Board.	Further work to develop bespoke station plans focusing on local risk and targeting of work to areas of the community most in need. Station plans will have measurable targets for delivery and progress will be incorporated into station management information dashboards	Q4 2022/23	Assistant Director, Response
The service should assure itself that it makes the most of collaboration opportunities and that they are value for money	<p>All financial benefits from collaboration are monitored through a dashboard. Current efficiency savings (across the programme portfolio) are projected at £12.9m against a 10-year target (to 2027) of £15.1m.</p> <p>Collaboration meets statutory duties under the Police and Crime Act 2017 and the Serious Violence Duty under the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2021</p> <p>Collaborative effectiveness improvements have been secured through enhanced performance, shared estates, service provision and targeting of resources.</p> <p>Public safety improvements, including for the most vulnerable, along with improved joint response, community resilience and community engagement (rural and urban).</p> <p>Annual benefits reporting of projects in business as usual, including the joint Education Team, use of the fire and rescue estate by Essex Police, collapsed behind closed doors (gaining entry to patients in crisis for the East of England Ambulance Service Trust), arson prevention / fire investigation work and Safe and Well Visits</p>	<p>Progression of collaborative projects in delivery to achieve projected benefits across efficiency, effectiveness and public safety, including estates (fleet workshops, Dovercourt / Harwich stations), Restorative Justice Firebreaks, and Tri-Service Rural Officers.</p> <p>Project Minerva (vulnerability mapping) in relation to violence against women and girls (VAWG), joint volunteering (building on the pandemic response), use of the FRS estate by Essex Police, procurement and co-location of resilience teams</p> <p>Continued annual benefits reporting of projects in BAU, including the joint Education Team, use of the FRS estate by Essex Police, collapsed behind closed doors (gaining entry to patients in crisis for East of England Ambulance Service Trust), arson prevention / fire investigation and Safe and Well Visits</p> <p>Update report and business case templates to ensure collaboration opportunities / options are considered and evidenced as options in all proposed change initiatives</p> <p>Formulation of a collaboration register that incorporates all collaboration activity happening across the service (including collaboration outside of blue light partners e.g. with the Essex Centre for Data Analytics)</p>	Q4 2022/23	Assistant Director, Performance, and Improvement
The service should make sure that it is taking action to reduce non-pay costs and can demonstrate how it is achieving value for money	<p>Value for money audits are conducted as part of our annual audit plan by our external auditors. The last of these was conducted in 2021 and provided an opinion of reasonable assurance</p> <p>1.5 full time equivalent (FTE) dedicated resources (Finance Business Partner and Benefits Officer) are dedicated to monitoring savings and efficiencies across the service.</p>			Assistant Director, Finance

	<p>Information dashboards are now in place for budget holders to efficiently review budgets. This includes an easy view at transaction level for non-pay costs.</p> <p>The budget process for budget holders is no longer based on the prior year budget. Historic spending data has instead been provided to ensure non-pay budgets are lean.</p> <p>The Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) reflects the service’s overall annual financial savings</p> <p>A significant area of non-pay spend is the capital finance charge (MRP). The Authority now has a Capital Strategy and, through modelling the MRP / utilising the capital receipts reserve, MRP can be set and managed to ensure value for money.</p> <p>Savings and Efficiency Board set up to track all projects and value for money secured. The review of Non-Pay Costs is a standard agenda item for the Savings and Efficiency Board.</p> <p>Centralised procurement function introduced, along with the adoption of a category approach to procurement. The Procurement Team has launched its first Procurement Strategy.</p>			
<p>The service needs to better understand the financial challenges it faces. It should strengthen the assumptions that underpin its plans to manage the risk of fire and other risks now and in the future.</p>	<p>Balanced budget now a prerequisite. Balanced budget delivered for 2022-23 (for the first time in seven years)</p> <p>Forecasting, medium term financial strategy and sensitivity analysis published quarterly</p>	<p>Medium Term Financial Strategy progress update presented quarterly at the Strategic Board. To enhance this, improved sensitivity analysis is being prepared and presented at the Strategic Board and throughout the Budget Process.</p> <p>Activity based budget setting for the 2023-24 budget process.</p> <p>Produce a Capital / Treasury Management Strategy.</p>	<p>Q4 2022/23</p>	<p>Assistant Director, Finance</p>
<p>The service should have a clear and sustainable strategic plan for the use of its reserves which promotes new ways of working.</p>	<p>Reserves Strategy implemented. The Authority reviews and publishes its Reserve Strategy on an annual basis. This strategy is prepared alongside and is in sync with the:</p> <p>Annual Budget Medium Term Financial Strategy Capital Strategy Treasury Management Strategy</p> <p>Medium Term Financial Strategy and balanced budget requirement will protect the service’s reserves.</p>			<p>Assistant Director, Finance</p>
<p>The service needs to assure itself that it is maximising opportunities to improve effectiveness and efficiency through the better use of technology.</p>	<p>New workforce management system in place to centralise and introduce more effective planning, forecasting and visibility of resources.</p> <p>Installation of new fast internet fibre broadband to all fire stations.</p> <p>Post implementation review process for projects and programmes implemented.</p> <p>Digital Skills Officers in place to support development of digital skill across the service.</p>	<p>Continued delivery of the Digital and Data Strategy through the Digital and Data Programme</p> <p>Review of working practices through innovation to establish where technological changes can support better efficiencies</p>	<p>Q2 2023/24</p>	<p>Head of ICT</p>

	<p>Management information dashboards are widely available, delivering near live data across most functions.</p> <p>ICT Relationship Management Team established to understand fully the digital need of all functions / customers</p>			
<p>The service should make sure all staff understand and demonstrate its values</p>	<p>NFCC Core Code of Ethics (CCoE) launched. Our values are echoed and incorporated in mandatory Core Code training.</p> <p>Values and Ethics are incorporated into Recruitment, Learning and Development and key people processes (including how to challenge unacceptable behaviour).</p>	<p>Further activity to embed the Core Code of Ethics, values and behaviours including use of surveys and cultural maturity model.</p>	<p>Q2 2023/24</p>	<p>Assistant Director, Human Resources</p>
<p>The service should monitor secondary contracts to make sure working hours are not exceeded</p>	<p>Workforce management system project has started with a required deliverable for the system to support management of the Working Time Directive.</p>	<p>Update to the existing process, guidance and communication to be issued to managers of existing secondary contract holders with links.</p>	<p>Q3 2023/24</p>	<p>Assistant Director, Human Resources</p>
<p>The service should make sure that its absence / attendance procedures are consistently applied</p>	<p>Revised attendance management policy and supporting managerial resources published on the service’s intranet.</p> <p>Absence Management Training is available and easily accessible to managers</p> <p>People Impact Assessment of Attendance Management Policy completed.</p> <p>New absence management information dashboard issued to HR Business Partners (BPs) and managers, who use this to ensure effective monitoring and detection of inconsistent application of policy.</p> <p>Case and peer reviews carried out to ensure consistency.</p>	<p>Continue building our service’s Employee Relations capability.</p>	<p>Q1 2023/24</p>	<p>Assistant Director, Human Resources</p>
<p>The service should make sure its workforce plan takes full account of the necessary skills and capabilities to carry out the IRMP</p>	<p>New Strategic Workforce Plan data in place to support decision making and budget control.</p> <p>Succession plans developed across the service.</p> <p>Skills gaps reviewed and training in place.</p>	<p>Develop an approach to direct entry and build on accelerated development to support revised leadership, resourcing and development arrangements.</p> <p>Prioritisation of training to ensure the IRMP needs are met.</p> <p>Develop a strategic approach and process to understand the skills needed to carry out specific roles in certain locations to deliver the IRMP.</p>	<p>Q4 2022/23</p>	<p>Assistant Director, Human Resources</p>
<p>The service needs to assure itself that all staff are appropriately trained for their role. It needs to ensure all staff keep their skills up to date and have a consistent method of recording when they have received training</p>	<p>Learning Management System for all staff launched, including eLearning for mandatory training courses.</p> <p>Manager reports of competency compliance are published via dashboards which enables scrutiny and management action to be taken to rectify any issues.</p> <p>Digital skills support now established to ensure that all users can access the courses and information available to them.</p> <p>Learning & Development (L&D) Steering Group in place which oversees compliance.</p> <p>Monthly reporting on mandatory operational training, monitored by the Continuous Improvement Board and through performance reporting to the Performance and Resources (P&R) Board.</p>	<p>Formal review of the progress of the L&D Strategy / deliverables.</p> <p>Update to intranet pages and communications to ensure pathways are well promoted and understood.</p> <p>L&D launch of ‘Learning by Level’ as outlined in the NFCC core pathways. This signposts the mandated and core needs and our offerings to deliver the training needs.</p> <p>Implement process improvements to effectively record technical and professional training (starting in Q3).</p> <p>Delivery of activities identified in the formal review of the Learning and Development Strategy.</p>	<p>Q4 2023/24</p>	<p>Assistant Director, Human Resources</p>

	<p>Specific programme of learning has been developed and delivered for Control operators.</p> <p>Appraisal completion rates are monitored to ensure needs are captured and fulfilled through departmental training plans.</p>			
The service should make sure issues identified through its staff survey are appropriately addressed and that actions taken are communicated to staff in a timely way	<p>Bright Ideas (cross-workforce) Group continues to meet regularly to coordinate and triage new suggestions.</p> <p>Feedback from staff survey has led to actions which have been communicated to staff as ‘you said, we did’.</p>	Next staff survey commenced and reflects feedback from previous surveys. Managers will be trained to understand the survey feedback and to facilitate sessions which further capture needs and identify actions.	Q4 2022/23	Assistant Director, Human Resources
The service should review how effective its policy on bullying, harassment and discrimination is in reducing unacceptable behaviour towards its staff	<p>Case reviews completed to understand trends / themes to enable learning and proactive interventions.</p> <p>Dignity at Work Advocates re-launched in September 2022.</p>	Review and promotion of the Dignity at Work Policy to include management of bullying, harassment and discrimination.	Q4 2022/23	Assistant Director, Human Resources
The service should make improvements to the way it collects equality data to better understand its workforce demographics and needs	Asian Fire Service Association (AFSA) reviews (in 2021 and 2022) included suggestions to improvement engagement / willingness to provide data.	People Data Project (Portfolio of Change) planned to improve collection and utilisation of people data. Data gaps to be reviewed and identified, and actions taken to increase data availability.	Q4 2022/23	Assistant Director, Human Resources
To identify and tackle barriers to equality of opportunity, and make its workforce more representative, the service should ensure diversity and inclusion are well understood and become important values of the whole of the service	<p>Inclusion and Diversity Action Group established and meeting regularly with key purpose and objectives.</p> <p>Positive Action Group established and key objectives defined to target improvements.</p> <p>Ongoing training delivered throughout 2021/22.</p> <p>Monthly “Inclusion Insights” newsletter published and communicated to all employees.</p>	<p>Fair, Kind and Inclusive Workplace project in place.</p> <p>Next tranche of Diversity and Inclusion training scheduled.</p>	Q4 2022/23	Assistant Director, Human Resources
The service should put in place an open and fair process to identify, develop and support high-potential staff and aspiring leaders	<p>Process flow and promotion pathways communicated (through managers briefings / intranet).</p> <p>First phase of succession plans completed with readiness and skill development focus.</p> <p>Leadership Development Programme in place for two years.</p> <p>Leadership, Resourcing and Succession (LRS) improvements identified, and changes made to reflect feedback and meet the service needs.</p>	<p>Improve resourcing and talent experiences.</p> <p>Review of the Leadership Development Programme.</p> <p>High potential / aspiring leader identification incorporated into future succession plans.</p> <p>Pilot of the Group Manager to Area Manager development pathway delivered.</p>	Q2 2023/24	Assistant Director, Human Resources

		Ongoing review of the LRS and the scope to include high potential development.		
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Report title: Essex Police's Policy and Performance in relation to Deployment to Incidents	
Report to: Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel	
Report author: Roger Hirst (Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex)	
Date: 8 December 2022	For: Noting
Enquiries to: Pippa Brent-Isherwood (Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer) 01245 291613 pippa.brent-isherwood@essex.police.uk	
County Divisions affected: All Essex	

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to clarify for Panel members Essex Police's policy on deployment to incidents – with a focus on high harm contact management - and how it performs against this. The report provides an overview of the force's Command and Control of Incidents Policy, an assessment of how well Essex Police responds to high harm crimes, and a summary of the ambition set for future delivery.

Work to improve investigative quality is being taken forward through a separate workstream and is outside the scope of this report.

2. Recommendations

That the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel notes the content of the report, raising any points of clarification as required.

3. Context / Summary

The National Context

The wider context around contact management nationally is based on several strategic assumptions which directly influence policing's capability and capacity to respond to incidents, including:

- Contact will continue to rise
- Contact will continue to increase in complexity
- As such, contact management staff will continue to spend increasing time resolving contact
- Resolving complex contact will require increasing emphasis on partnership working

- Technology will continue to evolve to provide new means of contacting the police, and the public will continue to expect a choice of contact channels for key services
- Resources for policing will remain constrained
- Contact management will continue to be a key enabler of overall police service delivery

Essex Police's Command and Control of Incidents Policy

Essex Police's Contact Management Command is responsible for managing initial contact with the force and the subsequent organisational response. As such, the Contact Management Command is the face of Essex Police to most people who interact with the force. However, the force adopts a whole system approach to responding to calls for service, with police attendance at incidents inevitably coming from the nearest available and appropriate unit, whether that be from Local Policing Teams, Community Policing Teams, CID, the Operational Policing Command or the Crime and Public Protection Command. The vast majority of emergency and priority incidents are attended by uniformed response officers from within the Local Policing Area (LPA) or Operational Policing Command (OPC), including specialist resources such as Roads Policing, the Dog Unit, Firearms, Operational Support Group and Marine Unit. Detectives from both the LPA and CID also respond to incidents where available, especially residential burglaries and serious violence incidents, to maximise investigative opportunities. The force recognises that, in order to deliver a good service to the public, and to promote victim trust and confidence, it needs to deal with all three elements of response (contact, dispatch and investigation) well. As such, Control Room performance and Response performance are inextricably linked.

The force's Command and Control of Incidents Policy sets out the agreed procedure for incident management and is designed to ensure an effective, victim focused response to reports of crime or other calls for assistance by selecting the most appropriate resources to send to an incident, in an appropriate timescale.

The Force Control Room (FCR) takes all emergency calls, whilst non-emergency calls are shared between the FCR and the Resolution Centre (RC). Recorded incidents are risk assessed at the earliest opportunity in order to identify vulnerable victims at first contact and ensure that the most appropriate response grading is applied to every call. Panel members have been given the opportunity during the week commencing 21 November 2022 to visit the FCR to see this process in action prior to the Panel's consideration of this report.

The THRIVE methodology, which is used widely by police forces across England and Wales, is applied in Essex as a risk assessment tool. Call handlers consider six factors when determining the appropriate response grade to be allocated to recorded incidents:

- **Threat** – Any communicated or perceived intent to inflict harm or loss on another person, including the victim. This considers the impact on the person(s), property, public safety and community cohesion, as well as the reputation of Essex Police.

- **Harm** – An assessment of the level of harm that would be caused, including to the victim, if the threat is carried out.
- **Risk** – The likelihood of the threat occurring.
- **Investigation** – Whether there is a need for an investigation and, if so, what level of investigation would be proportionate. The call handler will also consider whether a police presence is required at the scene. If the incident is not a police matter, it will be referred to another agency.
- **Victim and vulnerability** – This places victim satisfaction and confidence at the heart of the force's decision-making. A person is considered vulnerable if, as a result of their situation or circumstances, they are unable to take care of or protect themselves or others from harm or exploitation. A low-level crime may not initially be seen as requiring attendance, but increased victims needs may escalate the police response. For example, the theft of a mobility scooter may appear low-level however the impact on a vulnerable victim with a disability is significant and is identified as requiring officer attendance and an enhanced level of victim care.
- **Engagement** – This may take place with organisations and / or individuals, in order to build positive relationships that further policing aims, prevent offences and build trust and confidence in victims and the public.

Using the THRIVE methodology to make an individual assessment of every contact enables the force to deploy the right people, with the right skills, to deal with incidents, thus allowing the force to use its resources as effectively as possible. As such, THRIVE is about providing an appropriate and proportionate response, rather than applying a “one size fits all” approach to certain types of crime.

There is no national standard set for response times outside of emergency response. Instead, target response times are set by the Chief Constable for each force. Essex Police's Command and Control of Incidents Policy sets out how incidents will be graded and the target attendance time for each grading as follows:

Grade	Response	Attendance Target
1	Urban emergency	15 minutes
2	Rural emergency	20 minutes
3	Priority	Within 60 minutes
4	Routine	Within 48 hours
5	Resolution without Deployment	No attendance
6	Appointment	By appointment

An emergency response grading is given where the call handler's assessment of the incident indicates that a person's life is in danger, or that someone is vulnerable to immediate violence, serious injury, or serious damage to their property. In these circumstances, it is vital for policing resources to be deployed to the scene at the earliest opportunity, not only to safeguard victims of crime and members of the public, but also to secure and preserve the scene of any crime, to identify any forensic opportunities and potential witnesses, and to apprehend suspects if still on scene. Incidents graded as emergencies will have a police resource assigned immediately. The nearest, most appropriate unit will be deployed, which may necessitate redirecting resources from non-emergency incidents. For example, an Armed Response Vehicle (ARV) may be deployed to a domestic abuse incident, or a Community Policing Team

(CPT) officer may be deployed to attend a serious crime which may later require specialist investigative officers.

Where an incident is not graded as an emergency, but there is still a degree of importance and / or urgency (i.e. where nobody is in immediate danger but there are investigative opportunities around evidence capture such as forensics and / or witnesses), it will be graded as a priority incident. It should be noted that resources deployed to a priority incident will not travel on blue lights, so their progress will be impacted by traffic conditions etc.

Where there is no urgency to respond to an incident, but the attendance of a police officer or other member of staff is required to carry out proportionate enquiries, it will be graded as requiring a routine response.

If the incident can be resolved without officer attendance, it will be graded for resolution without deployment and remitted to the Resolution Centre. Following a crime allocation assessment, the investigation will then be concluded with no further action, allocated to Case Investigators within the Resolution Centre for further investigation, or allocated to the most appropriate department to investigate. These cases may also be referred to another agency.

Where immediate attendance is not required, and the victim agrees to this approach, an appointment may be booked for an officer to attend at the earliest, most convenient time for the victim. Such appointments will be attended by Local Policing Area (LPA) officers via a diary system managed by the Force Control Room. Following the appointment, the attending officer and their supervisor will assess the most suitable department to progress the investigation. This ensures a timely response to the incident, in agreement with the victim, whilst also ensuring that the most appropriate policing resource owns the investigation through to resolution.

The initial grading given to an incident remains in place unless circumstances later dictate that the incident should be upgraded or downgraded following a further THRIVE assessment. This means that, if an emergency or priority incident is not attended within the target time, it remains at that grading and the first available policing resource is dispatched to attend. The Command and Control of Incidents Policy sets out the steps to be taken to re-grade incidents where necessary. It should be noted that incidents will never be downgraded due to a lack of deployable resources or because a caller reporting a domestic abuse incident ends the call prematurely and contact cannot be re-established. Incidents can only be downgraded with a supervisor's authority and a clear rationale must be placed on the record of the incident.

High Harm Crimes

Essex Police's Definition of High Harm Crimes

There is no national definition of a high harm crime. Essex Police has therefore determined high harm offences to be those which most significantly impact on the public, namely residential burglary, robbery, rape, serious sexual offences, and violence with injury. All these offence types have clear links to the Police and Crime Plan 2021 – 2024 and the Force Plan. Although domestic abuse and Violence Against

Women and Girls (VAWG) are not specifically included, there are clear links with these thematic areas.

Residential Burglary

The classification of residential burglary includes all buildings or parts of buildings that are within the boundary of, or form a part of, a dwelling. This includes the dwelling itself (including vacant dwellings), sheds, garages, outhouses, summer houses and any other structure that meets the definition of a building. It also includes other premises used for residential purposes such as houseboats, residential care homes and hostels. Where an outbuilding within such a boundary but not forming part of the dwelling building, such as a garage or workshop, which is used solely for business purposes is burgled, this should be recorded as “burglary – business and community”. Where both a dwelling house and an outbuilding used for business purposes (belonging to the same victim) are subject of a burglary at the same time, then only the residential burglary is to be recorded. Vacant, new build, partially complete or properties under renovation will be recorded according to the purpose for which they are intended. All buildings which are not on a plot of land where a residential building stands and which are not used for business and community use will be classified as residential.

On 30 September 2022, Chief Constable Andy Marsh (Chief Executive of the College of Policing) and Deputy Chief Constable Alex Franklin-Smith (the NPCC lead for burglary) wrote to Chief Constables summarising the findings of a rapid review of evidence undertaken by the college of the measures that can be effective in detecting and reducing burglary crimes as well as reassuring victims. This found that:

- Burglaries cluster in time and space. Burglars often return to the same property or to properties that are very close to or similar in layout to the initial burglary. Consequently, after a burglary, the victim is at a higher risk of re-victimisation than non-victims and the risk for the houses near to the burgled property is also raised.
- Burglars tend to offend close to where they live and select targets based on their perception of effort, risk and reward, using situational cues such as occupancy, surveillance, accessibility and security together with high yield potential. However, burglars who are drug or alcohol dependent may have distorted target selection.

Measures that could be effective in detecting and reducing burglary crimes as well as reassuring victims were found to include:

- Rapid police attendance at scenes, as this increases victim satisfaction and helps to establish solvability factors. Solvability factors can then be used to triage reports and target investigative resources more effectively.
- Deployment of crime scene investigators when there may be forensic opportunities.
- Focused effort on properties and areas predicted as at high risk of repeat occurrence, to increase the likelihood of apprehending a burglar at the scene. Entrapment devices that either covertly photograph the offender or trigger a

covert alarm could be used, particularly at locations subject to repeat victimisation.

- Offender management and diversion schemes, particularly those including drug treatment and mental health pathways.
- Provision of crime prevention advice and support to implement crime prevention measures, e.g. by providing property marking.
- Use of communication channels to encourage collaboration between communities and policing to promote the uptake of crime prevention measures.
- Cocooning activity to inform people in the vicinity and give crime prevention advice.
- Liaison with partners, including local authorities, to limit access to alleyways and other places that can give access to properties.
- Liaison with partners to ensure that target hardening measures are implemented for vulnerable people such as the elderly or disabled.

Further to this, the NPCC Burglary Portfolio has worked with the College of Policing's Investigative Standards Team to develop an app that can be made available to frontline investigators to provide best practice advice and guidance and assist them with capturing relevant scene information.

Rape and Serious Sexual Offences (RASSO)

The Crime and Public Protection Command has primary investigative responsibility for most RASSO offences. Due to the specialist nature of these offences, and the particular need to take a victim centric approach to them, in line with policy, these will be assigned to the most appropriate unit (e.g. a specialist RASSO detective rather than sending a generalist uniformed response). Where there is a need for an emergency response, this will take place. On some occasions, the victim may decide that they do not wish to see the police, or that they prefer to see the police later and / or at a different location, or there may be forensic timescale considerations.

Alternatively, contact with the victim may be made otherwise than by deploying a unit (e.g. via rapid video response). The police may also need to ensure that they do not expose the victim to repeat trauma by the repeated disclosure of the offence through the force's process. For example, the victim may initially have to re-live the offence to a call-taker, then to the first attending response officer, then to a specialist detective and potentially later in court. By deploying the most appropriate resource first (i.e. the detective), the force reduces this trauma but increases the response time. Sacrificing performance for victim care quality in these circumstances is the right thing to do for the victim and is more likely to enhance victim satisfaction.

Essex Police Policy on Attending High Harm Crimes

Essex Police has an ambitious policy of attending all high harm incidents. However, it is recognised that, in practice, this is unlikely ever to be achievable because, for example, the victim may not wish to see the police, or may not wish to see them at this time.

There is no specific response grading set for high harm incidents. Instead, the response grading for each incident is determined and prioritised based on the THRIVE methodology described above. The only exception to this is residential burglary

incidents, for which Essex Police has a very clear policy position, which is to attend all of them and aim to do so within one hour.

Performance

The key performance indicators (KPIs) associated with the force's response to incidents are as follows:

- 90% of 999 calls into the Force Control Room to be answered within 10 seconds.
- The abandonment rate for 999 calls will be less than 2%.
- 90% of 101 calls into the Force Control Room to be answered within five minutes.
- The abandonment rate for 101 calls will be less than 5%.
- 90% of all public calls into the switchboard to be answered within 30 seconds
- 90% of all public calls into the Resolution Centre to be answered within five minutes.
- 90% of emergency incidents to be attended within 15 minutes for urban locations and 20 minutes for rural locations.
- 84% of priority incidents to be attended within 60 minutes.

Between 1 January 2021 and 10 October 2022, the force attended 83% of the high harm incidents reported to it, compared with 74% of other incidents, as shown in the table below:

	Total Calls	Attended Calls	Attendance Rate
High Harm Incidents	82,480	68,278	83%
Non-High Harm Incidents	332,776	244,306	74%

The table below provides a more detailed breakdown of the proportion of all high harm incidents attended more recently (during the 13 months up to and including September 2022):

	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Total
All HH	65.7%	67.7%	64.8%	69.3%	68.1%	67.1%	66.0%	64.8%	65.2%	66.4%	66.5%	65.0%	68.0%	66.5%
Burglary	84.3%	81.3%	83.3%	84.0%	87.3%	87.1%	82.1%	77.7%	82.3%	82.0%	85.5%	86.8%	89.0%	84.1%
Robbery	67.2%	75.0%	79.4%	80.9%	78.8%	76.8%	80.4%	72.9%	74.1%	77.9%	73.1%	71.4%	80.2%	76.0%
VWI	68.3%	69.7%	65.7%	70.1%	70.3%	69.0%	67.4%	66.0%	66.0%	66.4%	67.3%	66.3%	68.2%	67.7%
Rape	48.9%	49.4%	41.3%	50.4%	43.7%	42.6%	48.6%	55.5%	53.1%	47.6%	53.4%	49.3%	47.2%	48.5%
Sexual Assault	48.5%	53.5%	53.9%	53.1%	48.7%	50.6%	52.7%	49.4%	53.7%	59.9%	53.8%	48.6%	56.5%	52.5%

During this period, Essex Police attended 66.5% of all high harm incidents reported to it. It should be noted that the majority (79%) of calls marked as not being attended during this period were graded as requiring a routine response.

The table below illustrates the grade of service assigned to high harm incidents between 1 January 2021 and 10 October 2022, and the proportion of cases in which the target time was met. This shows that the force is not attending all high harm incidents as quickly as it aims to.

	Time Met Emergency	Time Met Priority	Time Met Routine
Burglary incidents	90%	48%	96%
Robbery incidents	85%	65%	95%
Violence with Injury incidents	86%	65%	86%
Rape incidents	70%	38%	95%
Serious sexual incidents	70%	31%	67%

Overall, between 1 January 2021 and 10 October 2022, Essex Police met its target response times for 84% of the high harm incidents graded as requiring an emergency response, for 51% of those graded as requiring a priority response and for 85% of those requiring a routine response. This is compared with attendance at other incidents in the table below:

	Time Met Emergency	Time Met Priority	Time Met Routine
High Harm Incidents	84%	51%	85%
Non-High Harm Incidents	81%	67%	72%

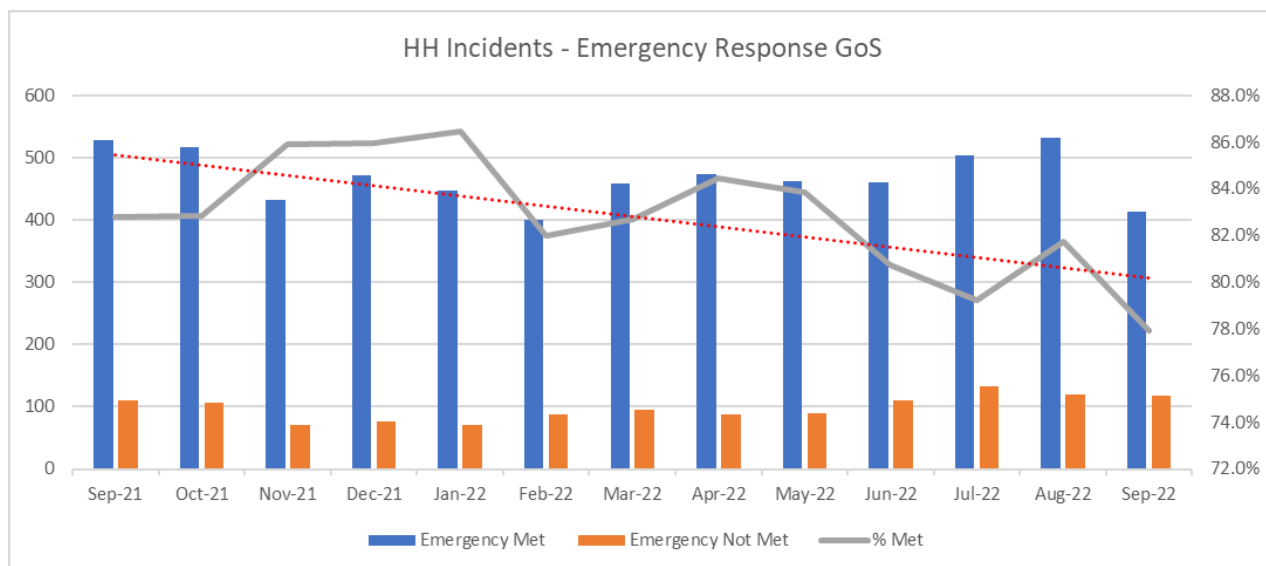
The next table provides a more detailed breakdown of the proportion of high harm incidents graded as requiring an emergency response that were attended during the 13 months up to and including September 2022:

	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Total
All HH	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	99.8%	99.8%	99.8%	99.8%	99.9%
Burglary	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Robbery	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
VWI	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	99.8%	99.8%	99.8%	100.0%	99.9%
Rape	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Sexual Assault	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	97.5%	99.7%

During this period, Essex Police attended 99.9% of all high harm incidents that were graded as requiring an emergency response.

The table and graph below show the frequency with which the target response time was met for high harm incidents requiring an emergency response during this period:

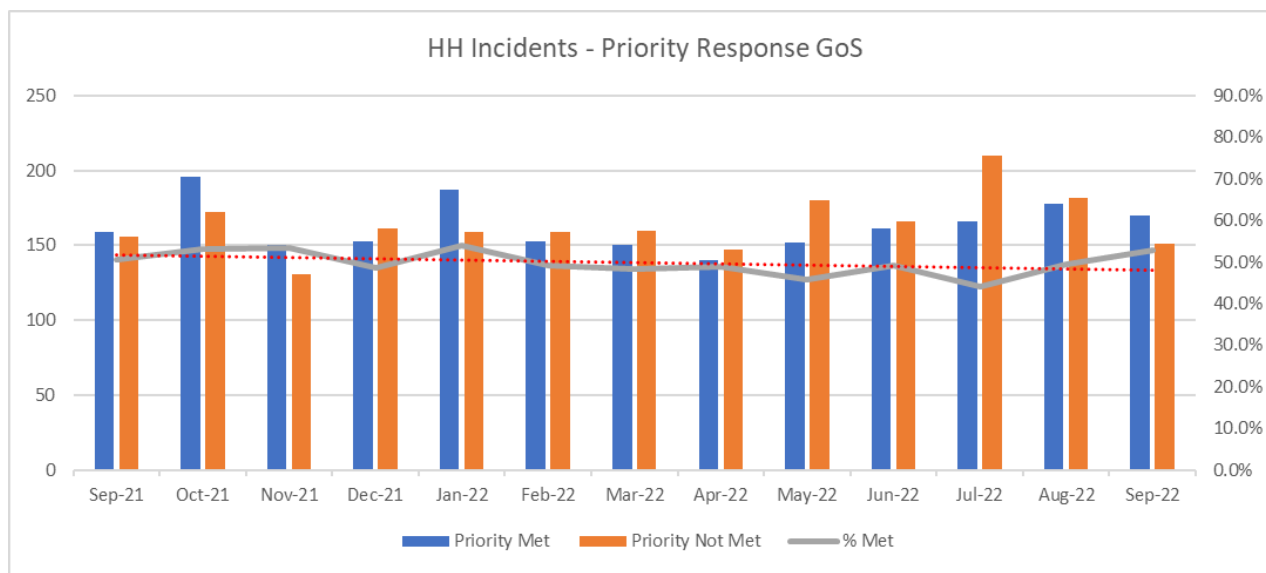
	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Total
Emergency Met	529	516	433	471	447	401	458	473	462	461	503	532	413	6099
Emergency Not Met	110	107	71	77	70	88	96	87	89	110	132	119	117	1273
% Met	82.8%	82.8%	85.9%	85.9%	86.5%	82.0%	82.7%	84.5%	83.8%	80.7%	79.2%	81.7%	77.9%	82.7%



The drop in emergency response performance in February and July could be attributed to Essex Police deploying a significant number of officers to both COP26 (in February) and the Just Stop Oil protests (in July).

The table and graph below show the frequency with which the target response time was met for high harm incidents requiring a priority response during this period:

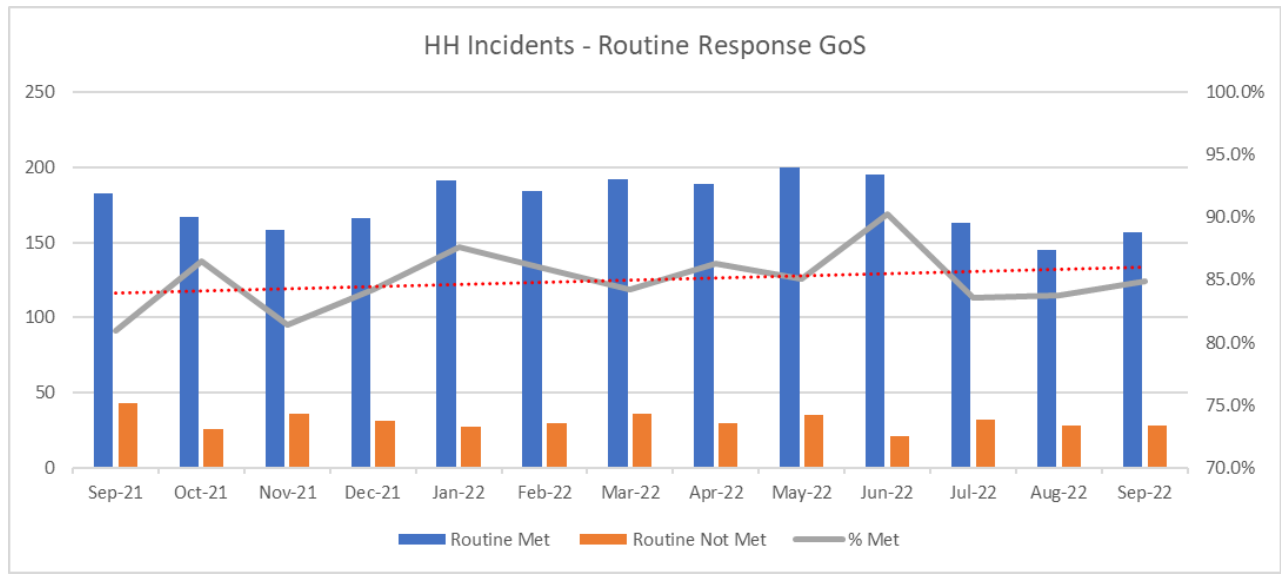
	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Total
Priority Met	159	196	150	153	187	153	150	140	152	161	166	178	170	2115
Priority Not Met	156	172	131	161	159	159	160	147	180	166	210	182	151	2134
% Met	50.5%	53.3%	53.4%	48.7%	54.0%	49.0%	48.4%	48.8%	45.8%	49.2%	44.1%	49.4%	53.0%	49.8%



Attendance at priority response incidents needs to improve. Resourcing challenges and competing demands often create complexities around diverting an officer from a current commitment to a priority incident. Even once redeployed, they will typically be required to travel some distance to arrive at the scene, which is not always achievable within the target time.

The table and graph below show the frequency with which the target response time was met for high harm incidents requiring a routine response during this period:

	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Total
Routine Met	183	167	158	166	191	184	192	189	200	195	163	145	157	2290
Routine Not Met	43	26	36	31	27	30	36	30	35	21	32	28	28	403
% Met	81.0%	86.5%	81.4%	84.3%	87.6%	86.0%	84.2%	86.3%	85.1%	90.3%	83.6%	83.8%	84.9%	85.0%



Performance for incidents graded as requiring a routine response is significantly better than for priority response incidents, primarily because officers have more time to arrive at the incident.

Appendix 1 breaks the above data down by the five crime types included within the Essex Police definition of high harm incidents. When viewing this, it should be noted that all crimes reported to Essex Police are recorded and are subject to a proportionate investigation, even if the target response time is not met.

The findings of Operation Beaumont (the force's response to a particular incident, which considered the ability of contact staff to respond to incidents) earlier in 2022 identified gaps in Essex Police processes around identifying vulnerability, threat and harm. The principal training gap identified within the FCR was that call handlers did not input intelligence around repeat callers or threats made from an individual that would not constitute the recording of a crime. As a result, refresher training was rolled out immediately and mandated for all FCR staff. The Contact Management Command has reviewed all its training and completely overhauled all the packages being delivered, with the assistance of Sussex Police.

Essex Police's most recent HMICFRS PEEL Review also identified that the force's response to incidents requires improvement in four key areas:

- Providing a timely response to calls for service
- Assessment of risk
- Identifying vulnerability
- Crime prevention advice

Challenges facing Essex Police in Responding to Incidents

There are several challenges impacting the force's ability to meet its ambitions and targets around operational response.

Firstly, a vibrant labour market and wide opportunities for staff within policing means high staff turnover in the Contact Management Command. It is therefore essential that the Command continues to recruit and train staff to ensure capacity and capability are maintained.

As members of the Police, Fire and Crime Panel are aware, rapid growth of the force over recent years has resulted in a relatively young and inexperienced workforce, both on the front line and in contact management. Supervision and support are essential in guiding and nurturing those young in service and teaching them to apply the THRIVE model well. The force has therefore developed a new supervisor's course and is supporting its staff through both this and the setting of clear expectations so that they develop quickly and confidently.

The force's ability to respond to incidents is also directly impacted by abstractions due to other demands on police time (such as responding to concerns for welfare and those in mental health crisis, guarding patients in hospital, and conveying people to hospital if the ambulance service cannot attend in a timely manner) along with the need to resource major incidents and operations, both planned (e.g. large events and Operation Union) and unplanned (e.g. protest activity, such as that undertaken over recent months by Just Stop Oil campaigners). Strategic demand oversight is managed through the Deputy Chief Constable, and the force has established a task and finish group to explore the minimum levels of staffing required in Response and Local Policing Teams in order to ensure that the force can continue to flex its capability to meet calls for service. The force also continues to develop its driver training capability and is reviewing its approach to fleet management to ensure that it has appropriately trained officers in the right places with access to the right equipment, including suitable vehicles. 140 additional places on response driver training are being offered next year to meet the demand and enhance the force's capacity to respond to incidents within the target timescales.

Additionally, the technology currently in use in the force does not always support operational response as well as it might. In the future, new capabilities will help the force better manage its internal process and enhance its ability to assess risk and make decisions. As such, various changes to Essex Police's IT infrastructure are already in train and due to complete between January 2023 and March 2024. For example, the force currently makes use of an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system which filters out some forms of contact prior to transfer to a call taker. In future, Intelligent Interactive Voice Response capability will be able to deal with contact more efficiently and effectively, removing the need for human interaction in far more cases than our current systems. It will also identify threat within waiting contacts and prioritise them appropriately. Where contact with a call handler is necessary, the technology will be able to prioritise based on an initial risk assessment (e.g. by identifying that the call is of a domestic abuse nature and putting this at the front of the queue). In addition, the Contact Management Command will be moving to a new Integrated Command and Control System (ICCS) in the autumn of 2023, a benefit of which will be greater flexibility and capacity to handle and grade calls for service (both

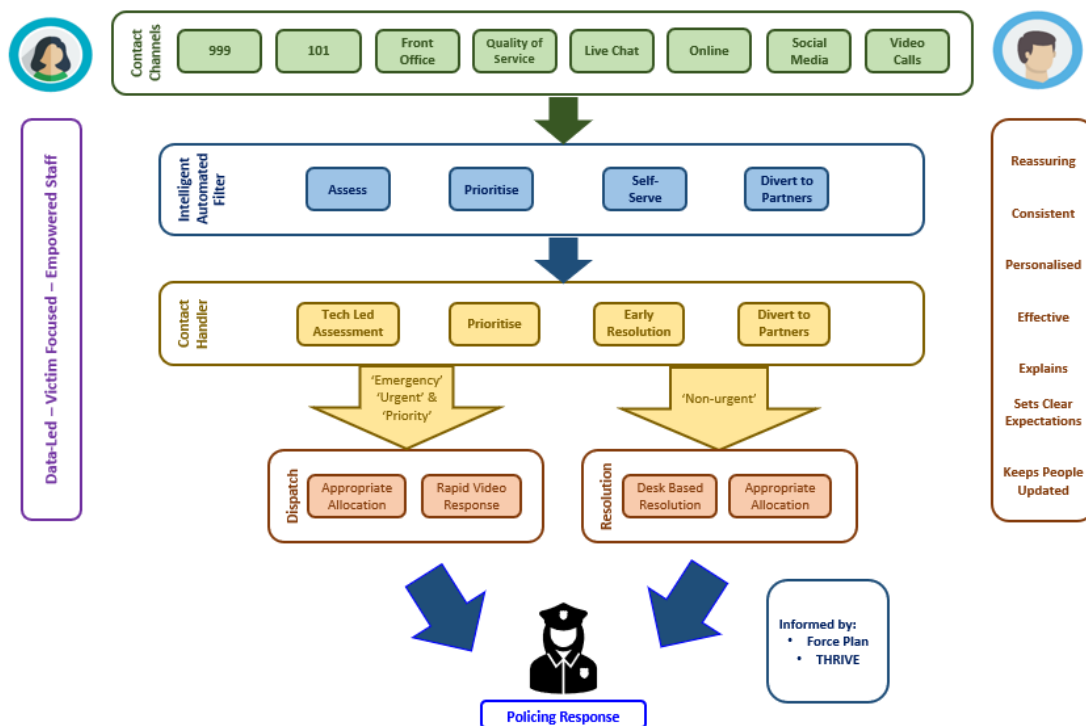
emergency and non-emergency).

Going forward, the dispatch function will exclusively deal with incidents that require an emergency, urgent or priority response. Requests for service outside of these parameters will not be dealt with on STORM and will instead be allocated to the appropriate team via Athena. This is currently the process followed for most crimes; the key change is that this will also be used for 'non-crimes'.

Video technology can also be used to improve the victim experience, as per the Kent Rapid Video Response Trial, by improving deployment options and service delivery.

Other Future Plans

As set out above, Essex Police has an ambition to attend all high harm incidents – particularly those graded as requiring a priority response - and to improve response times to all incidents, and has already changed its dispatch policies in pursuit of these objectives. In tandem, the Contact Management Command has commenced a detailed piece of project work to review the way Essex Police approaches public contact. As a result, a new target operating model has been agreed, as shown below:



Since 26 September 2022, the Contact Management Command has been driving a renewed focus on command and control through Operation Clarity, which makes the Force Control Room the final arbiter in respect of deployments and takes a “task not ask” approach to improving the response time to all incidents, and specifically high harm incidents. The objective of the operation is to provide a faster response to more incidents in order to support victims of crime better. As part of this, the force will be prioritising early attendance at residential burglaries, not only to safeguard and reassure victims but also to establish an early investigative strategy, including identifying and securing forensic opportunities and witnesses and identifying and apprehending suspects. Every residential burglary is now graded as requiring a

priority response, with attendance to be achieved as soon as possible and, in any case, within one hour. Other high harm incidents will also be allocated an enhanced level of response where appropriate. For example, all street robberies, including attempts, which are reported to be in progress or within 30 minutes of being committed are subjected to the force's Operation Tigress response plan (which focuses on victim care as well as pursuit of the perpetrator(s)) and allocated an emergency response grading. The trigger plan includes several pre-defined tasks developed specifically by investigators to maximise evidential opportunities and lines of enquiry to identify, locate and apprehend the suspect(s) during what is known as "the golden hour" following an offence.

Further to its rapid review of evidence of the measures that can be effective in solving burglary crimes, the College of Policing is currently preparing a comprehensive toolkit for forces around the operational response to burglary which it plans to release before the end of January 2023, to be followed closely afterwards by a knowledge sharing event for forces on how to reduce these offences. Essex Police will have due regard to these inputs in due course.

A new Responding to Incidents Policy was agreed in principle by the force's Contact Management Programme Board in August 2022 following feedback from a peer review conducted by Sussex Police that Essex Police is not compliant with the NPCC's National Contact Management Strategy, including the principle that there should only be one emergency response grade. Sussex Police recommended that:

- Essex Police implement a standardised approach across all FCR shifts
- All call handlers are logged in as 'all calls' to prevent overuse of 999 system
- Essex Police implement a challenge approach to misuse of 999 system
- Essex Police shift demand from traditional methods of contact where possible and identify IT solutions to transfer calls.

The new policy will implement in Essex the National Contact Management Vision of contact management enabling the police service to manage all contact in a way that is consistent across the country and that appropriately meets the needs of the individual, thus delivering a service that is intelligent, personalised, reassuring and effective at the earliest point of contact. This vision will apply to all contact channels and will deliver contact management services which:

- Are designed to deliver appropriate assistance to members of the public.
- Prioritise those at greatest risk of harm.
- Make effective use of people and technology across an appropriate range of communication channels.
- Achieve early resolution of calls for service, deploying frontline policing resources where necessary.
- In collaboration with others, ensure that the police protect the public and increase confidence in policing.

Under the new policy, the conventional contact channels of 101 and 999 calls will remain a key part of the force's contact offering however, in line with the national strategy, Essex Police will continue to develop other channels of contact. This will involve establishing some new channels (e.g. social media and video calls) as well as

continuous improvement to existing channels.

The new policy will also update Essex's response gradings to align with the National Police Chiefs Council's (NPCC's) National Contact Management Grade (NCMGs), as follows:

Grade	Response	Attendance Target
1	Emergency	20 minutes
2	Urgent	Within 60 minutes
3	Priority	Within 8 hours
4	Scheduled	Within 24 hours
5	Resolution without Deployment	No attendance
6	Appointment	By appointment

The force's Chief Officer Group (COG) is currently considering how best to transition from the current to the new policy and in what timescales, given that implementation is reliant upon supporting changes to technology described above. More work is to be done on this at the COG Away Day on 21 December, where a timeline for implementation will be agreed.

Implementation of the new policy will also require some changes to staffing structures. Calls are currently received by call takers in FCR, Switchboard and the Resolution Centre. Going forward, it is proposed that the call taking functions of these departments are merged to create a single professionalised team of contact handlers. This team would be trained to an appropriate level to allow early resolution of contact whenever possible. This could be supplemented by the transfer of the Public Protection Assessment Centre resource and functionality into Contact Management, allowing the checks of police systems to support risk assessment and response as part of the initial process, thus providing a more efficient and resilient model. By merging these functions, the resilience of each team can be fully exploited to improve contact handling capacity in an 'omni-competent' model. Wasteful downtime due to the current siloed working would be better directed to dealing with demand.

Implementation will also be supported by an updated THRIVE process focusing on the solvability of the crime, victims, vulnerability and repeat victimisation. All FCR staff will have received a refreshed THRIVE training input by the end of 2022 which will enable them to assess risk, identify vulnerability and provide victims of crime and members of the public with crime prevention advice in order to prevent repeat victimisation.

Alongside this, Essex Police has already improved its performance management framework, including through the use of performance dashboards created by the Operational Support Team to compare resourcing with demand. This facilitates work to ensure the force has the right staff, in the right place, at the right time, which should naturally lead to improvements in the force's response to incidents. An enhanced level of scrutiny of performance by the command team is also helping to drive performance improvements and focus staff on priorities.

4. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Frequency with which Target Response Times were met by High Harm Crime Type (September 2021 – September 2022)

APPENDIX 1

Frequency with which Target Response Times were met by High Harm Crime Type

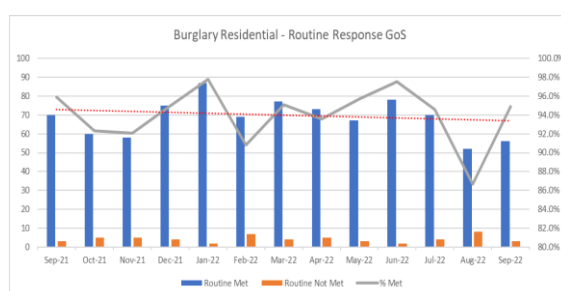
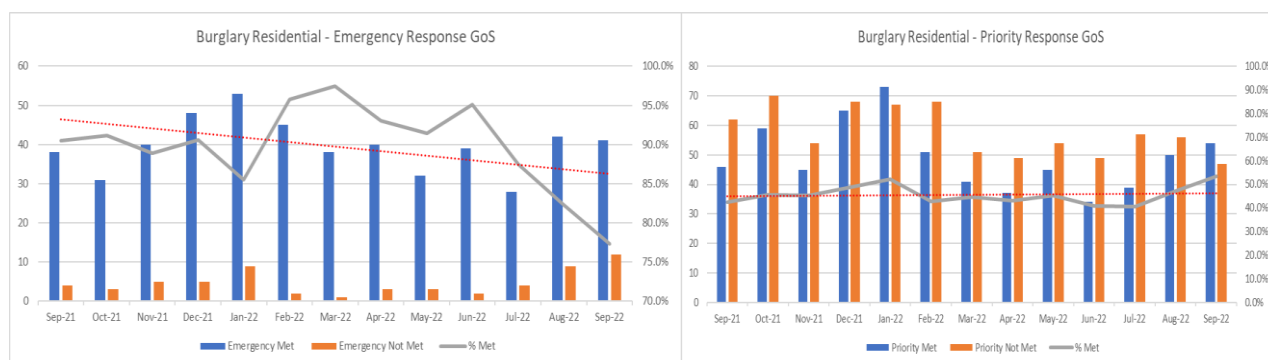
(September 2021 – September 2022)

Residential Burglary

	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Total
Emergency Met	38	31	40	48	53	45	38	40	32	39	28	42	41	515
Emergency Not Met	4	3	5	5	9	2	1	3	3	2	4	9	12	62
% Met	90.5%	91.2%	88.9%	90.6%	85.5%	95.7%	97.4%	93.0%	91.4%	95.1%	87.5%	82.4%	77.4%	89.3%

	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Total
Priority Met	46	59	45	65	73	51	41	37	45	34	39	50	54	639
Priority Not Met	62	70	54	68	67	68	51	49	54	49	57	56	47	752
% Met	42.6%	45.7%	45.5%	48.9%	52.1%	42.9%	44.6%	43.0%	45.5%	41.0%	40.6%	47.2%	53.5%	45.9%

	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Total
Routine Met	70	60	58	75	87	69	77	73	67	78	70	52	56	892
Routine Not Met	3	5	5	4	2	7	4	5	3	2	4	8	3	55
% Met	95.9%	92.3%	92.1%	94.9%	97.8%	90.8%	95.1%	93.6%	95.7%	97.5%	94.6%	86.7%	94.9%	94.2%



At present, all burglaries will be recorded and investigated proportionately, but may not all be attended within the target timescale. As can be seen, there was a clear reduction in performance outcomes for residential burglaries requiring an emergency response in August and September 2022. This may have been caused by the increase in calls for service throughout the summer months, as small numbers create a large swing in performance when viewed as a percentage.

Robbery

	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Total
Emergency Met	20	26	26	22	23	18	20	26	26	36	22	25	28	318
Emergency Not Met	3	8	4	3	5	8	6	10	3	8	6	4	9	77
% Met	87.0%	76.5%	86.7%	88.0%	82.1%	69.2%	76.9%	72.2%	89.7%	81.8%	78.6%	86.2%	75.7%	80.5%

	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Total
Priority Met	7	10	10	5	13	10	6	7	8	12	16	7	16	127
Priority Not Met	3	8	6	2	5	2	4	7	4	8	8	6	7	70
% Met	70.0%	55.6%	62.5%	71.4%	72.2%	83.3%	60.0%	50.0%	66.7%	60.0%	66.7%	53.8%	69.6%	64.5%

	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Total
Routine Met	5	5	8	6	6	5	8	1	2	2	5	3	4	60
Routine Not Met	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	4
% Met	83.3%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	88.9%	100.0%	100.0%	66.7%	100.0%	100.0%	80.0%	93.8%



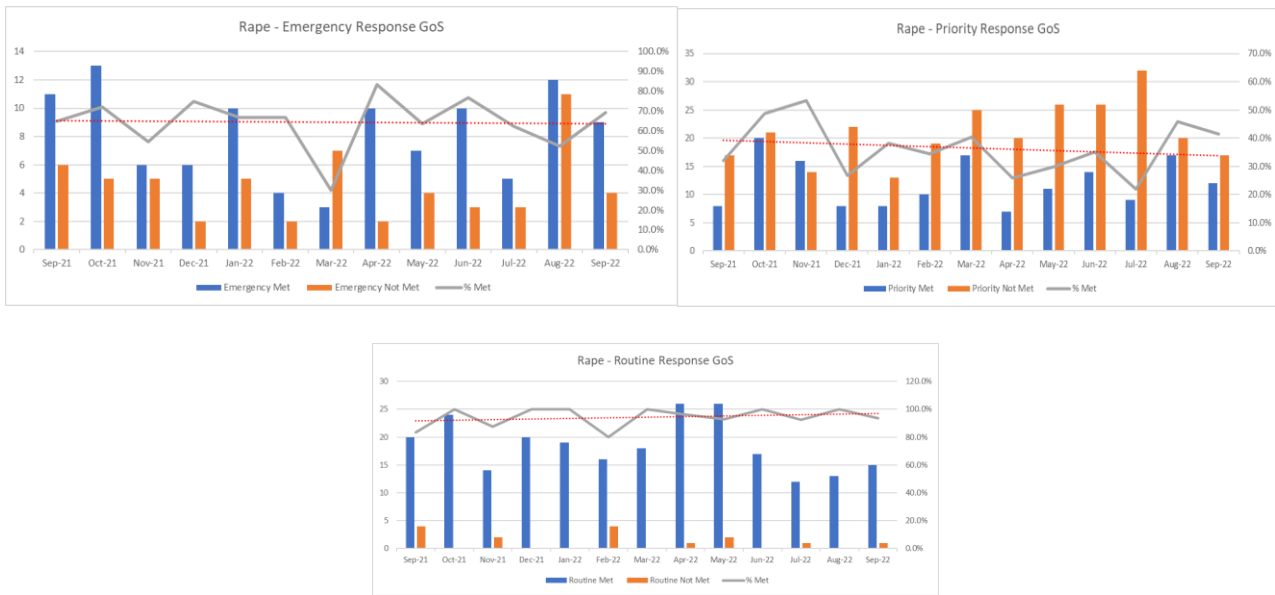
A Superintendent has been appointed to lead on the themes of burglary and robbery and chairs a steering group overseeing attendance at and the investigation of these crime types.

Rape

	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Total
Emergency Met	11	13	6	6	10	4	3	10	7	10	5	12	9	106
Emergency Not Met	6	5	5	2	5	2	7	2	4	3	3	11	4	59
% Met	64.7%	72.2%	54.5%	75.0%	66.7%	66.7%	30.0%	83.3%	63.6%	76.9%	62.5%	52.2%	69.2%	64.2%

	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Total
Priority Met	8	20	16	8	8	10	17	7	11	14	9	17	12	157
Priority Not Met	17	21	14	22	13	19	25	20	26	26	32	20	17	272
% Met	32.0%	48.8%	53.3%	26.7%	38.1%	34.5%	40.5%	25.9%	29.7%	35.0%	22.0%	45.9%	41.4%	36.6%

	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Total
Routine Met	20	24	14	20	19	16	18	26	26	17	12	13	15	240
Routine Not Met	4	0	2	0	0	4	0	1	2	0	1	0	1	15
% Met	83.3%	100.0%	87.5%	100.0%	100.0%	80.0%	100.0%	96.3%	92.9%	100.0%	92.3%	100.0%	93.8%	94.1%

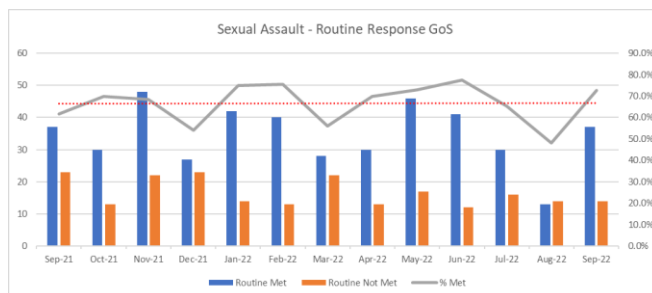
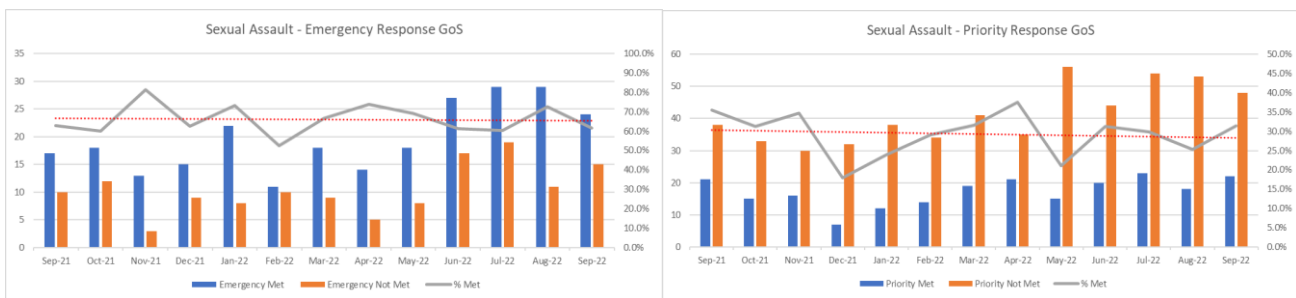


Sexual Assault

	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Total
Emergency Met	17	18	13	15	22	11	18	14	18	27	29	29	24	255
Emergency Not Met	10	12	3	9	8	10	9	5	8	17	19	11	15	136
% Met	63.0%	60.0%	81.3%	62.5%	73.3%	52.4%	66.7%	73.7%	69.2%	61.4%	60.4%	72.5%	61.5%	65.2%

	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Total
Priority Met	21	15	16	7	12	14	19	21	15	20	23	18	22	223
Priority Not Met	38	33	30	32	38	34	41	35	56	44	54	53	48	536
% Met	35.6%	31.3%	34.8%	17.9%	24.0%	29.2%	31.7%	37.5%	21.1%	31.3%	29.9%	25.4%	31.4%	29.4%

	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Total
Routine Met	37	30	48	27	42	40	28	30	46	41	30	13	37	449
Routine Not Met	23	13	22	23	14	13	22	13	17	12	16	14	14	216
% Met	61.7%	69.8%	68.6%	54.0%	75.0%	75.5%	56.0%	69.8%	73.0%	77.4%	65.2%	48.1%	72.5%	67.5%

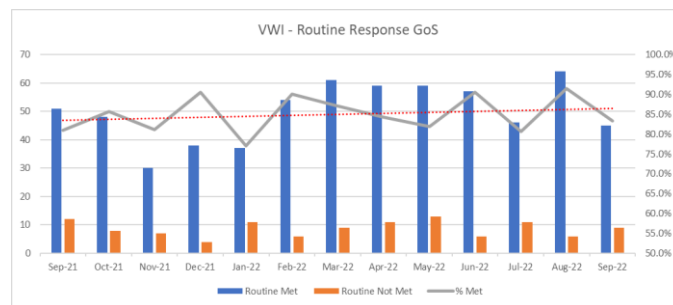
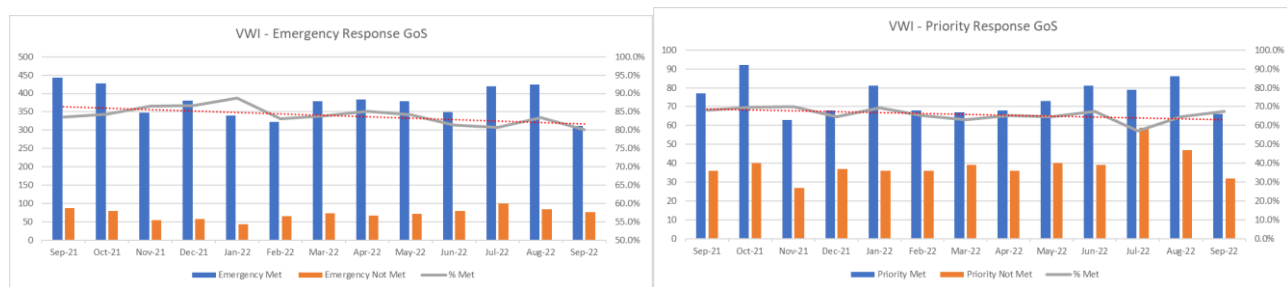


Violence with Injury

	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Total
Emergency Met	443	428	348	380	339	323	379	383	379	349	419	424	311	4905
Emergency Not Met	87	79	54	58	43	66	73	67	71	80	100	84	77	939
% Met	83.6%	84.4%	86.6%	86.8%	88.7%	83.0%	83.8%	85.1%	84.2%	81.4%	80.7%	83.5%	80.2%	83.9%

	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Total
Priority Met	77	92	63	68	81	68	67	68	73	81	79	86	66	969
Priority Not Met	36	40	27	37	36	36	39	36	40	39	59	47	32	504
% Met	68.1%	69.7%	70.0%	64.8%	69.2%	65.4%	63.2%	65.4%	64.6%	67.5%	57.2%	64.7%	67.3%	65.8%

	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Total
Routine Met	51	48	30	38	37	54	61	59	59	57	46	64	45	649
Routine Not Met	12	8	7	4	11	6	9	11	13	6	11	6	9	113
% Met	81.0%	85.7%	81.1%	90.5%	77.1%	90.0%	87.1%	84.3%	81.9%	90.5%	80.7%	91.4%	83.3%	85.2%



Report title: Police and Crime Plan 2016 to 2021 Closure Report	
Report to: Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel	
Report author: Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex	
Date: 08 December 2022	For: Noting and comment
Enquiries to: Darren Horsman Strategic Head of Policy and Public Engagement, Deputy Monitoring Officer, PFCC and Janet Perry, Chief Financial Officer and Strategic Head of Performance & Resources PFCC. E-mail: Darren.horsman@essex.police.uk and janet.perry@essex.police.uk	
County Divisions affected: All Essex	

1. Purpose of Report

The attached '**Police and Crime Plan 2016 to 2021 Closure Report**' provides a review of the delivery of the priorities in the '**Police and Crime Plan 2016 to 2020**' and the '**Police and Crime Plan 2020 to 2021 Extension**'.

2. Recommendations

To note the content of the **Police and Crime Plan 2016 to 2021 Closure Report**'.

3. Context

- 3.1. The Police and Crime Plan 2016 to 2020 set out a clear plan to help build the safe and secure communities the public need to thrive. The strategic approach set out in the plan focused on the police and the public working together to force out crime, ensuring police collaborate effectively with councils and communities to tackle crime and crack down on anti-social behaviour early.
- 3.2. As a result of the COVID pandemic, the elections scheduled for 2021 were postponed for a year and the Commissioner reviewed and extended the Police and Crime Plan 2016 to 2020 to align to the revised election cycle. In developing the extended Plan, we undertook a significant amount of public engagement to get a sense of the public's priorities for the further year. Through this we heard from the public that the investment in officers was making a difference, especially the Town Centre Teams, but that they also wanted to see even more officers visible in communities. We also learnt that gangs and county lines had become a bigger concern for the public and they wanted more action taken in this area.

3.3. This Extension, while closely aligned to the previous Plan, incorporated a range of new commitments to reflect the success of Essex Police's approach to tackle traditional acquisitive crime and anti-social behaviour, but also addressed the growth in crime related to gangs, violence, and domestic abuse.

3.4. The '**Police and Crime Plan 2016 to 2020**' commitments, as well as the '**Police and Crime Plan 2020 to 2021 Extension**' updated commitments are reported on extensively throughout the attached report '**Police and Crime Plan 2016 to 2021 Closure Report**'

4. Police and Crime Plan 2016 to 2021 Closure Report

4.1. The attached report reviews each priority in the Police and Crime Plan from 2016 to 2021. In addition, it also provides a more detailed assessment of progress against each of the 'We wills' commitments under each priority. This detail is set out within the Appendix to the '**Police and Crime Plan 2016 to 2021 Closure Report**'

4.2. The Commissioner discussed the content of the report with a working group of the Panel on the 18th of November and presented an overview of the report's findings.

5. Next steps

5.1. At the Working Group, it was agreed by the Panel Members that the action for the PFCC to review the delivery of the Priorities in the 2016 to 2021 Police and Crime Plans had been completed by the production of the '**Police and Crime Plan 2016 to 2021 Closure Report**'.

5.2. The PFCC will continue to ensure the delivery of the priorities in the '**Police and Crime Plan 2021 to 2024**'.

Police and Crime Plan 2016 to 2021 Closure Report

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1. Foreword

- 1.1. In 2016, the public demanded better, more visible policing. Through public engagement and the 2016 Police and Crime Commissioner election it was clear that large sections of the public had lost faith in the ability of policing to protect them and their communities. At our public meetings concerns were raised about a lack of visible policing, accessibility and a broken relationship on the ground between the public and Essex Police. Essex Police had reduced in size as public sector resources were stretched. Later analysis by PA consulting showed that the community policing teams bore the brunt of these reductions, as officers were drawn away from visible, proactive preventative policing to respond to increasingly complex high harm offences.
- 1.2. By April 2021, Essex Police had successfully recruited 500 officers, rebuilt their community policing capacity, and established a range of new highly visible teams focused on tackling specific types of crime that have a significant impact on communities. Anti-social behaviour had reduced from 52,732 in 2015/16 to 30,674 in 2021/22, a reduction of 42 per cent. Over the same period, burglary had gone from 13,032 reported incidents to 6,535, a reduction of 50 per cent, and theft from 25,872 to 23,112, a reduction of 11 per cent.
- 1.3. As Essex Police's regular and special constabulary grew, as set out in more detail later in this report, they were able to deliver a more visible community presence. Together Essex Police and my team worked with communities and community safety partnerships to understand and address local issues. We invested more in these local partnerships; more direct funding, but also more time, commitment and focus from local officers.
- 1.4. Confidence in Essex Police grew as communities started to see a difference. Communities told us through the independent public survey commissioned by the Chief Constable and me that we understood the issues in their area, that they were more confident in us, and more people thought Essex Police did a good or excellent job. They also told us they wanted more. More officers, more visibility.
- 1.5. While we rebuilt the force and got traditional forms of crime down, the Government rightly added new crimes as our understanding of controlling and coercive behaviour and stalking developed. As victims of domestic abuse became more confident that the police would listen and deal with these crimes, more reported them. We also saw a significant change in how drugs and gangs were fuelling violence in our communities.
- 1.6. These shifts were reflected in a significant change in the mix of reported crimes between 2015/16 and 2021/22 with a large increase in the reported incidents of Controlling and Coercive Behaviour and Stalking, reductions in burglary, theft and anti/social behaviour and increases in drug driven violence. Over this period the force has also improved the accuracy of its crime data and has received an outstanding rating for this by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services, so we now have a much more accurate picture of what crimes are really happening across our communities. These factors have significantly altered the mix of reported crime and contributed to a 49 per cent increase in overall crime, as can be seen in figure1(i).

Figure 1(i)



- 1.7.** As we got to grips with these evolving patterns of crime, we built new partnerships and tactical approaches to understand how to tackle them, protect the vulnerable and support victims. Our Violence and Vulnerability Unit was one of the first in the country, our domestic abuse perpetrator programme broke new ground, and the partnerships we built to deliver in these areas are strong and focused on getting these crimes down. While we have much to do to get on top of these offences and prevent crime, we have a plan, we have effective partnerships, and it is working.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1.** The Police and Crime Plan 2016 to 2020 and the Police and Crime Plan 2020 to 2021 Extension set out a clear plan to help build the safe and secure communities the public need to thrive. The strategic approach set out in the plans is focused on enabling the police and the public to work together to force out crime, ensuring police collaborate effectively with councils and communities to tackle crime and prevent criminality through stopping anti-social behaviour early. During the development of the plans, through our ongoing engagement with the public and through the 2016 election result, it was clear that the public wanted more visible policing within their communities, and local policing, in particular, needed significant investment.
- 2.2.** As well as halting any further reduction in police numbers, the Commissioner and Essex Police engaged PA consulting group to undertake an evidenced based assessment of their capacity. This assessment showed that Essex Police was significantly under strength in its community policing and prevention focused teams. This was driven by a reshaping of the force, as it had reduced in size in the years leading up to 2016 and had been required to invest heavily in its public protection capacity following an inadequate HMICFRS inspection and high profile operational failures around the investigation of child abuse.
- 2.3.** At the same time, while crime across the country had reduced significantly from its 1995 peak, by 2014/15 crime had started to increase. New types of crime had also been identified that required new legislation, such as stalking and coercive and controlling behaviour. These new laws created new recorded offences and fuelled a significant change in the mix of crime as well as adding more demands onto policing locally. Essex Police also had to invest heavily in capacity around high harm cases driven by the inadequate HMICFRS inspection and identified operational failings. This further exacerbated the calls on policing locally.
- 2.4.** The nature of crime was also changing. As technology had improved, so had the tools available to criminals and the amount of evidence created by digital devices. This resulted in the investigation and prosecution of existing crimes becoming significantly more complex and resource intensive.
- 2.5.** To tackle the impact these national trends were having on Essex Police, combined with significant challenges around the capacity of the force in 2016, the Commissioner successfully secured the public's support for increases in the Policing Precept. The Commissioner built national alignment within Police and Crime Commissioners and worked with government to successfully secure the biggest investment in policing in a decade. This initial investment was followed by an even larger investment as the government committed to recruit a further 20,000 officers nationally. These local and national investment programmes lead to the biggest ever recruitment programme for policing.
- 2.6.** These initiatives provided the Chief Constable with the resources to increase officer establishment by more than 500 between April 2016 and the end of March 2021. This growth programme did not stop at the end of this Police and Crime Plan and the establishment will have grown by a total of 900 officers by the end of March 2023, making Essex Police the biggest and strongest it has ever been. Much of this growth has been focused in community policing teams, through Town Centre Teams and specialist teams such as the Rural Engagement Team, Business Engagement Team, and Domestic Abuse Problem Solving Teams. We have also

invested heavily in a network of Children and Young People Officers to engage with schools and young people in the community on the cusp of criminality. This focus is about shifting the attention back to local policing where officers work with communities to prevent crime.

- 2.7.** In 2016/17, the Commissioner launched a significant campaign to recruit and embed Specials within the regular constabulary. This led to the growth of Specials from a base of 353 prior to the 2016 election to 520 in the 12 months to the end of March 2021. These officers not only provide additional capacity, but also strengthen the vital link between communities and the police.
- 2.8.** While this programme of growth has been successful and has given the force greater capacity, crime across the county has continued to increase from 111,022 crimes per year in 2015/16 to 167,226 in 2019/20. Levels fell in 2020/21 to 148,135 during the COVID lockdown period and then increased to 165,518 in 2021/22. This growth has, in part, been driven by new legislation, but was also significantly impacted by improvements in the accuracy of crime data recorded by Essex Police, and a sustained and significant effort to encourage the reporting of domestic abuse, which has grown from 30,719 cases in 2015/16 to 42,802 in 2021/22.
- 2.9.** While overall crime has increased, anti-social behaviour has reduced significantly from 52,732 in 2015/16 to 30,674 in 2021/22. The numbers did increase in 2020/21 as breaches of COVID regulations were recorded as anti-social behaviour, however, the underlying level of ASB, excluding the COVID offences, has fallen year on year throughout the period. This is down to strong proactive activity on and ground but also to improvements in crime data recording that has helped ensure that incidents are recorded appropriately and not inaccurately classified as ASB.
- 2.10.** These changes in recorded crime have impacted the crime harm score, a measure of the harm caused by all crime based on the severity of the offences as indicated by the available sentences. As shown in figure 2 (i), using this measure it is clear that there has been a significant increase in the level of harm, as both the total number of reported incidents and the severity of these incidents has increased, this reflects the change in the mix of crimes recorded discussed previously and the increased severity of incidents.

Figure 2(i)

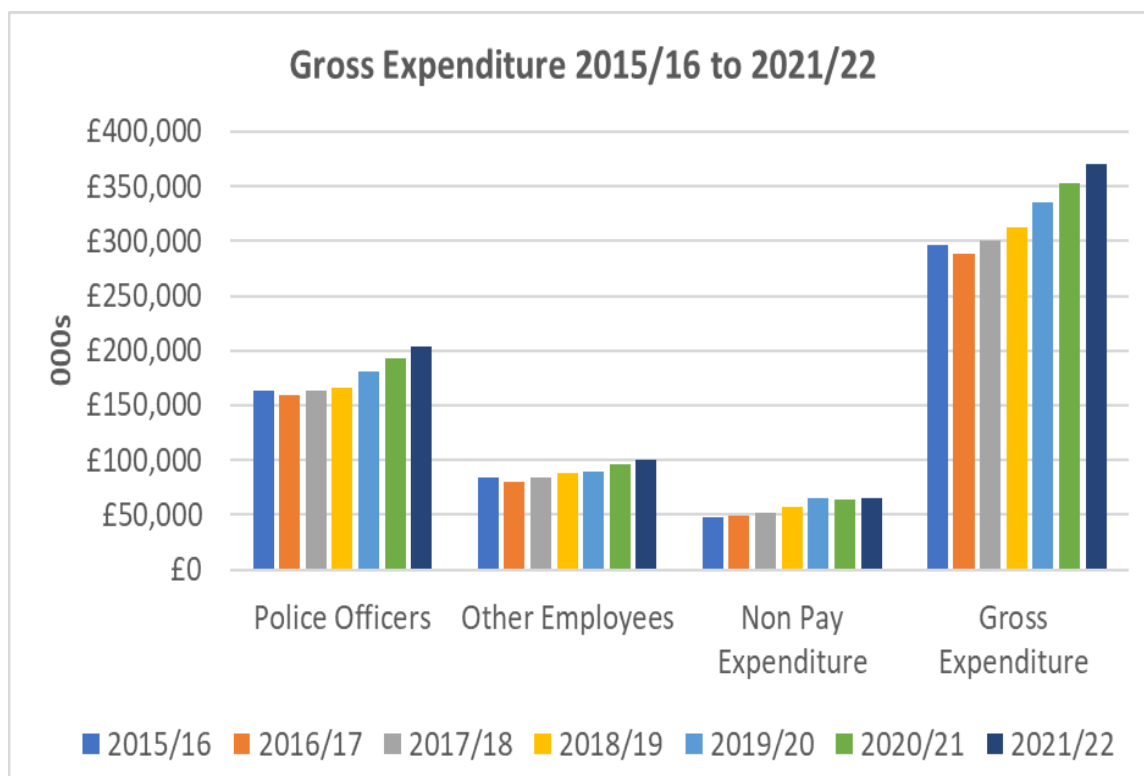


- 2.11.** Where Essex Police have been successful in driving down crime, as in domestic burglary, theft, and anti-social behaviour it demonstrates that by working with communities, they have been able to get ahead of these more traditional forms of crime. These successes have led to the public's growing confidence in their force. In 2017, the Commissioner and the Chief Constable established an independent public survey which asked a representative sample of more than 7,000 residents each year, their views of policing in Essex.
- 2.12.** Since this was introduced, the number of people who answered good or excellent to the statement 'taking everything into account, how good a job do you think the police in this area are doing?' has increased from 68.7 per cent in 2017/18, to 79 per cent in 2021/22. For victims of crime, this increased from 54 per cent 2017/18 to 61 per cent in 2021/22.
- 2.13.** As a result of the COVID pandemic, the Police and Crime Plan 2016 to 2020 was extended for a further year. In developing this we undertook significant public engagement to get a good sense of what had worked for the public and areas where they still have significant concern. Through this we heard a wealth of information including that our investment in officers was making a difference, especially the Town Centre Teams, but the public wanted more. We also learnt that gangs and county lines had become a bigger concern for the public and they wanted more action taken in this area.
- 2.14.** This Extension, while closely aligned to the previous Plan, incorporated a range of new commitments to reflect the success of Essex Police's approach to tackle traditional acquisitive crime and anti-social behaviour, but also address the growth in crime related to gangs, violence, and domestic abuse. These updated commitments are also reported on throughout this report.

3. Financial Overview

- 3.1.** Following the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, the Essex Police Authority was replaced, on 22 November 2012, with two 'corporation sole' bodies, the PCC for Essex and the Chief Constable. The assets, liabilities and reserves of the Police Authority were transferred directly to the PCC. All payments for the Group are made by the Commissioner and all income and funding are received by the Commissioner. The Commissioner has the responsibility for managing the financial relationships with third parties and has legal responsibilities for discharging the contractual terms and conditions of suppliers.
- 3.2.** Following a full public consultation and a business case submitted to the Home Secretary in May 2017, the Home Office approved the decision for the PCC to take on the governance of Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, becoming the country's first Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC).
- 3.3.** The Commissioner is also the Finance Lead for PCCs across the country. Over the last six years, he has worked hard with the Home Office and Treasury to help secure additional funding for policing nationally. From the Commissioner's first budget setting for the year 2016/17, the Commissioner planned for increased expenditure to support force growth. In 2019/20, funding was secured for the first year of a three year programme to increase police officer numbers by 20,000 nationally.
- 3.4.** One of the challenges Essex Police faces is that it is one of the lowest funded forces nationally and it has the lowest spend per head of population (Source: HMICFRS 2021 Value for Money Profiles). Essex Police has a good track record of delivering cash and efficiency savings to maximise the benefit out of every penny. In 2021/22 £4.4m savings were delivered with £2.9m of these recurring annually. This approach is continuing beyond the Police and Crime Plan 2016 to 2021 and there continues to be an ambitious savings programme with £4.7m programmed to be delivered in 2022/23.
- 3.5.** The graph at figure 3(i) shows the PFCC Group's gross expenditure for each year from 2015/16 to 2021/22, the increase over the six years of 25 per cent, includes the Essex share of the first two years of the 20,000 additional officers for Police Uplift Programme (PUP). In 2021/22 as well as the additional government funding for the PUP, the Commissioner also increased the precept by 4.98 per cent (£9.90 per year on a Band D property) allowing, the Chief Constable to recruit a further 186 Full Time Equivalents (FTE). This has meant that Essex Police had 700 more FTE officers, than it had in 2016 and during 2022/23 the Chief Constable has received the funds to recruit another 200 FTE. 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.

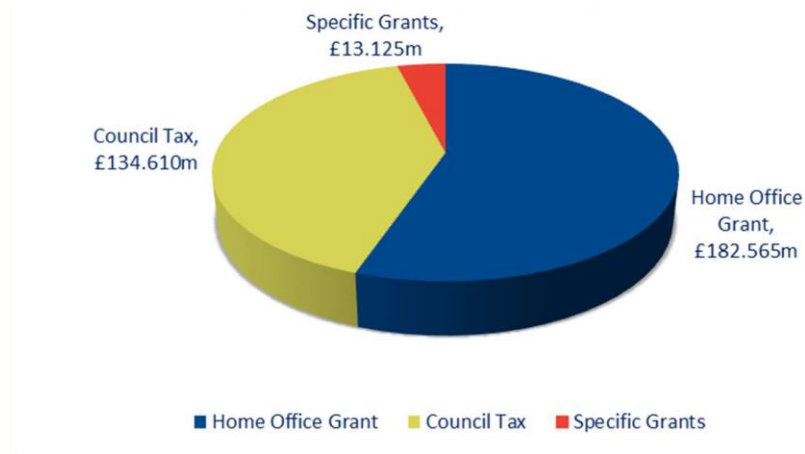
Figure 3(i)



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.

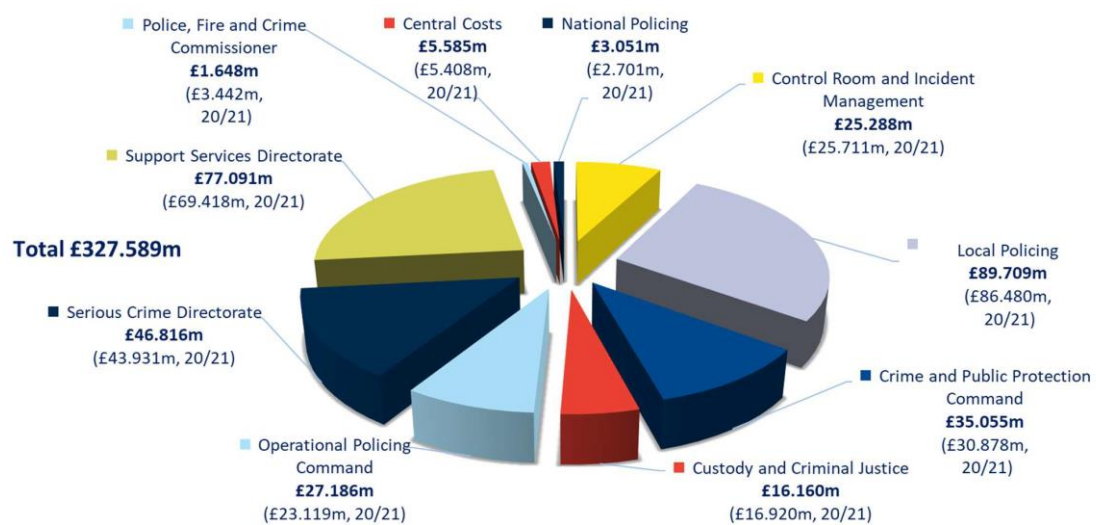
- 3.6.** The significant increases in inflation over recent months, has already had an impact on the cost of supplies and services, and is expected to impact further during 2022/23 and 2023/24. The Commissioner and Essex Police has reviewed the impact of these pressures over the next two years and the sensitivity analysis demonstrates that the force will be able to manage the cost of supplies and services in the short term. However, with staff being such a significant percentage of the costs, the impact is more likely to come from pay award increases affected by these rising costs. We will continue to consider the various impacts of costs in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) as the budget for 2023/24 is developed.
- 3.7. Where the money came from in 2021/22** The chart at figure 3(ii) shows an analysis of the Commissioner's key sources of funding in 2021/22, totalling £330.3m. The Home Office core grant paid to the Commissioner accounted for 55 per cent of the total funding. These grants and income raised by council tax, funded the net revenue budget for 2021/22 of £330.3m.

Figure 3(ii)



3.8. Where the money was spent in 2021/22 (and 2020/21) The graph at figure 3(iii) shows an analysis of the Group's net revenue expenditure totalling £327.589m in 2021/22, resulting in a surplus of £2.7m, transferred to the General Reserve and earmarked reserves

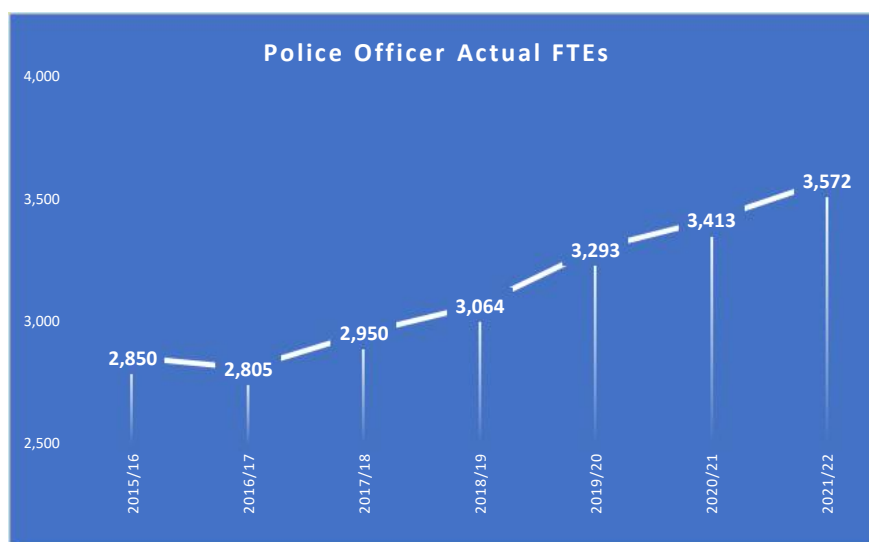
Figure 3(iii)



4. More Local, Visible and Accessible Policing

- 4.1. Local, visible, and accessible policing is essential to deliver a policing service that is properly connected to the community, where the public work with the police to squeeze out crime and, wherever possible, crime is prevented from happening.
- 4.2. Between 2016 and the end of March 2021, the Commissioner has provided the funding for the Chief Constable to grow the force establishment by more than 500 officers, taking the total number of established officers to 3,369 from 2,850 in May 2016. Because of the successful “We Value Difference” recruitment campaign by Essex Police and the commitment to fund increases over multiple years it has been possible to recruit beyond the establishment each year to ensure recruitment kept pace with the multi year growth programme. The growth in establishment has continued after the 2020/21 financial year with a further increase of 218 officers in 2021/22 and 200 more in 2022/23. This will take the establishment of the force to 3,755 by the end of March 2023, making the establishment of Essex Police the strongest it has ever been.
- 4.3. This growth in the establishment figures has been matched by the actual officer FTEs, which vary slightly due to the timing of officers joining the force and others retiring or deciding to leave. The actual FTEs are shown in the graph at Figure 4(i).

Figure 4(i)

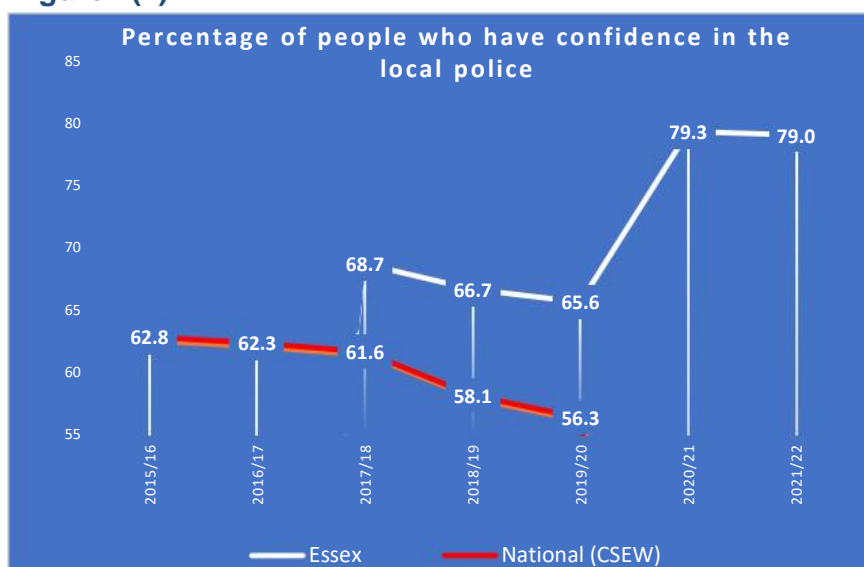


- 4.4. Towards the end of 2021, as the multi-year growth programme has been delivered, there has been significant increases in public confidence. Since 2017, the Commissioner and Chief Constable have commissioned an independent public survey to understand and track public confidence in policing. This survey mirrored the national confidence questions used in the Crime Survey of England and Wales and asked a representative sample of more than 7,000 Essex residents each year. The scale of the survey provides a much more detailed and robust local picture that has helped to target activity and allowed this information to be available once the Crime Survey for England and Wales, as shown in figure 4 (ii), stopped providing this information at the end of 2019/20.
- 4.5. As also can be seen in figure 4(ii) since the introduction of the independent public survey for Essex in 2017, the number of people who answered good or excellent to the question “taking everything into account, how good a job do you think the police

in this area are doing?’ has increased from 68.7 per cent in the 12 months to the end of March 2018 to 79 per cent in the 12 months to the end of March 2022 (those answering good or excellent making up the confidence percentage). This question mirrors the question asked in the Crime Survey of England and Wales (CSEW) but focuses only on Essex and uses phone calls to gather results. The introduction of the survey also coincided with the reduction of the CSEW sample size making it statistically less reliable when broken down to Essex, resident types and districts. CSEW also changed their methodology.

- 4.6.** For victims of crime, this has increased from 54 per cent in the 12 months to the end of March 2018 to 61 per cent in the 12 months to the end of March 2022. For people who self-identify as Black, Asian or an Ethnic Minority, the increase has been from 74 per cent to 80 per cent, though there have been significant fluctuations over that period.

Figure 4(ii)



- 4.7.** This increased confidence and reduction in overall crime developed as the force grew. The introduction of Town Centre Teams, comprising 58 constables and ten sergeants in 2019, had an immediate impact on feedback that was received from communities and has continued to drive down business crime and anti-social behaviour.
- 4.8.** Similar growth across community policing, local policing and some of our specialist teams has coincided with a significant increase in the public’s confidence in policing, indicating that confidence has grown as the force has become stronger and more visible. It is important to note that 88 per cent of Essex residents continue to see a visible policing presence as very important or important, compared to a national average of 78 per cent.
- 4.9.** At the same time as the force was growing, Essex Police, supported by the Commissioner, also significantly improved their approach to public engagement. A new engagement strategy was introduced in 2017 backed by an internal governance process to help drive improvement. This has transformed the engagement with the public providing a strong structured approach based on insight and reliable data.
- 4.10.** Our investment in Community Safety Partnerships has also been a key element of our strategic approach to strengthening the local, visible, and accessible nature of

policing. The introduction of Community Safety Engagement Officers based in Community Safety Hubs has increased capacity in terms of local engagement and continues our investment in local Community Safety Partnerships as an important way of giving local communities influence over resolving local issues. Together, these extra resources and continued investment have helped to contribute to the public's confidence that Essex Police understand local issues.

- 4.11.** A significant area of focus during the Commissioner's first term was in tackling rural crime. Working with the Essex Rural Partnership and Essex Police in 2017, a partnership based Rural Crime Strategy was developed for the first time. This was supported by the establishment by the Chief Constable of a dedicated Rural Engagement Team. This team has been received extremely positively by our rural communities and was expanded in 2020/21. This team represents a dedicated investment of £623k and is now the largest Rural Engagement Team in the country. The team have made a significant difference in rural communities and focus on unauthorised encampments, hare coursing and rural theft. The work of this dedicated team has seen a reduction in the number of unauthorised encampments from 229 in the 12 months to March 2018 to 182 in the 12 months to March 2021.
- 4.12.** In the 2016 Police and Crime Plan, the Commissioner also set out an ambition to work with businesses to tackle crime against them, so they can play an active part in creating the safe and secure communities the public want. Following a significant amount of work with business groups, the Business Crime Team was established by the Chief Constable in February 2020. This team provide specialist advice to local policing teams and work closely with business networks such as the Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses, and business groups across the county to prevent business crime. This model has been used as national best practice.
- 4.13.** In early 2020, following additional funding secured by the Commissioner the Chief Constable increased the number of Children and Young People officers (CYP) from 13 to 33. These officers work to identify children and young people who are most at risk of becoming repeat offenders or at serious risk of harm or vulnerability. They engage with young people in senior schools to support a partnership approach in keeping young people safe and reducing crime and anti-social behaviour. The work being completed by the CYP officers is providing increased accessibility and visibility with school staff and children and young people and has received positive feedback.
- 4.14.** Since 2016, the shared Joint Education Team between Essex Police and Essex County Fire and Rescue Service has grown in effectiveness and now provides a broad range of community safety advice to all school children across Essex. Following the pandemic, this team developed a range of videos, teaching plans and supporting material to help teachers, children, and parents to engage with their children while teaching from home.
- 4.15.** Alongside this growth in officers, Essex Police has also continued to develop and improve technology, helping officers to work more efficiently. The Mobile First programme has continued to save officers time and, in 2020/21, 50 per cent of all daily recorded crime was completed via smartphones without the need to return to a station. This success led to the deployment of extra applications at officers' request, including What3Words, an interpreting service, bike register and, in September 2020, a stop and search module which was supported by a mobile fingerprint scanner. This has resulted in more successful arrests and helped to save officers 19 minutes per shift, on average.

- 4.16.** When the Commissioner was elected in 2016, there were 353 members of the Special Constabulary in Essex. While there was a strong core of officers who provided consistent regular hours, the overall engagement was low. Following a review of this area and significant investment, the Special Constabulary was repositioned in the force with officers much better integrated alongside regular officers and a strong growth programme established. This work has continued to deliver strong growth and, as can be seen in figure 4(iii), by 2020/21, there were 521 Specials in Essex, and the force were the second largest and fastest growing in the country.

Figure 4(iii)



- 4.17.** Since this redevelopment of the programme in 2016, Specials have provided much higher levels of engagement and delivered more hours per officer. So, not only has the number of Specials grown, but so too has the effectiveness of each officer. For example, in 2020/21, there was a significant increase in the number of hours delivered by the Special Constabulary, with a 11.45 per cent increase over the year to 214,503 hours, the equivalent to 122 full time officers.
- 4.18.** This has provided a huge boost to Essex Police in terms of capacity, but also built stronger relationships between the force and the communities they serve. Importantly, the huge growth of the Specials programme has made a significant contribution to Essex Police's regular recruitment programme, with 232 officers leaving the Specials to join the regulars between May 2016 and the end of March 2021.
- 4.19.** This strong volunteering base is also reflected in the strength of Essex Police's Police Cadet Programme, which grew from 180 in 2017 to 410 in 2020/21 making it the largest in the Eastern Region. This could not be achieved without the dedicated support of the Essex Police Cadet Leaders and, by 2020/21, it was very positive that there were 80 Leaders across Essex. Essex Police also continue to benefit from a large Police Volunteer Programme which grew from 125 in 2018 to 188 in 2020/21 and 3,546 people participating in a variety of Essex watch schemes from Dog Watch, Farm Watch, Marine Watch and Caravan Watch. There are also more than 100 watches for different business areas and allotments where individual membership is not measured. A strong element of both Essex Police's and the Commissioner's engagement with communities is the relationship with Neighbourhood Watch, who have an active membership of more than 88,000.

Together, these groups reach 100,000s of people across Essex and provide vital crime prevention advice and act as an extremely useful conduit to the public.

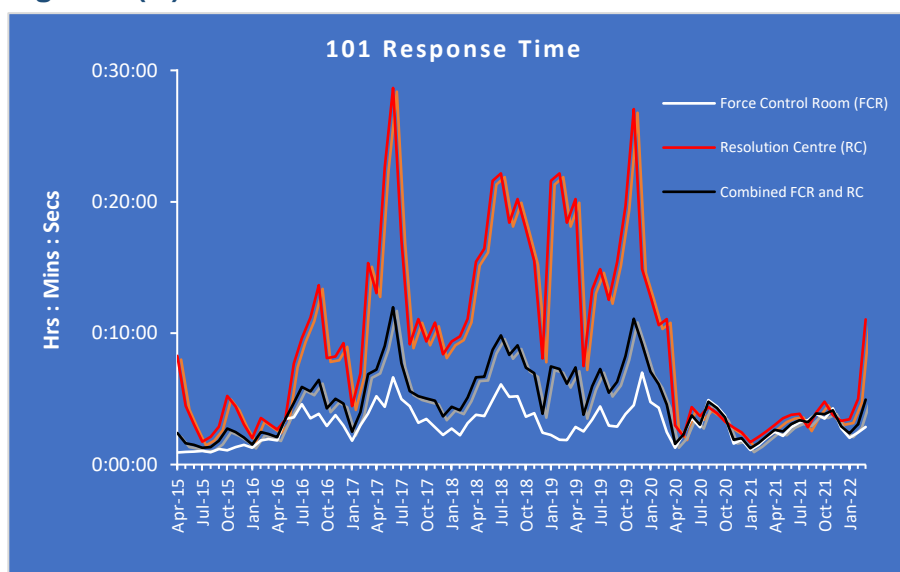
4.20. At the same time, Essex Police's Community Safety Accreditation Scheme (CSAS) programme is the largest in the country. In 2020/21, 442 accredited people from 42 organisations worked together with Essex Police across the county in a range of roles and with a wide range of powers given to them by the Chief Constable.

4.21. Since March 2016, there has also been a significant improvement in accessibility with the introduction of online reporting, which has seen several significant phases of development over the period. A Live Chat function was also introduced on the Essex Police website, which went live in April 2020. The Live Chat received more than 10,000 conversations in the first six months. Essex Police have also successfully launched the Essex Single Online Home website, which is part of a national programme, and significantly improved online reporting systems, including a dedicated way to report anti-social behaviour.

4.22. Since 2016 the Commissioner and Essex Police have also worked with Crimestoppers to promote the service as an alternative way for the public to report crime where they do not want to be identified. The support has covered a wide range of projects including a number of annual grants, large cash incentives for information relating to high profile complex cases and more bespoke support to encourage reporting in rural communities, of hate crime and a range of other targeted crime types.

4.23. Providing a timely and effective Emergency (999) and non emergency (101) public call system remains a priority for the Commissioner and has been an area of focus since 2016. Early in 2016, clear measurement systems were introduced to provide an honest assessment of ongoing service delivery. Figure 4 (iv) shows the combined time a caller would have to wait for their call to go through to the Force Control Room and onto the Resolution Centre. This shows the significant increase in the average time and the impact extra investment had on getting this number down but also the significant shift in service during the COVID 19 pandemic.

Figure 4 (iv)



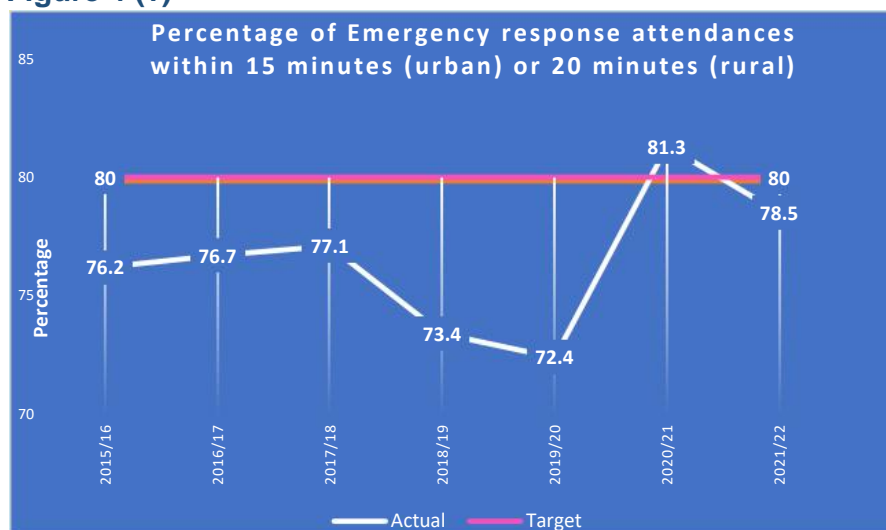
4.24. Since 2017, significant investment has been made in this service, including the introduction of a resolution centre. By 2020/21, the 101 service was averaging a

pickup time of two minutes 36 seconds and Essex Police were hitting their target 50 per cent of the time. However, the resolution centre was now picking up significant volumes of work which would have previously been dealt with by the 101 service. The resolution centre picking up calls on average within 3 minutes ten seconds and achieved their five minute target 73 per cent of the time. This improved service corresponded with a significant decrease in the negative feedback about the service the Commissioner received through his public engagement programme.

4.25. While there is still much to do to provide the service that the Commissioner wants to, it is now clear that the unacceptable service levels provided in 2015/16 have improved and the main focus of improvement has been able to switch from ensuring calls are picked up to focusing on the quality of the service provided.

4.26. As part of the Police and Crime Plan 2016 to 2020 the percentage of emergency's responded to within 15 or 20 minutes was also measured. This is shown at figure 4 (v) and indicates a dropping off of the service in 2018/19 and 2019/20 improving by 2021/22.

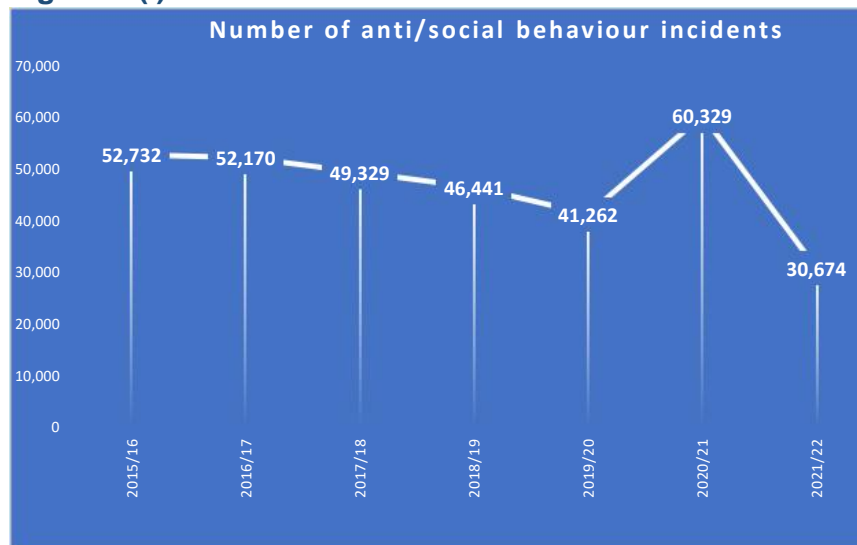
Figure 4 (v)



5. Crack down on Anti-Social Behaviour

- 5.1.** Since 2015/16, there has been a significant year on year reduction in anti-social behaviour (ASB), with a 21 per cent reduction between 2015/16 and 2019/20. While this underlying trend is well established, during the period of lockdown in 2020/21 when breaches of COVID regulations were classified as ASB, there was an almost 50 per cent jump in reported anti-social behaviour
- 5.2.** It can be seen in figure 5 (i) Anti-social behaviour reduced significantly over the period of the Police and Crime Plan; from 52,732 in 2015/16 to 30,674 in 2021/22. The numbers did increase in 2020/21 as breaches of COVID regulations were recorded as anti-social behaviour, however, the underlying level of ASB, excluding these COVID offences, has fallen year-on-year throughout the period.

Figure 5 (i)



- 5.3.** HMICFRS assessed Essex Police as Good at dealing with Crime and ASB in 2016, 2017 and 2019. The PEEL 2021 inspection report published in October 2022 included the following comment from the HMI: 'The force is good at preventing crime and anti-social behaviour. Essex Police works effectively with other allied organisations to proactively intervene to protect vulnerable people and to reduce crime and disorder using a range of prevention and enforcement measures'. In addition, the internal data demonstrates that progress in getting ASB down and building capacity in this important area has continued. The force wide growth programme, for example, has continued to increase the resources and investment in local policing, including the introduction of Town Centre Teams in 2019, Children and Young People Officers and Community Safety Engagement Officers. This has increased the number of resources each year that are focused on local, preventative policing.
- 5.4.** Anti-social behaviour is defined as "any behaviour where the victim is suffering harassment, alarm, distress, nuisance or annoyance". The responsibility for tackling it is shared between local councils and Essex Police. As such, a lot of the activity is delivered through local Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) that Community Policing Teams are represented on. In rural communities, this support is also supplemented by Essex Police's Rural Engagement Team who work closely with local police to offer specialist advice and guidance on tackling rural crime such as hare coursing, unauthorised encampments, and the theft of rural machinery.

- 5.5.** Expert advice is also provided to Community Policing Teams by specialist ASB officers who advise on proactive tactics and guidance, as well as training and briefings on changes to legislation and assisting with Criminal Behaviour Orders (CBOs) and ASB Injunctions.
- 5.6.** As discussed in other sections of this report, the introduction of Community Safety Engagement Officers during the 2020/21 financial year has had a big impact on the engagement at a local level. This has been further bolstered by the introduction of a stronger analytic capability which has allowed local policing teams working with Community Safety Partnerships to have a much stronger intelligence focus. This ensures resources are allocated efficiently and the biggest impact is made with the resources we have. It is also a good example of Commissioner's and Chief Constable's continued investment in local resources, through Community Safety Partnerships, to help tackle local issues identified by the community.
- 5.7.** As well as providing additional funding to allow the Chief Constable to increase the size of the force, the Commissioner also provides direct funding to the Community Safety Partnerships in the form of annual grants. From 2016/17 to 2020/21, this amounted to £1,362,790 across Essex. Working directly with the Commissioner's office, each Community Safety Partnership commits to a locally informed and developed annual plan with clear local priorities and objectives. This structure, designed to ensure collaboration and partnership, is at the heart of how these teams operate, with local people getting the opportunity to have their say in the priorities for their area. This local variation can be seen in the priorities for the different partnerships, with rural crime being a priority in Maldon, while issues such as gangs and street drinking appear more frequently in urban areas.
- 5.8.** Successfully preventing anti-social behaviour is often about proactive problem solving; identifying why an issue is happening and then working within the community or with individuals to resolve those underlying issues. Restorative and Mediation practices, which are delivered directly out of the Commissioner's office, are an effective approach to tackling these issues and are becoming increasingly popular as the impact of this approach is understood.
- 5.9.** Restorative Justice is a voluntary process which facilitates communication between somebody who has been harmed and the person who has caused that harm. It has been proven to result in a reduction in reoffending, high participant satisfaction and an improvement in victim recovery.
- 5.10.** The Commissioner's in house Essex Restorative Justice and Mediation Service accepts referrals ranging from community issues and anti-social behaviour to the most serious offences. The team has grown from two members of staff when the service launched in 2015, to four in 2020, managing a team of 40 trained volunteer facilitators. Since the launch of the service, the number of referrals has increased year-on-year, from 168 in 2016/17 to 303 in 2020/21. Traditionally carried out face to face, the team had to adapt to changing circumstances caused by the pandemic in 2020/21. Even given this challenge, the team processed 297 referrals and 55 cases were carried out, using socially distanced meetings or virtual discussions leading to 156 participants being engaged in the restorative process in 2020/21.
- 5.11.** Feedback from victims has been very positive since the service launched in 2015. Consistently, around two thirds of those asked report that the process had a positive impact on their situation and about 80 per cent said they felt better after speaking with facilitators. General feedback is equally as positive; as an example, one victim said: "I think your understanding and sensitivity in these issues is faultless."

- 5.12.** We have seen an increase in the percentage of people having confidence that the police response to ASB is improving, (measured via the public perception survey which began in 2017/18) as can be seen in figure 5 (ii) although it has levelled off 2021/22.

Figure 5 (ii)



6. Breaking the Cycle of Domestic Abuse

- 6.1.** Domestic abuse accounts for about a third of all violent crime in Essex.
- 6.2.** Between 2015/16 and 2021/22, recorded incidents of domestic abuse increased from 30,719 to 42,802. Reported incidents have grown significantly over the last six years as significant work has been undertaken to encourage victims and survivors to come forward to seek support and report crimes. Changes in law in relation to controlling and coercive behaviour and stalking have also resulted in new offences and legislation leading to more criminal incidents being recorded. In recent years, as well as increasing the support offered for victims, the Commissioner and Essex Police have increased their focus on changing the behaviour of perpetrators to prevent domestic abuse from happening in the first place and breaking the cycle of abuse.
- 6.3.** The Commissioner has sought to raise awareness of domestic abuse and encourage victims to come forward to report abuse and access help. The increase in reported incidents of domestic abuse can be seen in figure 6 (i). Similarly, there has been an increase in repeat incidents of domestic abuse, as can be seen in figure 6(ii), with the Commissioner increasing investment in perpetrator services and early interventions

Figure 6 (i)

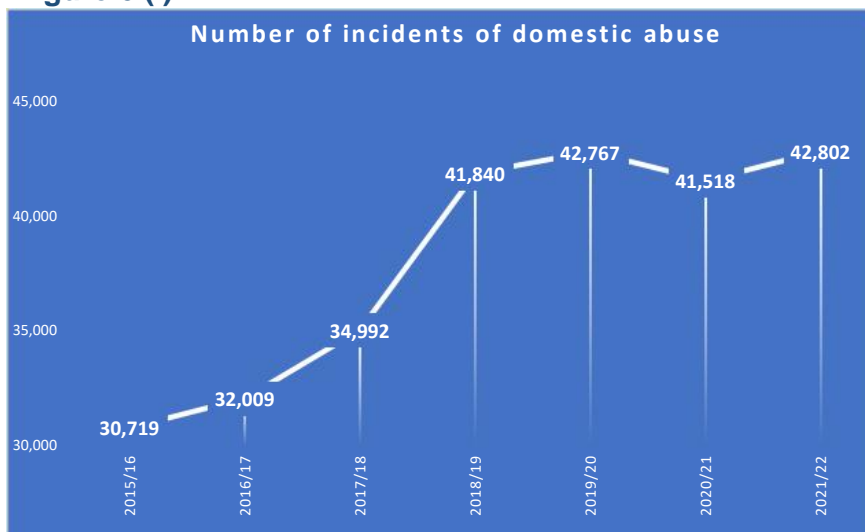
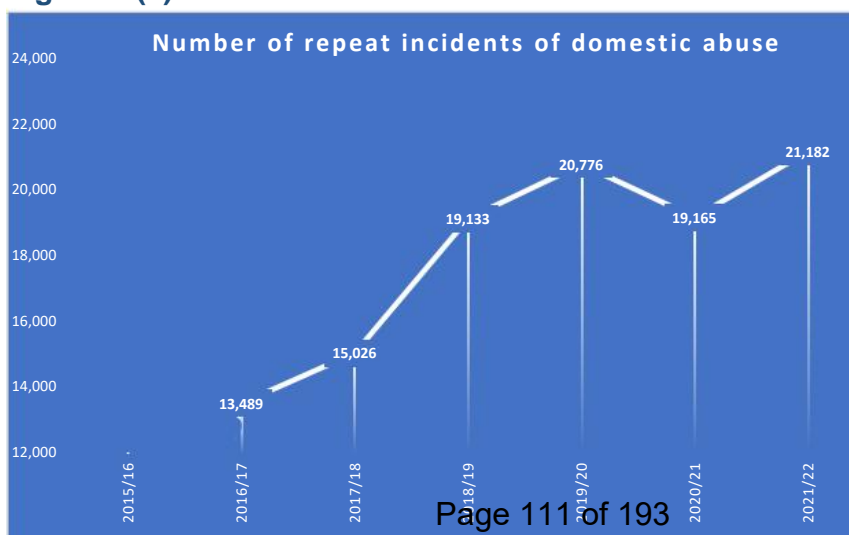


Figure 6 (ii)



- 6.4.** The number of arrests for domestic abuse incidents initially fell between 2015/16 and 2017/18 but have since increased year on year to a peak of 16,041 in 2021/22 as can be seen in figure 6 (iii).

Figure 6 (iii)



- 6.5.** As can be seen in figure 6 (iv) the volume of domestic abuse incidents solved has decreased from 3,925 in 2015/16, to 3,134 abuse offences solved in 2021/22

Figure 6 (iv)



- 6.6.** Jane Gardner, the Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, chairs the countywide Southend, Essex, and Thurrock Domestic Abuse Board (SETDAB). This is a partnership of organisations from across Essex, including the Commissioner representatives, Essex Police, Health, Local Authority, other Emergency Services and Criminal Justice agencies, with a focus on working together to support victims, raise awareness of abuse and reduce offending.
- 6.7.** As part of the development of the new partnership domestic abuse strategy, the partnership commissioned an independent review of the previous strategy (2015 to 2020). The review was undertaken by Anglia Ruskin University (ARU) and reported back to the partnership in 2021. ARU's key findings from their evaluation were that "over its lifespan, the Partnership performed in compliance with relevant best practice and national guidance, with regards to partnership work on the joint

commissioning of services, shared processes (such as MARACs and DHRs), safeguarding, activities to address the behaviour of perpetrators, and the development of a joint communications strategy”.

6.8. In May 2020, SETDAB launched its new, ambitious five year strategy which focuses on delivering five key outcomes:

6.8.1. Outcome 1: Children and young people can recognise and form healthy relationships.

6.8.2. Outcome 2: People experiencing and at risk of experiencing domestic abuse are supported to be and feel safe.

6.8.3. Outcome 3: Everyone can rebuild their lives and live free from domestic abuse.

6.8.4. Outcome 4: Supporting and disrupting perpetrators to change their behaviour and break the cycle of domestic abuse.

6.8.5. Outcome 5: Communities, professionals and employers are able to recognise domestic abuse at the earliest opportunity and have the confidence to take action.

6.9. On behalf of the Board, the Commissioner takes the lead on outcome 2.

6.10. SETDAB has recently embarked on a commissioning discovery exercise exploring how best to respond to domestic abuse systemically, understanding needs and assets and considering joint commissioning opportunities around victim and perpetrator services interventions.

6.11. To support people experiencing, and at risk of experiencing domestic abuse, a wide range of support services are commissioned by the Commissioner, which provide specialist, tailored support when and where it is most effective.

6.12. The service currently commissioned from Victim Support represents the first level of emotional and practical support provided to victims. It offers a wide range of general support for all victims of crime. This high volume service received £1,097k between the commencement of the contract in April 2019 and the end of March 2021, to provide this important function. Prior to that, the Commissioner invested £1,850k in Victim Support over the three years 2016 to 2019.

6.13. From 2016 to 2019, Safer Places was commissioned to deliver an Independent Domestic Abuse Advisors (IDVA) service across Essex. In preparing for the recommissioning of that service in 2019, the Commissioner worked with local authorities through the SETDAB partnership to develop and commission an integrated system which improves consistency and quality of service for victims, as well as better value for money for commissioners. Specialist domestic abuse organisations Next Chapter, Safe Steps and Changing Pathways receive £2.465m p.a. as part of a jointly commissioned contract with Essex County Council, Southend-on-Sea Borough Council and Thurrock Council. This funding delivers an integrated domestic abuse support service, including the provision of refuges, IDVAs, community based support and the delivery of a seven day a week, single point of access - the Compass helpline - which delivers advice and support for victims and professionals.

6.14. Specialist support services are also commissioned for victims and survivors of rape and sexual abuse, including historic child sexual abuse. Since taking office, the Commissioner has sought to increase reporting of these crimes, recognising data from the Crime Survey of England and Wales that nationally about eight in ten incidents of sexual abuse are not reported. There has been an increase in the

number of people coming forward for help since the Commissioner inherited responsibility for the commissioning of local support services in 2014; for example, service users entering support increased from 4,690 in 2016/17 to 7,117 in 2018/19.

- 6.15.** Local rape crisis centres have also been commissioned to provide specialist support for victims and survivors of sexual abuse since 2016, increasing investment in services as demand has increased; in 2016/17 the Commissioner invested about £840k in sexual abuse support, by 2020/21, this figure had increased to £1.1m. In April 2020, the Synergy Rape Crisis Partnership was 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. The contract value is about £1m per annum.
- 6.16.** In April 2019 Essex became one of the six national areas in a Sexual Violence Local Commissioning Test pilot. This enabled rape and sexual abuse support services in these areas to be directly commissioned by Commissioners, based on local needs, and thus not commissioned directly by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ). As part of the pilot, Essex received £808,500 in total over three years from the MoJ, which is allocated to specialist local support agencies, to enhance support offered to victims of sexual abuse.
- 6.17.** In 2020, a new two year funding arrangement was put in place for an additional six Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs) as part of a broader initiative to provide more support earlier in the process. This is to help victims and improve the number of cases that make it through to the courts. Between October and December 2020, the number of victims referred to ISVAs increased by 82 per cent compared to the same period a year earlier, an increase from 159 to 289.
- 6.18.** In response to the new challenges presented by the COVID pandemic, the Commissioner secured £605,967 of extra government funding for local domestic abuse charities which increased the capacity of local services and enabled the system to respond dynamically to new risks associated with lockdown and the absence of traditional services and support mechanisms. The funding also helped to make venues and services COVID secure, so they could continue to provide vital support to victims. Sexual violence organisations were also provided with £415,000 to support their work during COVID, including the provision of extra counselling.
- 6.19.** Over recent years, the Commissioner has invested in domestic abuse perpetrator behaviour change programmes to confront and change dangerous and abusive behaviour before they can cause more harm. This began in April 2016 with a national three year pilot project called Drive, which operated in Sussex, South Wales and Essex. This was a ground breaking project, that focused specifically on high risk, high harm perpetrators, including serial perpetrators deemed to cause the most harm. Independent evaluation of the quantitative and qualitative data showed that the Drive perpetrator intervention was effective at reducing the use of abusive behaviours, increasing safety for victims and children, and doing so to a greater degree than in cases where only support to the victim is being provided.
- 6.20.** The data also showed a more sustainable impact on safety when Drive was present. The number of Drive service users using each type of domestic violence and abuse (DVA) behaviour reduced substantially. For example, physical abuse reduced by 82 per cent, sexual Page 14 of 33

stalking behaviours reduced by 75 per cent; and jealous and controlling behaviours reduced by 73 per cent.

- 6.21.** Following the conclusion of the three year Drive pilot in 2020, the Commissioner took the decision to build on the success of the pilot and invested in a local adaptation that expanded the pilot area from Colchester and Tendring to cover the whole county. Funding of £170,000 was invested to deliver behaviour change programmes, which had more than 280 referrals in 2020/21 and delivered a 95 per cent reduction in physical violence. This is important work and vital to driving down the number of people affected by domestic abuse in the county. This increased focus on perpetrators has coincided with the rate of repeat DA offences plateauing recently, which is hopefully an indication of a longer term reduction in abuse.
- 6.22.** The Commissioner has promoted and invested in the J9 DA Community Awareness programme which is focused on raising awareness about domestic abuse among professionals, those working in the community and residents themselves; helping them to recognise domestic abuse and respond to victims and survivors. The sessions are delivered free and equip attendees with the tools to recognise abuse, respond appropriately and help people to access the support they need. J9 training sessions in 2019/20 enabled about 350 people to be trained on how to recognise the signs of domestic abuse and gave them the knowledge of where to signpost victims. In 2020/21, because of the impact of COVID, the sessions were adapted to be delivered via a virtual platform to ensure they could continue to get this important message out.
- 6.23.** The Commissioner continues to invest in the Goodman programme, promoting positive behaviours in young people. The five week mentoring programme is aimed at young men, at risk of entering abusive relationships, providing education about the value of respect and the characteristics of healthy relationships. The Essex Youth Service also deliver a female version, Sisters in Strength. This provision was adapted to ensure it could be delivered through 2020/21, despite the restrictions in schools.
- 6.24.** The Commissioner has provided further funding to Alpha Vesta, a specialist charity raising awareness of domestic abuse in the workplace, ensuring employers understand the dynamics of abuse and are able to support victims to come forward.
- 6.25.** Essex Police has been one of the most successful forces nationally at utilising Domestic Violence Protection Orders and Notices (DVPOs & DVPNs) to protect victims. Over the period 2015/16 Essex Police adopted and refined the use of these tools, increasing the utilisation of them over the period as can be seen in figure 6 (vi). In 2019/20, Essex Police implemented a pilot working with a perpetrator service and utilised tasking opportunities within MARAC to disrupt DA offenders and promoted the use Protection Orders & Notices to protect victims.
- 6.26.** The Commissioner continues to prioritise domestic and sexual abuse as well as the broad VAWG agenda and will continue to use local and national funding opportunities, partnership working and commissioning good quality interventions to ensure victims are confident, empowered and able to come forward, report abuse and access support.

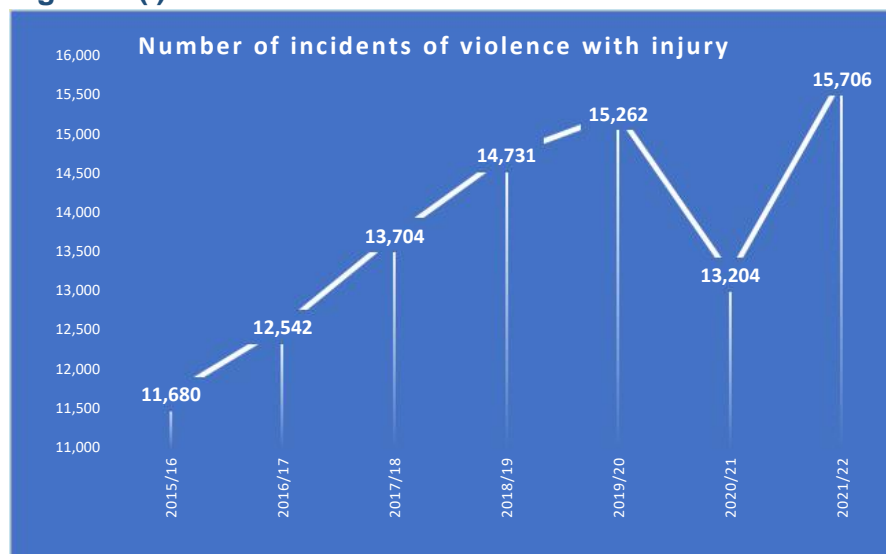
Figure 6 (vi).



7. Reverse the trend in serious violence

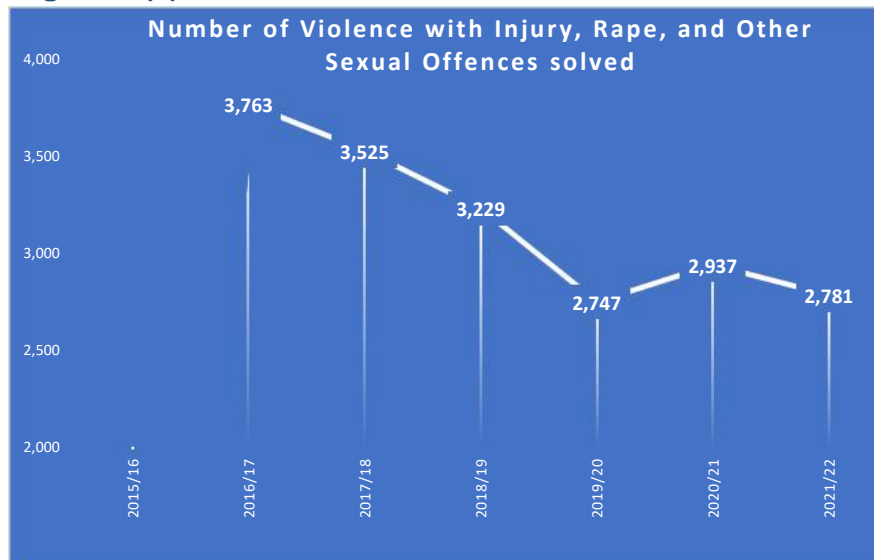
- 7.1.** Violence in communities affects everyone; the vulnerable who are groomed into a life of crime, the families living without a loved one, the victims of drug driven crime and all of us in wider society who want to live free from the fear of violence.
- 7.2.** Reducing violence in communities across Essex and the impact of gangs and drug driven violence is important and a key focus for the Commissioner and Essex Police. Essex was one of the first counties to develop a Violence Reduction Unit or, as it is called in Essex, the Violence and Vulnerability Partnership. The Partnership, which is chaired by the Commissioner, and whose Operational Board is Chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable, Andy Prophet, has tested and trialled a range of interventions in recent years and through careful evaluation has developed a strategic approach that is delivering significant results in the fight against violent crime.
- 7.3.** Working together, the Partnership closely aligns activity to prevent violence and protect the vulnerable with strong, robust enforcement activity, led by Essex Police. Across Essex, the wider strategic approach includes:
- 7.3.1.** Identifying and tackling organised crime gangs, County Lines, and drug supply.
 - 7.3.2.** Delivering a proactive, robust local enforcement programme in partnership with communities.
 - 7.3.3.** Reducing the risk of young or vulnerable people being exploited by gangs and help those involved in gangs to break away.
- 7.4.** Between 2015/16 and 2019/20, the number of violence with injury offences increased from 11,680 to 15,262, as can be seen in figure 7 (i). Whilst the rate of incidents of violence with injury increased over the period of the plan. A noticeable dip occurred in 2020/21 to 13,204, due in large part to the restrictions in place in response to the COVID 19 pandemic, then rising again to 15,706 in 2021/22.

Figure 7 (i)



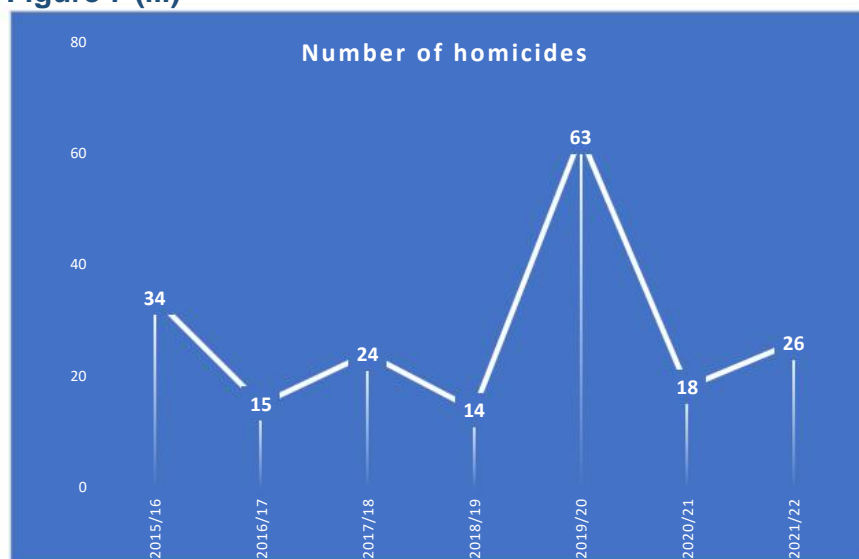
- 7.5.** The number of offences solved for violence with injury offences has declined from 3,763 in 2016/17, to 2,781 in 2021/22, as can be seen in figure 7 (ii).

Figure 7 (ii)



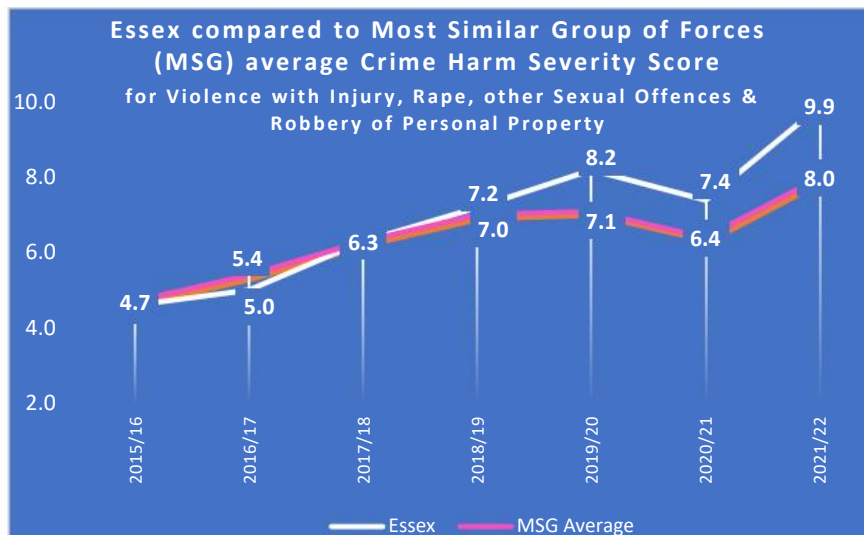
- 7.6.** The annual number of homicides fluctuates due in part to the relatively small numbers as shown in figure 7 (iii). A noticeable spike in 2019/20 occurred due to the tragic incident when 39 people were discovered in a lorry container in Thurrock.

Figure 7 (iii)



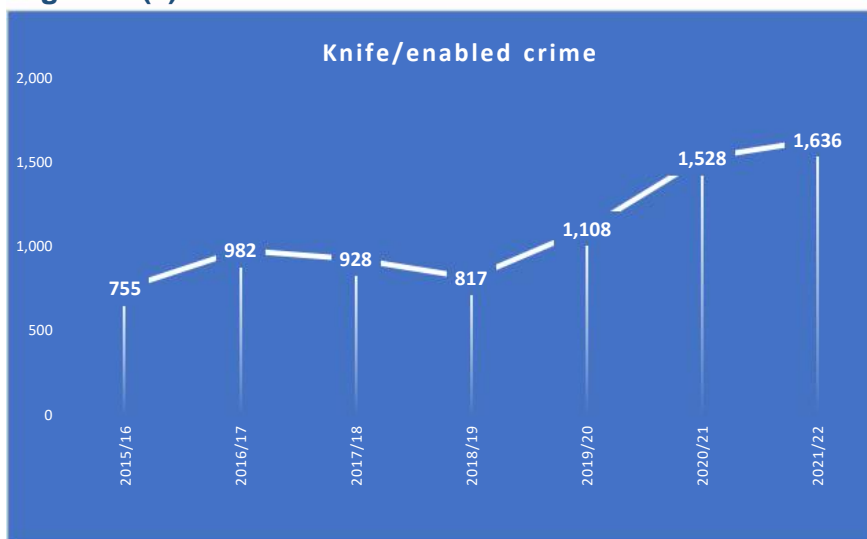
- 7.7.** The crime severity score for violence with injury offences increased from 4.6 to 8.2 over the same period suggesting that an increase in offences was combined with increased severity. The rate of crime severity score for violent offences has increased in Essex and in our Most Similar Group of Forces (MSGs) over the period 2015/16 to 2021/22. Despite starting at a similar baseline, the Essex rate has increased at a slightly higher rate than the MSG over the period as shown in figure 7 (iv).

Figure 7 (iv)



- 7.8.** This is also evident in knife enabled crime, which increased from 755 offences in 2015/16 to 1,636 offences in 2021/22, as can be seen in figure 7 (v).

Figure 7 (v)



Improvements in data quality in April 2019 (NDQIS or National data quality improvement service which uses AI to identify possible knife related crime for a manual check that may have been otherwise missed) and June 2020 (mandated question completion on whether a knife involved before record completed) also resulted in increased number of these offences being recorded

- 7.9.** Stop and Search for weapon volumes increased significantly, from 378 in 2015/16, to 3,060 in 2021/22. as can be seen in figure 7 (vi)

Figure 7 (vi)



- 7.10.** As the Partnership has continued to develop, so has its understanding of the specific nature of the problem in Essex and, importantly, how interventions can reduce the risk to young people by breaking the business models used by County Line gangs
- 7.11.** There is now a much better understand of the profile of those in Essex who use drugs and whose activity fuels the violence that goes hand in hand with drugs. This has allowed the Partnership to develop interventions to focus on users, reinforcing to them the real cost and impact of their activity to society.
- 7.12.** Through the analysis of serious violence, the Partnership now have a much better understanding of the small number of individuals who cause disproportionate levels of harm in communities. How they act and, importantly, how they can be identified early, and their behaviour tackled to prevent them from affecting communities. Programmes in accident and emergency departments is just one example of where this level of insight has led to the development of an early intervention programme by trained youth workers. This has proven to be very successful with most young people engaged continuing with ongoing support. The ability to target the right people, in the right way, at the right time, is enabling the Partnership to change the course of these young people's lives and prevent future violence from happening.
- 7.13.** This targeted approach has also been successfully used through the integration of safeguarding officers within Essex Police's specialist gang enforcement teams. These safeguarding officers work with partners to support young or vulnerable people who are swept up in enforcement activity against higher up County Line gang members. This approach provides the opportunity, where appropriate, to reach out and stop a young or vulnerable person from falling further into a life of crime.
- 7.14.** Between 2016/17 and 2020/21, the Partnership also recognised the importance of building broad capacity within communities, particularly within the voluntary and community sectors. Through engaging the sector in the partnership and by using targeted funding, the Partnership has been able to foster a strong and robust network of organisations that provide a wide range of interventions in local communities across the county from youth clubs, boxing sessions to after school sport activities for at risk children. These deliver an ongoing level of capacity that reduces the risk of young people falling into a life of crime.

- 7.15.** One example of a group that has benefited from this support is Changing Lives which was set up in Harlow in 2018 to raise children's awareness about the dangers of gangs and gang activity. The group uses a mix of physical activities and wellbeing programmes to improve young people's confidence, decision making and resilience, and preventing them from getting involved in anti-social behaviour and criminal activity.
- 7.16.** While these individual examples provide a flavour of the innovative and effective interventions currently under way, the real strength of the approach over the last few years has been the integrated and system wide strategy that this broader partnership has been able to deliver. By taking a holistic view of how different organisations work together to support young and vulnerable people and reduce violence, it has been possible to identify opportunities to intervene early, to make a difference and to stop people falling through the gaps.
- 7.17.** Since the start of the Partnership approach in 2017/18, all of the partners, including the Commissioner and Essex Police, have embraced their collective responsibility to tackle violence in communities, support those at risk of being exploited and create the communities that the public want to live in. Having spotted this trend early, the Partnership has been well positioned to benefit from the Government's increased funding and focus on this vital area. This has enabled it to learn to innovate and, most importantly, to collaborate. As a result, the Partnership now knows what works in communities, what must be done together and the effort that is required to see this through.
- 7.18.** As a key member of the wider Partnership, Essex Police has played a central role in the development of this work. This includes redeveloping and strengthening their own capacity to provide robust enforcement action against gangs and County Lines. A key development was the creation, in July 2020, of the Serious Violence Unit (SVU). The Unit uses an intelligence led approach to target gang leaders and County Lines. They have also boosted evidence gathering capacity which has resulted in an increase in convictions and sentences. The Unit takes a broad approach to tackling gangs and is supported by expert drug witnesses who can provide timely expert advice to support prosecutions and a dedicated legal resource to target gangs through civil injunctions.
- 7.19.** Between April 2020 and March 2021, the work of the SVU resulted in 288 arrests, 268 people charged, £300,082 of cash seized and £598,000 worth of drugs recovered. The success of the Unit has led to further investment and growth. This is funded from increases in the local policing precept and Central Government funding.
- 7.20.** The introduction of safeguarding officers in 2019 and 2020 provided a stronger focus on vulnerability, supporting those people who are being exploited and leading to several successful charges for Child Trafficking and Compulsory Labour of Adults. A child victim navigator also works within the team to provide specialist care and support to victims of trafficking and exploitation. The safeguarding officers and the victim navigator role (designed to help victims understand the process and access relevant support) have helped Essex Police to protect and safeguard victims of modern day slavery and trafficking and helped to build a stronger prosecution for these cases.
- 7.21.** The extra investment also helped to improve the enforcement approach, with increased focus on identifying, targeting and prosecuting those gang leaders and

County Lines. This focus led to more County Lines being dismantled and fewer restarting again after being targeted.

- 7.22.** The SVU continues to work through the Violence and Vulnerability Unit to target and reduce the drug user market in Essex, thus reducing the scale and business model for gangs and County Lines. While this work shows progress is being made, the tragic death of Sarah Everard and the national outpouring of emotion that has happened since, has clearly shown there is much more that policing must do nationally and that there must be a change within our wider society, to challenge and address male violence against women. No woman should feel unsafe in her own community, but the sad truth is that many do.
- 7.23.** The Commissioner has been vocal in supporting the need to create a society where women can live free from the fear of violence, which has a real psychological and emotional impact. Essex Police and the Commissioner have worked hard to encourage survivors of abuse and violence to come forward and when they have, there has been specialist support services put in place, to help them to cope and move on, while at the same time, robustly targeting offenders to break the cycle of violence against women.
- 7.24.** In 2018/19, the Commissioner led the development and publication of Essex's first partnership sexual violence and abuse strategy. The strategy was developed through the Essex Sexual Abuse Strategic Partnership which includes representatives from Essex Police, Local Rape Crisis Centres, Health, and Local Authorities. The partnership reviews progress against the strategy at each of its quarterly meetings. The strategy outlines the holistic approach the partnership is taking to tackle abuse, and focuses on the following partnership priorities:
- 7.24.1.** Prevent abuse from happening.
 - 7.24.2.** Support for victims and survivors.
 - 7.24.3.** Develop consistent, impactful communication and campaigns.
 - 7.24.4.** Challenge perpetrators to break the cycle of abuse.
 - 7.24.5.** Deliver an effective criminal justice response which bring victims justice and holds perpetrators to account.

8. Tackle Gangs and Organised Crime

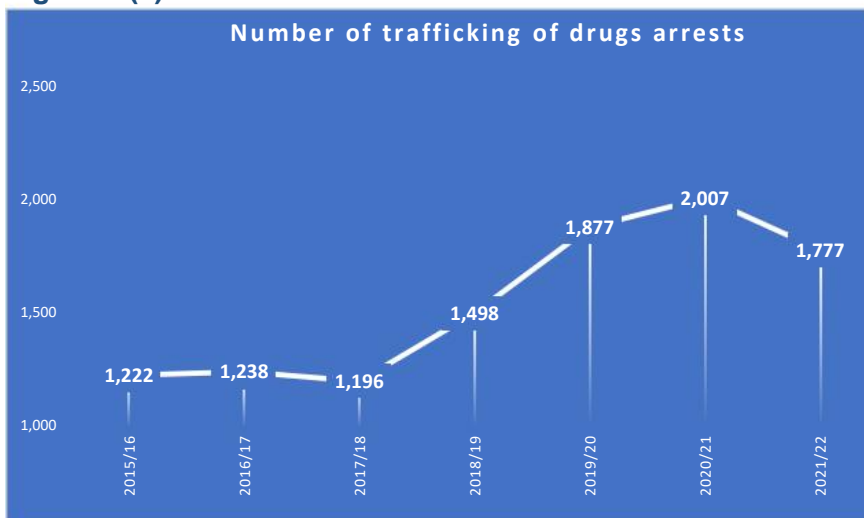
- 8.1. Working locally, regionally, and nationally, Essex Police take a hard line in pursuing organised crime groups, disrupting their activity, pursuing, and prosecuting those involved and confiscating their assets.
- 8.2. Leading this fight are dedicated Serious Organised Crime units (SOCs) based across the country, working with colleagues regionally and locally. The Chief Constable has recently been able to grow these teams due to the increased investment secured by the Commissioner through the local policing precept and national funding. They are also supported by a separate specialist money laundering team, a dedicated Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Unit and the Prevent and Protect Team who work with partners to reduce the risk of organised crime to the public.
- 8.3. As well as this high profile work, the force has successfully identified, targeted, and disrupted, a growing number of organised crime groups, with there being 83 in 2017/18 rising each year, to 281 in 2021/22, as can be seen in figure 8 (i).
- 8.4. This includes the group responsible for the tragic death of 39 people found deceased in a lorry in Grays, in 2019. After a successful international investigation by Essex Police, the trial for these offences took place at the end of 2020, early 2021. In January 2021 at the Old Bailey, seven men were sentenced to more than 92 years in total for their involvement.
- 8.5. The launch of the Serious Violence Unit in June 2020, which is discussed in more depth elsewhere in this report, has also increased the identification of criminal exploitation of vulnerable victims by County Lines and gangs. This has led to improved identification of the organised crime gangs who are often the controlling influence behind the activity.
- 8.6. Since 2016/17 Essex Police has received more than £3.2m from the Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA). £1.2m was invested back into Essex Police for specialist equipment, proactive operations, Essex Search and Rescue, Body Worn Video, drones, 'Method of Entry' training, digital forensics, knife arches, covert equipment, digital forensics training, fraud prevention campaigns and SCD financial investigators. £400,000 was allocated to Essex Community Foundation for investment in local charitable groups that deliver community safety projects. The remaining balance is available to Essex Police for allocation.
- 8.7. As well as strong, robust enforcement, Essex Police's Prevent and Protect Teams identify current and emerging issues relating to serious organised crime and proactively develop strategies to minimise their impact and tackle their criminal activity. This team focuses on cybercrime, fraud, modern day slavery and human trafficking, gangs, and organised crime gangs. The team provide education and awareness to allow individuals and businesses to protect themselves from the effects of serious organised crime, as well as preventing people from engaging in serious organised crime in the first place. Working with partners including Essex Chamber of Commerce, Barclays Bank, Anglia Ruskin University and many more, the team deliver educational events to raise awareness of types of crimes that businesses and the public are susceptible to and how they can protect themselves from becoming a victim or a repeat victim of organised crime. Over the last year, the team have undertaken more than 194 individual engagements, reaching more than 800 people.

- 8.8.** That team also developed the Essex Fraud Alert System (EFAS) which works with partners to utilise their own communication mechanisms to deliver advice and warnings about current scams and threats. This has been extended by providing monthly alerts to local magazines. Through these channels, we estimate Essex Police are able to reach more than 370,000 residents with timely accurate fraud prevention advice. This proved to be very successful during the COVID pandemic where the force was able to react quickly to new and emerging scams.
- 8.9.** The team have also developed work targeting romance fraud, supporting vulnerable fraud victims as well as working with key businesses to identify weaknesses in their processes and strengthen them against exploitation.

Figure 8 (i)



Figure 8 (ii)



9. Protecting children and vulnerable people from harm

- 9.1.** Protecting the most vulnerable in society is a key priority for the Commissioner and Essex Police. Significant work is undertaken with partners and across the force to ensure young and vulnerable people receive the support they need when they are the victim of crime; perpetrators are identified, investigated and, wherever possible, prosecuted and, most importantly, incidents are prevented from happening in the first place, so far as is possible. Despite such investment, however, over the period of the Plan, recorded crimes involving abuse against vulnerable people in Essex – as has been seen nationally – increased significantly.
- 9.2.** While young and vulnerable people can become the victim of any crime, there are certain types of crime where they are particularly vulnerable. In the chapter on tackling gangs and serious violence, a significant amount of work was presented that is being undertaken to prevent the exploitation of young and vulnerable people by gangs.
- 9.3.** Sexual violence and exploitation are also areas which can affect young and vulnerable people and, as such, an area of focus for both the Commissioner and Essex Police. The Crime Survey of England and Wales (CSEW) estimates, indicate that nationally 20 per cent of women and 4 per cent of men have experienced some type of sexual assault since the age of 16. This would represent 240,034 females and 48,007 men in Essex, experiencing some type of sexual assault. The CSEW showed that nationally about 83 per cent of victims did not report their experiences to the police.
- 9.4.** The CSEW, which includes crimes that are not reported to the police, indicates that the underlying volume of sexual abuse has not changed significantly since 2005. In Essex, the Commissioner and Essex Police have worked hard to increase the number of victims who are comfortable coming forward to report and to seek support, which is made available through the provision of accessible, high quality, specialist support services.
- 9.5.** The Commissioner has a responsibility to commission services to support victims of crime, which includes victims of sexual violence and abuse. In Essex, the demand has grown significantly in recent years and between 2018 and 2020 new referrals into support services increased by 29 per cent (data provided by the Synergy Rape Crisis Partnership).
- 9.6.** This increase is also present in Essex Police data which shows that reported child abuse offences increased from 2,404 in 2015/16 to 6,682 in 2021/22, The Commissioner has worked to improve understanding and promote awareness of child sexual abuse and exploitation, and to encourage victims to report and seek help. This, coupled with high profile media coverage of offences and court proceedings, including the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), has resulted in an increase in offences over the period of the plan, as can be seen in figure 9 (i) and an increase in investigations over the period of the plan from 465 in 2015/16 to more than 2,682 in 2021/22, as can be seen in figure 9 (ii). Despite a dip in 2018/19, the overall trend of Child Sexual Abuse solved outcomes is upwards, from 200 in 2015/16 to 395 in 2021/22, as can be seen in figure 9 (iii). The solved rate for child abuse cases decreased from 8.32 per cent in 2015/16, to 6.29 per cent in 2021/22, as shown in figure 9 (iv)

Figure 9 (i)



Figure 9 (ii)

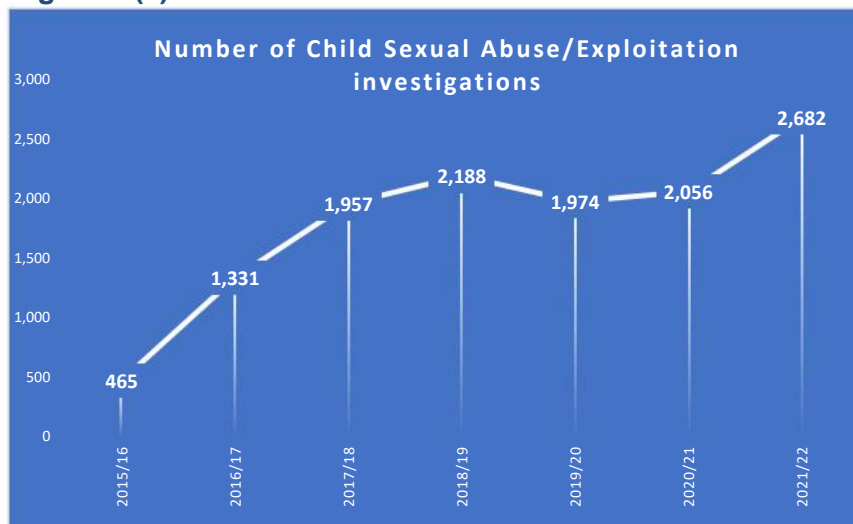


Figure 9 (iii)

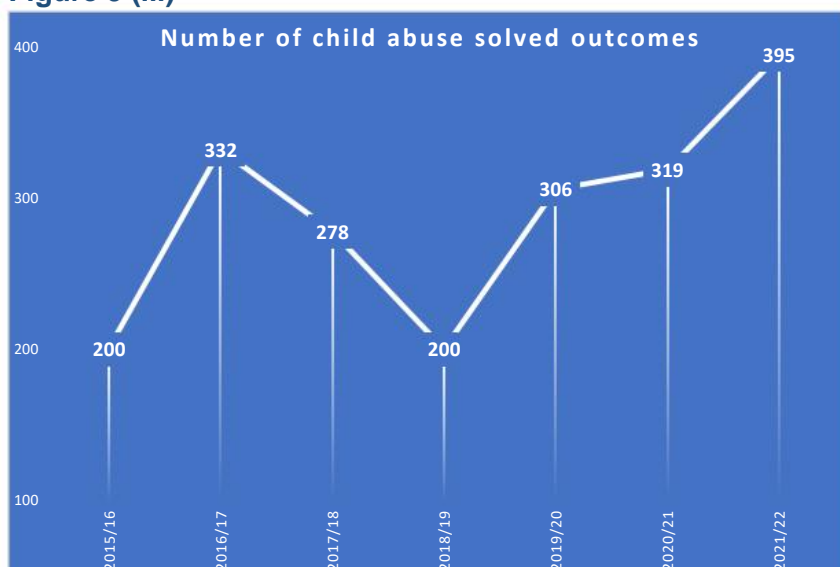
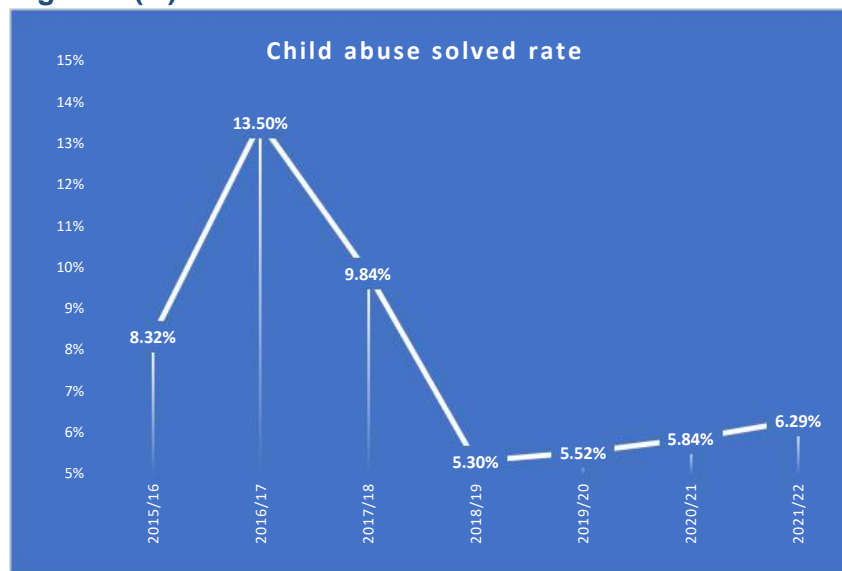


Figure 9 (iv)



- 9.7.** NHS England and the Commissioner jointly commission the Essex Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) which is a safe place for victims of sexual assault to be examined, interviewed, and referred to further support services. The SARC helps victims to understand their options and make an informed choice in deciding how they wish to proceed. SARC examinations have seen an increase in demand for services of 16 per cent between 2018 and 2020.
- 9.8.** As discussed previously, Essex is also one of only five local areas that successfully applied to receive devolved Rape Support Funding from the Ministry of Justice. This has brought commissioning services to a more local level allowing the partnership, through the Commissioner, to tailor support to the needs of communities.
- 9.9.** Sexual violence happens both within intimate relationships and within wider family relationships. Data from Essex Rape Crisis Partnership shows that 23 per cent of victims aged 16 and over had experienced sexual violence perpetrated by an intimate partner. An additional 33 per cent of victims had experienced sexual violence and child sexual abuse within their family, perpetrated by a family member (predominantly a father, stepfather, grandfather, or brother).
- 9.10.** Recorded rape offences have gradually increased over the Plan period, with projections anticipating this trend continuing. As noted in the chapter on serious violence, although rape convictions as a percentage of the total caseload increased between 2016/17 and 2020/21 (from 60 per cent to 69 per cent), the total number of rape convictions in Essex reduced from 67 in 2016/17 to just 20 in 2020/21. For the 12 months to the end of March 2021, Essex had the eighth highest rate per 1,000 population of recorded rape offences nationally, and the joint highest within its Most Similar Group of forces. Only 4 per cent were solved during this period, giving Essex the sixth lowest solved rate across England and Wales. This is not where we want to be, and the Commissioner will continue to prioritise this priority and improve outcomes for victims.
- 9.11.** The approach to tackling serious sexual violence is set out in the Essex Sexual Abuse Strategy. This was developed in 2018 and brought together a range of stakeholders including councils, charities, support organisations, health partners and the emergency services. It aims to help organisations work together to prevent the volume and impact of sexual violence and abuse in Southend, Essex, and Thurrock. It focuses on prevention, victim services, building awareness and

partnership working across the criminal justice system, as well as on perpetrators. The ambition of the partnership is to ensure there is a clear understanding of consent among children and young people, that victims can access appropriate support, and the rate of sexual abuse charges and prosecutions increases as victims feel more confident in coming forwards.

- 9.12.** There have already been some strong initiatives that have been developed through the partnership, including the First Responders project, which ensures victims of crime receive support within 24 hours from when they report the crime, and the Drink Aware initiative, which is a preventative programme safeguarding those who are most vulnerable within the night time economy, by working with local businesses, third sector agencies and the police. Essex was the first area in the UK to offer the level of service provided by First Responders, with the intention of reducing the number of victims who disengage from the criminal justice process and provide enhanced support for victims as their case progresses through the criminal justice system. Police referrals increased from 858 in 2018/19 to 1,789 in 2020/21, with evidence showing that victims who receive early support remain engaged with the criminal justice process. While more work is under way, the development of the strategy marks an important step forward in providing a joined up and sustained approach to tackling sexual violence in communities.
- 9.13.** Another area of crime which can affect young and vulnerable groups in society is hate crime. Essex Police and the Commissioner work closely with partners to promote the reporting, prevention, and prosecution of hate crime through the Hate Crime Partnership. Since 2018, the partnership has been implementing the Hate Crime Prevention Strategy which aims to improve victim satisfaction with the response to hate crime across Essex by dismantling barriers to reporting hate crime, improving the operational response to hate crime, and tackling hate crime by increasing public awareness and promoting positive values. To achieve these objectives, the partnership focuses on understanding and preventing hate crime, increasing reporting and support for victims, and improving shared operational response to hate crimes. Together, the partnership has worked hard over recent years to increase the reporting of hate crime by building stronger relationships with communities, better collaboration with Independent Advisory Groups and delivering more visible publicity, including a Crimestoppers online hate crime campaign that reached more than 1.2 million people and a multi-lingual Stop the Hate leaflet.
- 9.14.** Data from the public perception survey shows an overall increase in the rates of victims stating that they were satisfied with the service they received between 2017/18 (when the survey started) and 2021/22, as can be seen in figure 9 (iv).

Figure 9 (iv)

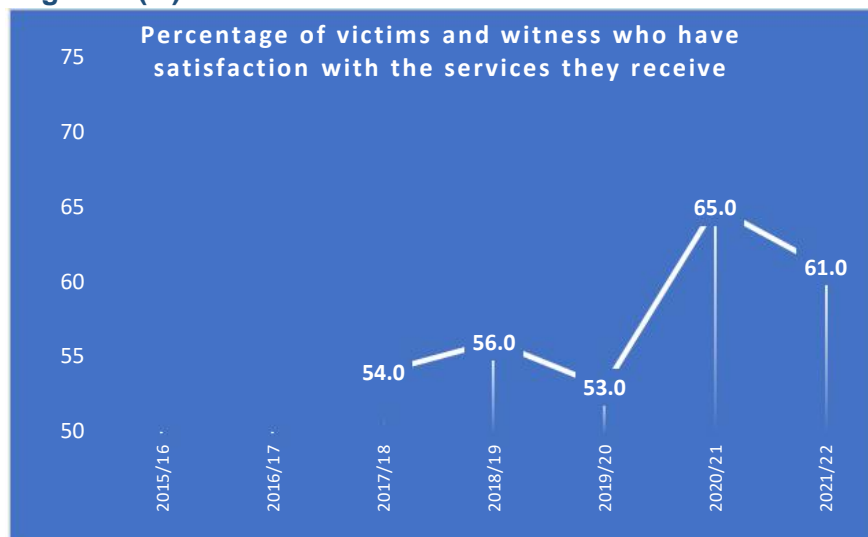
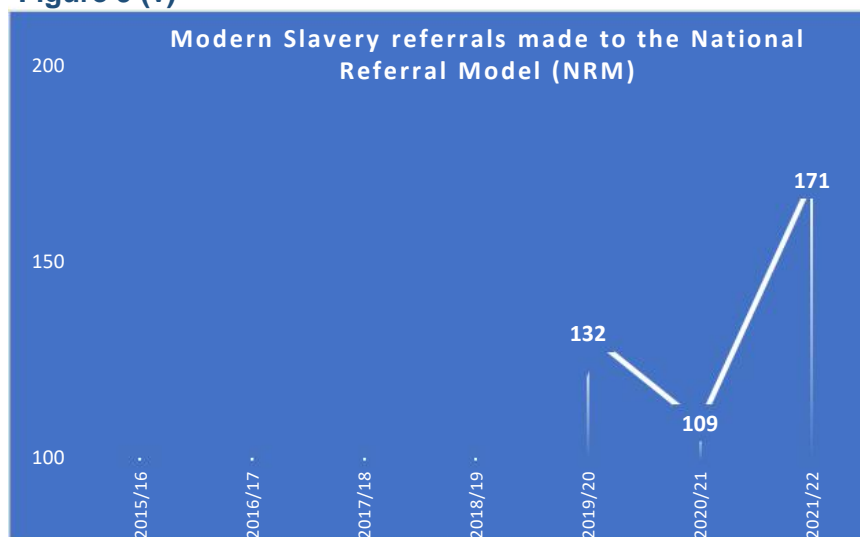


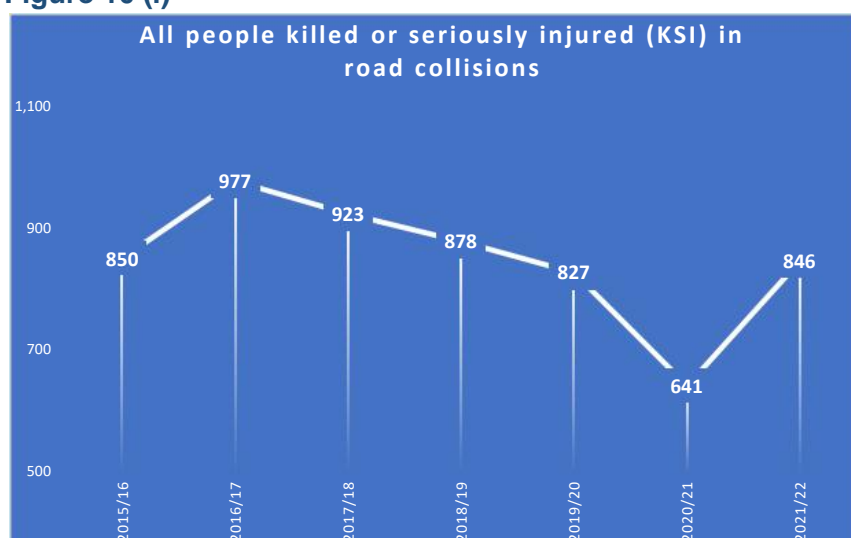
Figure 9 (v)



10. Improving safety on our roads

- 10.1.** More people are killed on the roads of Essex than from all other forms of crime put together. The four main driving offences – drug driving, drink driving, speeding, and driving without a seatbelt are without a doubt the biggest killers in the county.
- 10.2.** As well as this direct impact, it is also clear that the road network is used by criminals and that effective, robust policing of the roads can help to tackle other forms of crime such as organised crime groups, drugs and County Lines, burglary, and anti-social behaviour. In 2020 alone, more than 150 people were arrested by Essex Police's roads policing team for a range of criminal offences, including possession of weapons, burglary, violence, dangerous driving, possession with intent to supply class A drugs and high end road traffic offences. This is an increase of more than 30 arrests compared to 2019.
- 10.3.** Working through the Safer Essex Roads Partnership, the Commissioner, Essex Police and Essex County Fire and Rescue Service have continued to work hard to make the roads safer. The number of people killed or seriously injured on Essex roads has remained relatively constant over the period at 850 in 2015/16 and 846 in 2021/22, as can be seen in figure 10 (i).

Figure 10 (i)



- 10.4.** There was a long term downward trend during the period to 2019/20, which was achieved by a clear proactive strategy of prevention and education with investments in driver awareness campaigns and driver training programmes, along with a strong coordinated programme of enforcement with targeted activity by partners to focus on those most at risk, such as young men and motorbike riders, to effectively drive down deaths, as was the identification and improvement of high risk parts of the road network. There then followed a significant drop in 2020/21, which can be partly attributed to the impact of COVID lockdowns,
- 10.5.** However, it can be seen from figure 10 (i) that, as the country emerged from the most stringent COVID lockdowns, the numbers of people killed and seriously injured on Essex roads returned to pre pandemic levels. Analysis indicates that, as the roads remained less congested than usual, high speed was a common feature in RTCs during the final year of the Plan, along with certain groups of road users and

vehicle types. Overall, motorcyclists remain the most at risk group, representing 23 per cent of all recorded collisions involving death and serious injury. In response to these findings, Essex Police met with National Highways representatives to discuss the installation of measures to mitigate risk on known accident blackspots and several ideas have been taken away for development.

- 10.6.** The Safer Essex Roads Partnership undertook a significant review of activity in 2019. This resulted in the Partnership taking the ambitious step to commit to its Vision Zero Strategy in 2020/21. This builds on the success over the last ten years and aims to achieve zero people killed or seriously injured on the roads of Essex by 2040, through the delivery of 38 strategic actions grouped into five themes:
 - 10.6.1.** Post collision response and care.
 - 10.6.2.** Tackling speeding.
 - 10.6.3.** Ensuring safe roads and roadsides.
 - 10.6.4.** Ensuring safe road users.
 - 10.6.5.** Ensuring safe vehicles.
- 10.7.** Cutting across all these themes are programmes of road user education as well as a wider communications plan.
- 10.8.** The Vision Zero Strategy was launched at the Commissioner's conference on 24 May 2022, where workshops were held to raise delegates' awareness of the strategy and to start capturing what they and their organisations can do to implement Vision Zero. This vision cannot be achieved by one organisation; it needs the partnership and support of residents, businesses, and road users. It will require a cultural change by communities, stakeholders, and industry, acknowledging that everyone has a responsibility for safe use of the road network. By accepting that humans make mistakes and there is a shared responsibility on those who design, build, maintain and use the road network to prevent death and serious injury, it focuses efforts on creating a safe road system that can cope with human mistakes and prioritises human health and life. Going forward, the Commissioner, Essex Police and Essex County Fire and Rescue Service will continue to play their full part in delivering this new approach.
- 10.9.** While not all KSIs result in criminal offences being recorded, a number do result in arrests and prosecutions for offences such as driving under the influence of alcohol and / or drugs or driving related mobile phone crimes. Figure 10 (ii) shows a significant reduction during 2021/22 (of 57 per cent compared with 2020/21) in the number of people driving under the influence of drugs on Essex roads, following a steady upward trend over the previous four years, but a return to the upward trajectory in the number of people driving under the influence of alcohol following a reduction during the strictest COVID lockdowns (when the hospitality industry was shut down) can be seen in figure 10 (iii).

Figure 10 (ii)

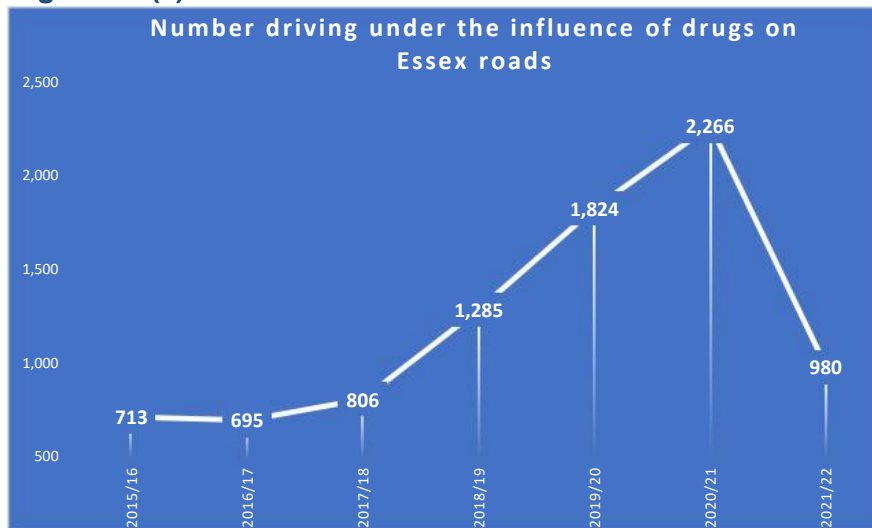
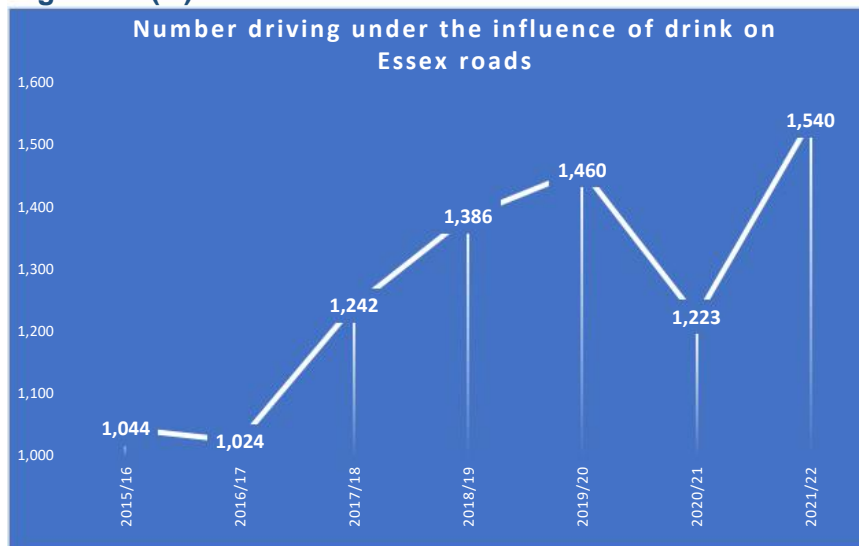
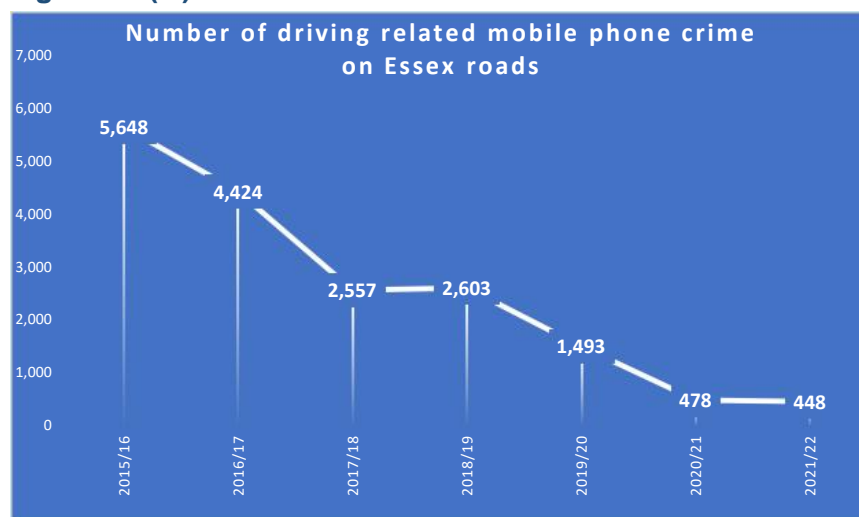


Figure 10 (iii)



10.10. By contrast, the number of driving related mobile phone crimes committed on Essex roads has shown a swift, significant, and sustained reduction over the duration of the Police and Crime Plan, by some 92 per cent against the 2015/16 baseline, as can be seen in figure 10 (iv).

Figure 10 (iv)



- 10.11.** As part of the Force Growth Programme in 2019/20, the Chief Constable recruited an additional 17 police constables, who were posted to roads policing units. These officers have had a direct impact on the number of arrests, collision investigations, stops and searches and intelligence submissions undertaken on Essex roads. This is expected to continue to develop as the officers gain further experience in their roles and the next cohort of officers start to make an impact. Following the increase in the precept for 2020/21, funding for an additional 24 officers was also allocated to roads policing. This growth provided further opportunities to increase the proactive focus on road safety and the disruption of those who use vehicles with criminal intent.
- 10.12.** As in many areas, the year 2020, presented unique challenges to policing the roads of Essex. The first national lockdown drastically reduced traffic volumes and enabled the roads policing team to increase proactive and preventative policing patrols significantly. This increased proactive capacity helped to tackle the high end speeding offences which increased during this period while also improving the detection of drug driving offences.
- 10.13.** A study of collisions during the COVID period showed that, while there were far fewer collisions, the severity of those that did happen was far higher, due mainly to increased vehicle speeds. Across Essex, we saw a 15 per cent increase in vehicle speeds during the COVID lockdown period, a worrying trend that has had a real impact on people's lives. In response, Essex Police developed a new strategy referred to as Unpredictable Visibility that delivers more visible roadside activity using detection devices such as TRUCAM. Enforcement takes place in specific locations identified to maximise the overall impact of the tactic within one district. The tactic has been shown to reduce reoffending rates by 10 per cent and provide a stronger impact on drivers caught in 30 mph zones than the use of static speed cameras. To support this activity, the Commissioner has approved the purchase of three LASERCAM 4 devices in 2020/21, which also allow for activity at night.
- 10.14.** During October 2020, two separate fatal road traffic collisions highlighted links to drivers who were driving stolen vehicles, with links to organised car theft. This led to the development of a successful target operation by Essex Police, focused on high harm cross border criminality that is conducted in partnership with the Metropolitan Police (Havering and Dagenham).

- 10.15.** A similar proactive approach has been taken with Essex Police's approach to commercial vehicles. Historically, the focus with these vehicles was upon mechanical defects and drivers' hours offences. Whilst these offences remain critical to improving safety on the roads, opportunities are now taken to gain valuable intelligence around organised immigration crime and wider threats to national security. Both proactive and reactive operations have been taken to target organised illegal immigration at Essex ports and key service stations.
- 10.16.** As well as increasing the capacity of the Roads Policing Team, significant work has been done to invest in and grow public participation. An early decision was taken to grow Community Speed Watch in the county with Essex County Fire and Rescue Service taking on responsibility for coordinating this service on behalf of the public. A dedicated coordinator was recruited, and significant work was done to develop and grow the scheme, which led to the number of letters being sent as a result of the scheme growing from 15,001 in 2017 to 24,333 in 2019 (an increase of more than 62 per cent). The number of letters did decrease due to COVID, but in the first six months of 2022 were at 8,456.
- 10.17.** Not only does Community Speed Watch provide a valuable additional resource in the fight against speeding, but also builds community participation and is vital to achieving the cultural and societal change that is essential to deliver the Safer Essex Road Partnership's ambitious goal of zero deaths on Essex roads by 2040. Unfortunately, the COVID pandemic placed significant restrictions on Community Speed Watch Groups with most groups having to suspend their activity based on national guidance. This was disappointing for members of the groups and for the Safer Essex Roads Partnership. However, the safety and health of volunteers was a priority, so it was important that the programme acted in their best interests even when there was significant enthusiasm from the volunteers themselves to get back out onto the roads. During the later stages of the pandemic, the Safer Essex Roads Partnership were able to develop ways to get as many groups as possible active again. A full review was conducted, and the scheme restarted fully in March 2021.

11. Police and Crime Plan 2021 to 2024

- 11.1. At the end of 2020/21, many of the significant challenges faced in 2016 had been overcome, with Essex Police well on the way to becoming the biggest it had ever been, with a strong level of public confidence in policing and reductions in key crime types. The partnership work undertaken by the Commissioner and Essex Police had also improved significantly with the establishment of Community Safety Hubs in the majority of areas across Essex, enabling joint tasking. A set of strong collaboration arrangements had been established to tackle violence and vulnerability, domestic abuse, road offences and help safeguard adults and children.
- 11.2. While progress in the area identified above had been made at the end of 2020/21, there were many new and complex challenges, not least the need to tackle the increase in overall crime levels and get crime down. The public have invested in policing to prevent crime and the Commissioner and Essex Police are committed to delivering on that. This is particularly important in areas such as drug driven violence, domestic abuse, violence against women and girls and road safety where the harm that is caused accounts for such a significant proportion of overall crime.
- 11.3. Due to several national scandals, not least the horrific, brutal murder of Sarah Everard by a serving Metropolitan Police officer, policing nationally face challenges to their legitimacy. While these challenges are not yet being seen in data about Essex Police, it is a challenge for policing nationally and a clear indication that forces must change and evolve if they wish to maintain public confidence and their own legitimacy.
- 11.4. This pressure on the police has gone hand in hand with a realisation throughout society that violence against women and girls has been tolerated for too long and must now be urgently challenged. This requires a societal shift, but there is also much that policing must do and the wider community safety environment.
- 11.5. These challenges were reflected in the 2021 election and have fed through to the Police and Crime Plan 2021 to 2024 (P&CP 2021 to 2024). At its heart, this new Plan builds on the successes of the Police and Crime Plan 2016 to 2021, extends the Commissioner's ambition, and sets out to address many of the new challenges the country currently faces.
- 11.6. The work that has been undertaken since 2016 has been fed into the new plan and updated to reflect the challenges of the current operating environment.
- 11.7. **Connections between 2016 to 2021 priorities and 2021 to 2024 priorities.**
- 11.8. The Police and Crime Plan Extension 2021 (P&CP-E2021) priority to have more local, visible, and accessible policing is further developed in the P&CP 2021 to 2024 under the priority for Investment in crime prevention
- 11.9. The P&CP-E2021 priority to crack down on anti-social behaviour is further developed in the P&CP 2021 to 2024 under the priority for Investment in crime prevention.
- 11.10. The P&CP-E2021 priority to break the cycle of domestic abuse is further developed in the P&CP 2021 to 2024 under the priority for protecting vulnerable people and breaking the cycle of domestic abuse.

- 11.11. The P&CP-E2021 priority to **tackle gangs and serious violence** is further developed in the P&CP 2021 to 2024 under the priority for **reducing drug driven violence**.
- 11.12. The P&CP-E2021 priority to **disrupt and prevent organised crime** is further developed in the P&CP 2021 to 2024 under the priority for **reducing drug driven violence**.
- 11.13. The P&CP-E2021 priority to **protect children and vulnerable people from harm** is further developed in the P&CP 2021 to 2024 under two of the new priorities **protecting vulnerable people and breaking the cycle of Domestic Abuse** and **reducing violence against women and girls**.
- 11.14. The P&CP-E2021 to **improving safety on our roads** is further developed in the P&CP 2021 to 2024 under the priority **Improving safety on our roads**

Appendix 1. The Priorities and 'We Wills'

1. More Local, Visible and Accessible Policing
2016/17 – 2019/20 Priorities
Deliver a more visible police presence, in crime hotspots, town centres and around the night-time economy and through targeted patrols to address burglary.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 500 officers recruited between 2016 and 2021 including growth in Community Policing Teams and the introduction of Town Centre Teams. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2017/18 41 • 2018/19 150 • 2019/20 215 • 2020/21 151 <p><i>Further details are set out in the narrative section above.</i></p>
Improve communications and contact between the police and local communities, so the public have access to information and advice on crime and anti-social behaviour in their area.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essex Police Public Engagement Strategy Developed in 2017. • Independent Public Confidence Survey developed by the Commissioner and Chief Constable in 2017/18 providing countywide and district level data. • District level engagement scrutiny programme developed to share best practice, identify areas for development and track engagement with the public. • Public Safety Engagement Officers established to support stronger engagement with the public. • Continued strong growth in public confidence.
Boost community volunteering, encourage the Active Citizen Programme and grow the police family – doubling the Special Constabulary, with a Special Constable in every community
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Constabulary grown to 521 officers by 2020/21, the second largest and fastest growing in the country. This is against a base of 353 in 2016 and was impacted by the significant growth in full time officers with the Specials contributing 232 officers to the regulars between 2016 and the end of March 2021. • Further details of community volunteering set out in narrative above.
Make it easy to contact the police through Do It Online and improvements to 101 ensuring that the public get a swift and responsive service from the police.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online reporting increased from 1,118 per month between September 2016 and the end of March 2017 to 1,934 per month between March 2020/21 • Further development in online reporting was identified and implemented through the 2020/21 Police and Crime Plan Extension.
Expect every Community Safety Partnership to set local priorities for their local Community Policing Team to ensure community confidence in the police.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual visit from the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's team and structured evaluation process established with all CSPs to understand and contribute to the local priorities set by the CSPs. • £272,500 is provided to Community Safety Partnerships each year on the basis of local priorities being understood and actioned.

1. More Local, Visible and Accessible Policing (*continued*)

2016/17 – 2019/20 Priorities (*continued*)

Working with our partners, we will establish Community Safety Hubs in every policing district with police co-located with local community safety partners to deliver joined/up responses to tackle locally defined priorities.

- Community Hubs encouraged in every area and implemented in areas where this was supported by partners. Hubs were established in all but two areas (Harlow and Thurrock). Since 2021, further conversations have been had and both Thurrock and Harlow are in the process of establishing a Hub, though at different stages of development.
- Since 2016, the Commissioner has supported the Community Safety Hub Steering Group and led the development of a new Performance Framework for Community Safety Hubs which was approved by Safer Essex in September 2020.
- The Commissioner's inaugural Fire and Rescue plan (2019 to 2024) featured a commitment to increase emphasis on partnership working.
- The Commissioner invested £200,000 to the roll out of Hubs between 2016 to 2019. This enabled local partners to fund estates work, purchase IT or furniture or improve accessibility of Hubs to encourage, enable and facilitate effective partnership working.

Give every front line police officer a smart phone or tablet, enabling mobile policing, so they can reduce time spent on paperwork and have more time on patrol.

- Programme completed in 2017 with further growth in functionality and improvement in enabling technology undertaken in following years. This led to a time saving of 19 minutes per officer, per shift.
- More information is provided in the narrative section above.

Help the rural communities by preventing rural crime, including strengthening Farm Watch, working with the Rural Crime Forum, and recruiting more Rural Specialists.

- Rural Crime Strategy developed in partnership with rural community.
- Rural Crime Team established to provide specialist advice to local policing team and lead engagement with rural communities.
- Increased investment in Rural Crime Team, so Essex has one of the largest specialist teams in the country and continued development and engagement.
- As referenced in the Domestic Abuse chapter, the Southend, Essex & Thurrock DA Partnership has developed a framework for tackling domestic abuse in rural areas.
- Further details set out in narrative above.

Strengthen engagement with local businesses to prevent crime and to help the local economy to thrive.

- Engagement strengthened in 2016 to 2018.
- Business led Strategic Business Board established in partnership with Federation of Small Businesses and Chamber in 2019.
- Crime Against Business Strategy developed in partnership with Businesses in 2019.
- Business Crime Team established, as set out in narrative section above, and further information provided in 2020/21 priorities.

Support increased participation in Neighbourhood Watch, Street Pastors, Active Citizens, and Volunteer Police Cadets.

- Ongoing engagement with Neighbourhood Watch from Essex Police and Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's team with leads assigned from each organisation.
- Annual funding established with NHW in 2019/20 to fund crime prevention projects around the county.
- Specific investment in Neighbourhood Watch onboarding programmes to support continued growth.
- Strong relationships maintained with Street Pastors with specific targeted funding provided from Community Safety Development Fund.
- Clear lead assigned for Police Volunteer Programme and Volunteer Police Cadets within Essex Police leading to strong sustained growth as set out in the narrative section above.

1. More Local, Visible and Accessible Policing (<i>continued</i>)
2019/20 – 2020/21 Priorities
Provide strong visible, preventative policing in crime and anti-social behaviour hotspots, town centres, neighbourhoods and around the night time economy.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 500 officers recruited, including growth in Community Policing Team and the introduction of Town Centre Teams. • Anti-social behaviour has reduced significantly from 52,732 in 2015/16 to 30,674 in 2021/22. The numbers did increase in 2020/21 as breaches of COVID regulations were recorded as anti-social behaviour, however, the overall trend, excluding these COVID offences, has fallen year on year throughout the period.
Develop preventative, proactive, problem solving policing activities by working with Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs), including embedding officers in local CSPs and Hubs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal audit of Community Safety Partnerships undertaken in October 2020 with all actions implemented. • Force Growth Plan implemented leading to increased policing capacity in Community Safety Partnerships. • Revised Performance Framework for Community Safety Partnerships developed and agreed by Safer Essex.
Develop a series of shared spaces for officers to use, such as in fire stations and local community centres.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drop/in centres developed across Essex with additional plan to share site in Dovercourt. • Further work planned on fleet workshop and possible control centres.
Work with local communities, including through the Community Special Programme, to increase visibility, boost the Special Constabulary and prevent crime in their communities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Constabulary grown to 521 officers by 2020/21, the second largest and fastest growing in the country. • Further details of community volunteering set out in narrative above.
Make it easier to contact the police. Improve the 101 response time, encourage online reporting, and realise the benefits of the national Single Online Home solution.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single online home implemented in 2021. • Online reporting increased from 1,118 per month between September 2016 (the date this was introduced) and the end of March 2017 to 1,934 per month between March 2020/21.
Deliver the next stage of Mobile First policing, so officers have better access to technology, can spend less time behind desks and more time visible and dealing with issues in their communities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued growth in Mobile First programme with 50 per cent of all daily recorded crime completed via smartphones without the need to return to a station in 2020/21. • Deployment of extra applications, including What3words, an interpreting service, bike register and, in September 2020, a stop and search module which was supported by a mobile fingerprint scanner.

1. More Local, Visible and Accessible Policing (continued)
2019/20 – 2020/21 Priorities (continued)
Work with schools, voluntary and statutory youth services to engage with young people, build confidence in policing, prevent crime, and promote safe behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared Education Team developed with Essex County Fire and Rescue Service leading to significant growth in school engagement and broader range of community safety messaging provided. 191,491 young people engaged in 2019/20. • Annual youth conference established in 2018 in partnership with Young Essex Assembly, targeted engagement undertaken with other youth groups around the county. • Youth voice included in the Violence and Vulnerability Unit and in the development of all key strategic documents and precept survey. • Commissioned range of services and projects that engage with young people, build their confidence in policing, and divert them away from crime and risky behaviours. This has been implemented through the Community Safety Development Fund and Violence and Vulnerability Fund.
Boost community volunteering, encouraging the Active Citizen Programme and grow the police family – doubling the Special Constabulary, with a Special Constable in every community
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment carried forward from 2016 to 2020 Plan with update provided above.
Support increased participation in community safety by supporting schemes such as Neighbourhood Watch, Street Pastors, Community Speed Watch, Volunteer Police Cadets, and others
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment carried forward from 2016 to 2020 Plan with update provided above.
Help businesses to recover and thrive after the impact of COVID by implementing the Crime Against Business Strategy.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crime Against Business Strategy developed and implemented. • Open for Business, Closed for Crime initiatives launched to support businesses as they reopened post COVID lockdowns. • Systems established through the business led Strategic Business Crime Board to help Essex recover from the pandemic.
Work with our rural communities to strengthen our response to preventing and fighting crime in rural areas through implementing the Rural Crime Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates on progress set out in the narrative section above

2. Crack down on Anti-Social Behaviour

2016/17 – 2019/20 Priorities

Tackle anti-social behaviour to prevent longer term and more serious crime.

- On going support is given to Community Safety Partnerships (CSP) and Hubs in their efforts to tackle anti-social behaviour. Since 2019/20, the Commissioner has conducted annual CSP review meetings with each CSP to receive updates on the work carried out by the partnerships.
- The Commissioner has utilised his own Community Safety Development Fund and worked with other grant makers to invest in existing and new initiatives that tackle anti-social behaviour and provide positive diversionary activities. Between 2016 to 2020, the Commissioner allocated £1.176m from the CSDF via about 120 small grants.
- The Commissioner promotes early intervention programmes such as Risk Avert and the Goodman project, which enable identification of individuals who would benefit from additional support.

Target repeat and high harm anti-social behaviour to protect individuals and communities from distress and disruption

- Supported CSPs in local initiatives, such as ASB Week, targeting hot spots where ASB is persistent and involving RJ volunteers.
- The Commissioner has been actively involved in the consultation process for Public Space Protection Orders issued across Essex where ASB is persistent, unreasonable and justifies restrictions imposed by the notice.
- Support Community Trigger and Community Remedy, promoting use of both initiatives via our website

Share intelligence in relation to anti-social behaviour through the development of Community Safety Hubs to include police, community safety officers, licencing, housing, and environmental health in every policing district

- Implemented Community Safety Hubs, allocating £200,000 to roll out of Hubs between 2016/19.
- Further details set out in narrative above

Make greater use of Restorative Justice (RJ) to help put right the harm caused by anti-social behaviour, making clear to perpetrators the effect their behaviour has on individuals and communities

- The Essex Restorative and Mediation Service received an increase in referrals of 220 per cent between 2016/17 and 2019/20, with anti-social behaviour consistently making up about a quarter of all referrals each year.
- The RJ team has grown from two members of staff when the service launched in 2015, to four in 2020, managing a team of 40 trained volunteer facilitators.
- Satisfaction rates for those who have used the service has consistently remained at about 90 per cent.
- In a 2020 review of reoffending rates for those who had taken part in RJ, 77 per cent had not reoffended within 12 months.
- ECFRS Firebreaks began to include an RJ element into their programme for young people to encourage them to take responsibility for their actions and understand the consequences.

Ensure the public are kept informed about what is being done about anti-social behaviour by local policing teams and community safety partners.

- This information is covered comprehensively in the chapter on local, visible, accessible policing.
- The Commissioner's office supports the partnership efforts of Anti-Social Behaviour Week each year through funding and attendance of staff such as the RJ team.

Improve the response of police and partners to anti-social behaviour by listening to local communities and drawing on evidence to increase public confidence

- The introduction of Town Centre Teams, comprising 58 officers and ten sergeants, in 2019 had an immediate impact and has continued to drive down business crime and anti-social behaviour, while coinciding with a significant increase in the public's confidence in policing.
- HMICFRS assessed Essex Police as Good at dealing with ASB in 2016, 2017 and 2019. While there has been no separate inspection since 2019 the progress shown in the inspections has continued.
- Further information on work associated with this commitment is included within the chapter on local, visible, and accessible policing.

2. Crack down on Anti/Social Behaviour (*continued*)

2019/20 – 2020/21 Priorities

Tackle anti-social behaviour to prevent longer term and more serious crime

- As documented in the narrative above, the Commissioner continued to focus on ASB which has driven a year on year reduction in incidents.
- The Commissioner continued their support to Community Safety Partnerships (CSP) and Hubs in their efforts to tackle anti-social behaviour. The Commissioner has conducted annual CSP review meetings with each CSP to receive updates on the work carried out by the partnerships.
- Utilisation of Community Safety Development Fund and work with other grant makers to invest in existing and new initiatives that tackle anti-social behaviour and provide positive diversionary activities. In 2019/20, the Commissioner allocated £300,000 and in 2020/21 £150,000 was allocated to the Coronavirus Community Safety Funding via the Essex Community Foundation. This funding enabled local voluntary and community sector organisations to continue to offer support and, where possible, adapt their services to accommodate virtual or COVID secure arrangements

Target repeat and high harm anti-social behaviour through the continued development of Community Safety Hubs to include police, Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, community safety officers, licensing, housing, and environmental health in every policing district

- In 2020/21, the Commissioner allocated £272,558 to CSPs. As part of the evaluation of the effective use of this funding, the Commissioner reviewed CS Hub arrangements with individual CSPs.
- Actions arising for the Commissioner's office from the internal audit of Community Safety Partnerships, which was undertaken in October 2020, have been completed and implemented.
- Since 2016, the Commissioner has supported the Community Safety Hub Steering Group and led the development of a new Performance Framework for Community Safety Hubs which was approved by Safer Essex in September 2020.
- The Commissioner's inaugural Fire and Rescue plan (2019 to 2024) featured a commitment to increase emphasis on partnership working

Support the community spirit shown throughout the COVID 19 crisis to strengthen communities, tackle ASB and ensure criminals have no place to thrive

- The Commissioner worked with and through the Essex Partners Board and the Recovery Coordinating Group to identify and respond to the impact of COVID on the local voluntary and community sector.
- The Commissioner worked closely with the Essex Resilience Forum to demonstrate leadership and provide a coordinated response to the pandemic, which included shared messaging across statutory sector agencies

Improve engagement and communication between the police and local communities, so the public have confidence that the police understand and act on local issues, and the public have access to advice on crime and anti-social behaviour in their area

- The Commissioner worked with Essex Police to recommission the independent public perception survey which is a vital longitudinal analysis tool that provides important data on the perception of Essex Police's performance among the public. The data from the survey is received and scrutinised at the Commissioner's performance and scrutiny board as well as via Safer Essex.
- Trialled opportunities – such as the precept survey, with local media companies to reach those who were not online, using print media advertising, radio advertising and static media in public areas.
- Worked with Essex Police to drive closer relationships between the service and communities, participating actively in the scrutiny of their local engagement activities through their confidence board and the Commissioner's scrutiny programme.
- Published three communication pieces each week on Commissioner work and produced content for local media as well as the Commissioner's social media channels in order to reach those who were not online and signed up to the Commissioner's channels.

2. Crack down on Anti-Social Behaviour (*continued*)

2019/20 – 2020/21 Priorities (*continued*)

Improve the response of police and partners to anti-social behaviour by listening to local communities and drawing on evidence to increase public confidence

- HMICFRS assessed Essex Police as Good at dealing with ASB in 2016, 2017 and 2019, and while there has been no separate inspection since 2019, the progress shown in these inspections has continued.
- The Commissioner worked with Essex Police to ensure the force was listening to communities and that they support local two way communication. The result was strong local engagement which resulted in higher levels of public confidence that EP understands local issues and that it tackles anti-social behaviour.
- Regular district meetings were organised to check in and get direct feedback from communities.
- Regular Commissioner engagement meetings ensure the communities have an opportunity to raise important issues with the Commissioner and police.
- Essex Police was able to significantly improve online reporting systems, including a dedicated way to report anti-social behaviour. The successful launch of the national Single Online Home in 2021 has seen a further improvement in the ability for online reporting to police.

Improve engagement and communication between the police and local communities, so the public have confidence that the police understand and act on local issues, and the public have access to advice on crime and anti-social behaviour in their area

- In early 2020, the Chief Constable increased the number of Children and Young People officers (CYP) from 13 to 33 as a result of increased funding from the policing precept. They engage with young people in senior schools to support a partnership approach in keeping young people safe and reducing crime and anti-social behaviour.
- When asked whether they feel the police understand their community's issues, 71 per cent of people agreed or strongly agreed in 2020/21 compared to 60 per cent in 2019/20

3. Breaking the Cycle of Domestic Abuse

2016/17 – 2019/20 Priorities

Improve our response to domestic abuse as set out in the Southend, Essex, and Thurrock Domestic Abuse Joint Commissioning Strategy.

- The SETDA partnership uses its partnership DA strategy to manage its work programme, developing individual work plans for the outcomes in the strategy, which enables a better shared understanding of problems, challenges and how this is respond to. These action plans are owned by outcome leads and progress is reported back to the SETDA Board on a quarterly basis. The SETDAB structure, which the Commissioner supports and funds, ensures collective ownership of the domestic abuse agenda, and has led to joint commissioning exercises, a partnership approach to Domestic Homicide Reviews, shared media campaigns and consistent approaches to new and emerging challenges, such as domestic abuse in rural areas and stalking.
- An independent review of the 2015 to 2020 SETDAB strategy was undertaken in 2020, feeding back to the Board in early 2021 with the finding that the Partnership performed in compliance with relevant best practice and national guidance. Multi-agency processes, such as safeguarding, DHRs and the local MARACs were much valued by respondents and seen as key achievements in the work of the Partnership.

Support victims and their families affected by domestic abuse to feel safe, cope and recover through targeted help and jointly commissioned services

- The Commissioner commissioned a jointly funded IDVA service between 2016 to 2019. Learning the lessons from that project, and listening to feedback from victims, the Commissioner worked through the SETDA partnership to commission a more integrated DA contract in 2020 where IDVA provision is joined up to refuge provision, community outreach and advocacy support.
- The Commissioner invested £2,573k in IDVA services between 2016 to 2020. The service provided advocacy, advice, and support to high risk victims, delivering the following:
 - 2016/17 - 3,472 referrals - average of 80 per cent of those engaged in the service saw a cessation in all types of abuse upon exiting the service.
 - 2017/18 - 2,522 referrals - average of 76.5 per cent of those engaged in the service saw a cessation in all types of abuse upon exiting the service.
 - 2018/19 - 2,294 referrals - average of 70.5 per cent of those engaged in the service saw a cessation in all types of abuse upon exiting the service.
 - 2019/20 EViE partnership held 2,848 IDVA cases

Ensure children and young people affected by domestic abuse are informed about healthy relationships, and work with schools in the delivery of education and prevention programmes

- The Commissioner supported the development of the Risk Avert programme, and continues to promote the availability of the programme, which is free to use for local schools.
- Through the Emergency Service Collaboration programme, in 2016/17 the Commissioner facilitated the creation of joint education teams delivered by Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, providing messages about fire safety, and broader community safety issues such as road safety, knife crime and cyber safety. The provision includes an element focused on healthy relationships, delivered to Year 9 students

Train and develop front line professionals to recognise the signs and indicators of domestic abuse and to know how and where to go to for help

- The Commissioner invested £20k in the J9 DA awareness raising project in 2019, which was matched by Essex County Council. The project included a two hour course aimed at community groups and a more detailed three hour course aimed at professionals, particularly those working in acute A&E hospital settings. More recently, the intervention has been converted to a virtual delivery to enable continuation of the work during periods of lockdown enforced due to the COVID pandemic.

3. Breaking the Cycle of Domestic Abuse (*continued*)

2016/17 – 2019/20 Priorities (*continued*)

Provide more safe ways for victims to report domestic abuse and access support

- In 2019, the Commissioner jointly commissioned a new integrated domestic abuse support service which included a single point of access for victims and professionals, the Compass service. Since its inception, the service has received 8,928 victim referrals, as well as one off requests for information, advice, and guidance from:
 - 2,828 victims,
 - 2,452 professionals, and
 - 512 third parties, on behalf of victims.
- The Compass service has sought to maximise accessibility and reporting by.
 - Implementing a contract with an interpretation service.
 - Enabling their website to be translated into any language.
 - Introducing a textphone option.
 - Scheduling timed calls for victims with narrow windows of time to engage.
 - Allowing referrals to be made over the phone or online.
 - Worked with GPs to facilitate safe spaces to call during pandemic.
 - Worked with Essex Police's Victim Panel to improve the victim journey.
- Many support services will make three contact attempts to victims before case closure. Compass return referrals to referring agencies after three attempts and then attempt twice more before closure. Compass measures its performance of making first contact within 48 hours, which is achieved for 99.6 per cent of referrals. 97 per cent of all referrals are responded to within 24 hours and an average of 80 per cent are responded to within six hours.

Focus on prevention through the delivery of high impact awareness raising campaigns

- The Commissioner has supported SETDAB to run targeted DA campaigns, including a perpetrator "reflect" campaign in 2016/17, an older person's DA campaign in 2017, and a stalking campaign in 2019. These campaigns were developed jointly and supported by the whole SETDA partnership, ensuring a collective and consistent message from all partner agencies are responded to within 24 hours and an average of 80 per cent are responded to within six hours.

Support victims of domestic abuse who have also experienced sexual abuse, ensuring they receive the specialist help and advice they need

- In Essex, the Commissioner commissions the Synergy Essex Rape Crisis partnership to deliver specialist support for victims of sexual abuse. This is a consortium of three Rape Crisis Centres: South Essex Rape and Incest Crisis Centre (SERICC), Centre for Action on Rape and Abuse (CARA) and Southend-on-Sea Rape Crisis (SoSRC). The service includes provision of ISVAs as well as counselling, therapy, and advocacy for all victims, regardless of their age, gender or when the abuse happened. Synergy offers a single point of access via telephone and their website. In 2016, when the service launched, the website received 13,000 hits in the last quarter alone. In 2016/17, the partnership received 1,240 online referrals from organisations and 238 online referrals from individuals.
- The Synergy partnership has seen significant increases in demand over recent years. Services delivered have increased from.
 - 2016/17: 9,722
 - 2017/18: 12,524
 - 2018/19: 13,713

As referenced earlier, this increase in demand is welcomed by the Commissioner as more victims are coming forward to report abuse and seek support. The Commissioner has increased investment in sexual abuse services to respond to this increase in demand.

3. Breaking the Cycle of Domestic Abuse (*continued*)

2016/17 – 2019/20 Priorities (*continued*)

Bring more perpetrators to justice by the further rollout of body worn video cameras for front line police officers

- In 2018 the Commissioner agreed the purchase of a new improved Body Worn Camera solution, an investment of over £3 million. This improved system provided a new camera for all operational staff, improved access to data storage solutions and improved transferability with Criminal Justice System partners. This improved the quality of evidence and the accessibility of evidence in cases.
- A 2019 review of all interviews involving DA prisoners interviewed in custody in August clearly illustrated that, where BWV was shown, there was a 20 per cent increase in the positive outcome rate (charge/caution).

Tackle offending behaviour through robust behaviour change programmes to break the cycle of domestic abuse

- As explained above, the Drive pilot the Commissioner supported between 2016 to 2019 delivered the following reductions in abusive behaviour:
 - physical abuse reduced by 82 per cent.
 - sexual abuse reduced by 88 per cent,
 - harassment and stalking behaviours reduced by 75 per cent; and
 - jealous and controlling behaviours reduced by 73 per cent.

3. Breaking the Cycle of Domestic Abuse (<i>continued</i>)
2019/20 – 2020/21 Priorities
Support victims and their families affected by domestic abuse to feel safe, cope and recover through targeted help and jointly commissioned services.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Given the success of the focus on this commitment in the previous Police and Crime Plan, it was decided to reaffirm the effort on this within the Extension to the Plan. The new integrated domestic abuse support contract was launched in April 2019 and saw a consortium of specialist DA providers (the Ending Violence in Essex / EviE / partnership) provide IDVA, refuge and community based support across the whole of the county. In 2019/20, the EviE partnership received 4,017 contacts and held 2,848 IDVA cases. In 2020/21, this was 4,560 contacts and 1,104 IDVA case
Train and develop front line professionals to recognise the signs and indicators of domestic abuse and to know how and where to go to for help
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As mentioned previously, the J9 DA awareness initiative continued to be delivered to professionals and communities across the county between 2019 to 2021. The Commissioner promoted the opportunity to engage in the project, including a press release in October 2020 to publicise the new virtual courses, adapted, and delivered during the COVID lockdowns and agile working arrangements. In 2018, the SETDAB partnership invited Dale Barrett, son of Janine Mundy, to present to the partnership conference on his experience. This was an emotional and thought provoking input which also served as an opportunity to promote the J9 awareness project named after Janine Mundy.
Support victims of domestic abuse who have also experienced sexual abuse, ensuring they receive the specialist help and advice they need
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2019/20, the Synergy rape crisis partnership continued to see an increase in demand for its services, with 15,747 services delivered for victims of sexual abuse. This compares with 9,722 in 2016/17, 12,524 in 2017/18 and 13,713 in 2018/19.
Understand the impact of the COVID pandemic on domestic abuse and help those affected to cope and recover, while ensuring the risk of offending is reduced
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2020, the SETDA Board began to meet fortnightly to monitor the impact of the pandemic on the partner approach to DA. The partnership developed a response plan which was monitored via the Board. The SETDA partnership developed a “stay safe at home campaign” which was released in 2020. The campaign focused on five risks to people during the challenging period of lockdowns and pandemic: domestic abuse, child abuse, accidental house fires, fraud, and bogus callers. In 2020, the Commissioner attracted an additional £1m investment in victim services which supported local organisations to adapt their offer to continue to provide much needed support in COVID different ways. The funding was allocated to 12 different services, including one dedicated to supporting the Gypsy and Traveller community. The Commissioner made available £150,000 through the Essex Community Foundation to create a COVID Community Safety Fund which was allocated to 19 local community sector organisations. This funding enabled groups to tailor their offer or make changes to their business model projects to take account of the changes enforced by COVID.

3. Breaking the Cycle of Domestic Abuse (*continued*)

2019/20 – 2020/21 Priorities (*continued*)

Support the Southend, Essex, and Thurrock Domestic Abuse Board by providing leadership and helping develop and embed the new strategy.

- **Ensure victims' voices are heard and used to inform our service development and the development of peer support networks.**
 - In tendering the integrated DA support service in 2019, the Commissioner undertook a series of engagement events to inform the partnership thinking and influence the model.
 - We regularly receive victim feedback as part of the quarterly monitoring processes to understand the qualitative as well as quantitative performance of the services.
 - To inform the development of the new partnership DA strategy in 2019/20, the partnership conducted face to face meetings and focus groups with a range of individuals from hard to reach communities including individuals with learning disabilities, mental health issues, young adults, victims of stalking and vulnerable domestic abuse victims identified as having high level needs. They added this feedback to that already obtained from service user engagement undertaken in February and March 2018, which informed the development of the commissioning of domestic abuse services. All feedback has been considered in the development of this strategy to ensure service user views and experiences are represented within the outcomes, key objectives, and activities. In addition, a 12 week open consultation process on the strategy took place to help inform the final product.
- **Alter the behaviour of perpetrators and reduce offending by commissioning innovative programmes.**
 - As mentioned earlier, the Commissioner continued to invest with the Change Project (£180k in 2020/21) to deliver DA perpetrator behaviour change projects. The Commissioner also continued to support the Goodman and Sisters in Strength projects (£70k in 2020/21) in school and community settings as an early intervention that supported those at risk of engaging in abusive relationships.
 - SETDAB also developed a VAWG perpetrator pathway project from 2017 to 2020, funded by Home Office, which allowed the partnership to explore different programmes of work, including a prison based intervention.
- **Develop clear consistent pathways for children and young people to report domestic abuse concerns.**
 - SETDAB ran a young people's campaign in 2016. Risk Avert continued to be provided in school settings across the county, promoting resilience and healthy relationships. As mentioned previously, the Commissioner continued to support and invest in the Goodman and Sisters in Strength work with young people.
- **Expand earlier intervention at primary school level, Early Years settings and have specific interventions on healthy relationships available along with support service pathways.**
 - As referenced elsewhere, the Commissioner's support for the Risk Avert programme supports delivery of this commitment. In 2019/20, Risk Avert was expanded into primary schools, working with 20 secondary schools and 65 primary schools that year. In 2020/21, (despite school COVID disruptions) the programme engaged with 39 secondary schools and 64 primary schools.
- **Promote our commissioned domestic abuse services' single point of access to ensure victims get the support they need to cope and recover.**
 - As described in detail above, the Compass service improved the consistency of access to support for victims of domestic abuse.
- **Work with the Criminal Justice System to monitor the use and effectiveness of the legislation and processes in managing domestic abuse offenders.**
 - In 2018/19, SETDAB established a Perpetrator Delivery Group to target work disrupting and supporting perpetrators, which includes criminal justice and voluntary sector partners. Through the Commissioner chaired Essex Criminal Justice Board, a DA subgroup was established during the life of the 2016 to 2020 Police and Crime Plan which eventually merged with the CJB Victims and Witness Action Team (VWAT). CJ partners also established a task and finish group in 2018 to review and report back on the national DA Best Practice Implementation Plan, which looked at how all CJ agencies and relevant support services dealt with DA in Essex.

3. Breaking the Cycle of Domestic Abuse (<i>continued</i>)
2019/20 – 2020/21 Priorities (<i>continued</i>)
Deliver targeted domestic abuse campaigns on key topics, including promoting domestic abuse awareness within communities and the business sector, encouraging healthy working environments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As mentioned previously, the Commissioner continued to invest in the community J9 programme, Alpha Vesta DA awareness for businesses and the Stay Safe at Home campaign during the COVID pandemic.
Use body worn video to improve successful outcomes in domestic abuse cases and ensure more perpetrators are brought to justice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The introduction of BWV provided a new camera for all operational staff, improved access to data storage solutions and improved transferability with Criminal Justice System partners. This improved the quality of evidence and the accessibility of evidence in cases
Understand and tackle the specific nature and impact of domestic abuse in rural communities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SETDA partnership developed a toolkit to enable organisations to improve their reach into rural communities. This included links to various assets which could be used to provide information, advice, guidance and support, examples include churches, GP surgeries, pubs, and social media platforms such as Facebook groups. It also included specific rural organisations such as Essex Rural Partnership, Essex Association of Local Councils, Farming Community Network, Essex Agricultural Society, Royal Horticultural Society, Essex Wildlife Trust as examples of locations for advertising domestic abuse support services and awareness.
Increase the use of restorative justice (RJ) as a proven way to prevent domestic abuse reoffending and help victims to cope and recover
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During the period 2019/20, the Commissioner's in house RJ service increased the number of complex and sensitive referrals into the service to support those impacted by sexual violence and abuse and domestic abuse. The Commissioner proactively engaged Essex Police to amend the community resolution (CR) process to allow CRs to be given for those aged 16 and 17 for domestic offences, where appropriate. In 2019/20, Essex Police officers were unable to refer domestic related incidents for RJ alongside a police outcome. This policy was based on national NPCC guidance and is something the RJ team escalated to the Restorative Justice Council to address in order to allow all victims to access their right to RJ, where safe. The aforementioned DA webinar in November 2020 was attended by more than 160 people and focused on the experiences of Lucy, a domestic abuse survivor who took part in a restorative justice process. The event received glowing feedback and led to discussions around using Lucy's story in Essex Police's Domestic Abuse Investigation (DAIT) team's training package.

4. Reverse the trend in serious violence

2016/17 – 2019/20 Priorities

Develop a Violence Prevention Strategy across Essex and support partners to reduce the level of violence

- The Essex Violence and Vulnerability Framework was developed and agreed by partner organisations across the county (June 2018). With this strong partnership approach, the Commissioner was able to access Early Intervention Youth Funds (of £350,000) from the Home Office to progress the areas within the Framework and benefit prevention work across the county.
- Following the success of the partnership framework, a joint delivery plan addressing serious violence linked to gangs and County Lines was developed in August 2019 – Essex was identified as one of the 18 Violence Reduction Unit areas for England and Wales. With this, the Commissioner was able to access new funds with a focus on preventing serious violence and protecting children and young people. The Commissioner accessed VRU funds with the county Violence and Vulnerability Partnership of £1.16m (in 2019/20). This funding was used to invest in projects including the A&E navigator programme, mentoring programmes with young people at risk of falling out of education, community led initiatives connecting with locally embedded not-for-profit organisations, interventions for high risk individuals to prevent an escalation in their offending.

Jointly commission effective prevention and diversionary activity for those at risk of involvement in violent crime, in particular children and young people

- Developed A&E navigator programme in Basildon and Thurrock University Hospital – reaching 125 children and young people by the end of 2019/20, supporting vulnerable young people with mentoring and onward support via other existing services (including through local communities and initiatives).

Deliver education and community programmes to help to prevent knife crime

- Through the Emergency Service Collaboration programme, in 2016/17 the Commissioner facilitated the creation of joint education teams delivered by Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, providing messages about fire safety, and broader community safety issues such as road safety, healthy relationships, and cyber safety. The provision includes an element focused on knife crime prevention and gang awareness for those in Key Stages 3 to 5. This input is based on the evidence of what works

Bring violent offenders to justice through targeted police enforcement, working closely with neighbouring forces such as the Metropolitan Police

- Recognising the benefit of working cooperatively on this agenda, Essex Police operational activity targeting high risk offenders has stepped up over the last few years, with increasing enforcement activity helping to protect the most vulnerable and target the most harmful.
- This included gang enforcement teams developed within Essex Police directly targeting the individuals causing the most harm.
- There have been specific cross border operations and activities, targeting key groups and individuals, for example Op Saturn which aimed to tackle London gangs committing crime in Essex

Deliver coordinated responses to tackle drug and alcohol misuse – getting more people away from dependency into treatment

- In 2018, the Commissioner supported the development of the street triage initiative which intervenes early to help people with mental health, alcohol, and drug misuse issues, to stay safe and stay out of the criminal justice system, where appropriate. The Commissioner is a joint commissioner of the integrated health and justice service which encompasses street triage, liaison and diversion and custody healthcare services.
- In 2019/20, the Commissioner also supported the Integrated Health and Justice Commissioning Group to develop the Horizons project which identifies the top ten cohort of individuals in a district that have a history of offending, drug misuse and homelessness and wrap support around that individual to reduce their reliance on statutory services. Following the pilot period which saw the Commissioner invest £90k into the project between 2019 to 2021, the model was independently evaluated and developed into a sustainable countywide model by mainstreaming it with the offenders with complex and additional needs (Full Circle) project

4. Reverse the trend in serious violence (continued)
2016/17 – 2019/20 Priorities (<i>continued</i>)
Improve management of dangerous offenders in the community by closer collaboration with probation and criminal justice partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements in Essex (MAPPA) enable a holistic and coordinated approach to management of serious offenders. • MAPPA in Essex ensures that Category 3 nominals are aligned to relevant specialist departments to ensure those who have the correct training, skills and attributes have a stronger management of these offenders. This includes alignment (as appropriate) to Domestic Abuse Investigation Teams, Serious Violence Unit and MOSOVO
Ensure victims of rape and sexual violence receive the help and support they need, and work with criminal justice partners to ensure that perpetrators are convicted
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tackling male violence against women has been a key priority for the Commissioner and, over recent years, they have listened to the experience of victims and survivors, as well as recognising the increasing demand on these services, and in response have increased the funding for support services such as counselling, advocacy, therapeutic support, and Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs). This is evidenced by the Commissioner investing £3,750,600 in sexual abuse services between 2016/17 and 2020/21. • In April 2019, Project Goldcrest launched. This is an initiative designed collaboratively by Essex Police and partners, including SARC and safeguarding partnerships. Input was also provided by young people, obtained via focus group discussions. This project enabled young people, who have already been identified as being at risk of CSE, to take their own forensic samples at home, with someone with parental responsibility (or an appropriate adult) as a witness. Their information, along with their bagged exhibits, are provided to the police and can be stored for up to 25 years. The young person remains anonymous to the police, unless they later decide they want to formally report. However, the forensic samples enable the force to gain and record valuable information, intelligence, and evidence

4. Reverse the trend in serious violence (*continued*)

2019/20 – 2020/21 Priorities

Ensure victims of rape and sexual violence receive the help and support they need, and work with criminal justice partners to ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice

- As documented in the chapter on domestic abuse, the Commissioner commissions the Synergy Essex Rape Crisis partnership to deliver specialist support for victims of sexual abuse. This is a consortium of three Rape Crisis Centres: South Essex Rape and Incest Crisis Centre (SERICC), Centre for Action on Rape and Abuse (CARA) and Southend-on-Sea Rape Crisis (SoSRC). The service includes provision of ISVAs as well as counselling, therapy, and advocacy for all victims, regardless of their age, gender, or when the abuse happened. Synergy offers a single point of access via telephone and their website.
- The Synergy partnership has seen significant increases in demand over recent years. Services delivered have increased from.
 - 2016/17 9,722
 - 2017/18 12,524
 - 2018/19 13,713
- Since taking office, the Commissioner has sought to increase reporting of sexual abuse, recognising data from the Crime Survey of England and Wales that around eight in ten incidents of sexual abuse are not reported. We have seen an increase in the number of people coming forward for help since the Commissioner inherited responsibility for the commissioning of local support services in 2014; for instance, service users entering support increased from 4,690 in 2016/17 to 7,117 in 2018/19. The Commissioner has commissioned local rape crisis centres to provide specialist support for victims and survivors of sexual abuse since 2016, increasing investment in services as demand has increased; in 2016/17, the Commissioner invested about £840k in sexual abuse support. By 2020/21, this figure had increased to £1.1m. In April 2020, the Synergy Rape Crisis Partnership was commissioned to deliver specialist support across the county, including therapeutic support, advocacy, counselling and 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. The contract value is about £1m per annum.

Increase the number of successful rape and sexual abuse prosecutions and encourage more victims to come forward by improving the quality of investigation cases and the way technology is used to provide compelling evidence.

- Essex Police has continued to focus on engaging and supporting victims, building strong prosecutive cases, ensuring evidence available digitally is used effectively and investing in more capacity and strong collaboration with partners such as the Crown Prosecution Service.
- Through the Essex Criminal Justice Board, the Commissioner has maintained a focus on improving the prosecution and conviction rates for perpetrators of sexual offences, including via the Case Management sub group.
- In 2021, the Frontliner programme was tested which enabled Essex Police to connect with a device and share files without the need to physically seize or remove the device. The application includes a consent form and allows police to provide a report showing the data received in an evidential format. This responds to feedback from victims that they will avoid reporting if it means their phone being seized/scrutinised and 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. The contract value is about £1m per annum.

4. Reverse the trend in serious violence (*continued*)

2019/20 – 2020/21 Priorities (*continued*)

Deliver against the Rape Prevention Strategy.

- The four key strategic aims of the Rape Prevention Strategy are.
 - **To prevent rape and serious sexual offences.**
Recorded rape has increased in Essex, but this is predominantly due to increased reporting and improvements in crime data accuracy focus.
 - **Ensure a partnership approach to tackle repeat victimisation and offending.**
The partnership sexual abuse strategy, Rape and Serious Sexual Offences (RASSO) Governance Board and ISVA referral process are examples of a positive local partnership approach.
 - **Utilise current partnership frameworks to facilitate and encourage sharing of data, resources, and expertise to deliver a coordinated evidence based approach.**
Op Ratify and Op Yalta are specific operations that use framework approaches to tackle repeat victimisation and repeat offending. These produce analytical products that identify those most at risk.
 - **Undertake key activity in line with force strategic objectives and under the following five key areas of focus: Victim Focus; Offender Focus; Partnership Focus; Staff Focus; and Innovation Focus.**
A victim feedback panel has been introduced at force level, giving victims a platform to share their experiences which contribute to individual and organisational learning.

Publish and support the Sexual Abuse Strategic Partnership to deliver the Essex Sexual Abuse Strategy and objectives, including

- Prevent abuse.
- tackle perpetrators.
- increase communications.
- ensure an efficient criminal justice system.
- improve young people's understanding of consent and abuse.
- The Partnership published the partnership strategy in November 2019 and presented to stakeholders to raise awareness of the strategy and challenge partners to support its delivery. Presentations were made to the Criminal Justice Board, Safer Essex, Health Executive Forum and Essex Leaders and Chief Executives. The SASP Board developed an action plan to support the delivery of the strategy's shared outcomes which is reviewed at each of its quarterly meetings

Increase the number of referrals to the Essex Restorative and Mediation Service (ERMS), to support those impacted by sexual violence and abuse and domestic abuse

- In 2020, the Commissioner published several case studies around the use of restorative justice (RJ) and sexual offences on the ERMS website, highlighting the successes of the service and the impact it has on both offenders and victims in these circumstances.
- The Commissioner also incorporated a case study / video example in standard RJ training. The case study specifically related to RJ and sexual offences, which was delivered to various teams who deal with victims of high harm offences, including witness care, detectives fast track, and a session for Essex magistrates.
- The Commissioner hosted a webinar around the use of RJ and domestic abuse during RJ Week in November 2020, which was attended by more than 160 people. This led to a 57 per cent increase in referrals in DA causes compared to the year before

Bring violent offenders to justice through targeted police enforcement, working closely with neighbouring forces such as the Metropolitan Police

- Building on the lessons learned during the previous plan, the Commissioner reaffirmed commitment to this collaborative work. As mentioned earlier, Essex Police operational activity targeting high risk offenders has stepped up over the last few years with increasing enforcement activity helping to protect the most vulnerable and target the most harmful. This included gang enforcement teams developed within Essex Police directly targeting the individuals causing the most harm

4. Reverse the trend in serious violence (continued)
2019/20 – 2020/21 Priorities (continued)
Deliver co-located responses to tackle drug, alcohol, and substance misuse – getting more people away from dependency and into treatment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As covered previously, the Commissioner continued to support the development of the street triage initiative through the integrated health and justice service, taking an active role in evaluating the performance of this contract. • The Horizons project was effectively mainstreamed into the offenders with complex and additional needs (Full Circle) service. The Commissioner continues to monitor the effectiveness and impact of this service, which reports into the Reducing Reoffending Board, chaired by the Deputy Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner.
Improve management of dangerous offenders in the community by closer collaboration with Her Majesty's Prison & Probation Service and criminal justice partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MAPPA (Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements) are a set of arrangements to manage the risk posed by the most serious sexual, violent, and terrorist offenders (MAPPA-eligible offenders) under the provisions of sections 325 to 327B of the Criminal Justice Act 2003. They bring together the police, probation, and prison services into what is known as the MAPPA Responsible Authority. A number of other agencies are under a Duty to Cooperate with the Responsible Authority. These include social services, health services, youth offending teams, Jobcentre Plus and local housing and education authorities. • MAPPA-eligible offenders are identified and information about them is shared between agencies to inform the risk assessments and risk management plans of those managing or supervising them. • There are regular MAPPA meetings attended by relevant agency practitioners to manage cases which require more senior oversight and structured multi-agency management
Tackle perpetrators who groom individuals or groups, with a particular focus on victims who are targeted online
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police Online Investigation Team (POLIT) has responsibility for investigations across the county into offences involving indecent images of children and paedophilia material held on a computer. This unit responds to referrals from other agencies and provides a proactive capability utilising system to detect those people in Essex viewing and distributing indecent images of children via the internet. • In 2021, Essex Police developed and joined the Eastern Region Child Abuse Investigations Group to share information and good practice around child death, child sexual exploitation, child exploitation, child abuse, legislation, procedure, training events

4. Reverse the trend in serious violence (*continued*)

2019/20 – 2020/21 Priorities (*continued*)

Deliver on the priority areas for the Essex Violence and Vulnerability Unit

- In 2021, the Violence and Vulnerability Annual Report was published on the Essex VVU website, demonstrating the positive activities undertaken by the Violence and Vulnerability Unit.
- Through improved understanding of the issues for the county, including the development of a serious problem profile, understanding of the small number of individuals who cause disproportionate levels of harm in communities has grown. This includes how they act and, importantly, how Essex Police can identify and work with them at points in their journey, tackle behaviour and prevent them from affecting communities. This targeted approach has included the integration of safeguarding officers within the police gang enforcement teams. These safeguarding officers work with partners to support those young or vulnerable people who are swept up in enforcement activity against higher up County Line gang members. These links help to use the opportunity, where appropriate, to reach out and stop a young or vulnerable person from falling further into a life of crime.
- The VVU has recognised the importance of building broad capacity within communities, particularly within the voluntary and community sectors. Through targeted funding, the Commissioner has been able to foster a strong and robust network of organisations that provide a wide range of interventions in local communities across the county, from youth clubs, boxing sessions to after school sport activities for at risk children. These deliver an ongoing level of capacity that reduces the risk of young people falling into a life of crime. One example of a group that has benefited from this support is Changing Lives which was set up in Harlow in 2018 to raise children's awareness about the dangers of gangs and gang activity. The group uses a mix of physical activities and wellbeing programmes to prevent young people from getting involved in anti-social behaviour and criminal activity.
- While these individual examples provide a flavour of the innovative and effective interventions currently under way, the real strength of the approach over the last few years has been the integrated and system wide strategy that this broader partnership has been able to deliver. By taking a holistic view of how partners work together to support young and vulnerable people and reduce violence, they can spot opportunities to intervene early, to make a difference and to stop people from falling through the gaps.

4. Reverse the trend in serious violence (*continued*)

2019/20 – 2020/21 Priorities (*continued*)

Working through the Violence and Vulnerability Partnership, we will: support staff, including front line workers, to respond to the needs of young and vulnerable people

- The VVU led on the creation of e-learning modules to raise the skills and understanding of all those who may encounter young people at risk of serious youth violence and exploitation. This e-learning package is available for free for anyone in Southend, Essex, and Thurrock to access.
- Every Contact Counts sessions were delivered in collaboration with Community Safety Partnerships, raising awareness and upskilling staff to respond appropriately to child and vulnerable adult exploitation. This included local reporting procedures; how to disrupt exploitation; and intelligence and information sharing.
- Listen to and act on what communities want.
- The Commissioner recognises the value of hearing from communities about issues that impact upon them. As an example of how this can be done effectively, the VVU engaged with voluntary sector partners through the 'voice of communities' workstream, including devising a small grants programme for small, local, not for profit, VCS organisations to support the VVU's work.
- During this period, the VVU grew its voluntary and community networks and started to move towards co-designing key activities for its work programme.
- In 2020/21, the Commissioner created a small grants process which would ultimately allocate £130,000 of funding to 32 small charities to deliver work in local communities – supporting 1,349 children and young people.
- Through its dedicated comms and media activity, the Essex VVU has established an extensive reach for its communications work. This includes the publication of fortnightly newsletters to 6,500 recipients and media articles to a total audience estimated at more than 103,000.
 - Build awareness of how gangs operate and exploit the vulnerable, so that the Unit can improve the response.
 - The VVU has led on, and shared an improved and more sophisticated understanding of, the scale and issues relating to serious violence in the county. This has been driven through an evidence based and partnership approach embodied and facilitated by the VVU.
 - Example of this work is that more than 200 professionals were briefed on the Serious Violence Problem Profile and Drugs Market Profile in 2020/21.
 - An example of the impact of this work includes delivering a series of workshops (Operation TRESPASS) providing training and raising awareness of cuckooing in Essex (cuckooing is the term used when criminal gangs target the home of a vulnerable person(s) in order for the property to be used as a hub and/or base for drug dealing). With 40 workshops involving delegates from all areas of the community, partners engaged with the aim of making them better prepared to identify and recognise the signs of cuckooing and what they can do assist in mitigating the effects and safeguarding any individuals involved.
 - target areas experiencing high levels of gang activity.
 - The VVU is leading on the development of a more sophisticated and detailed picture of harm across Essex, and the different types and scale of harm across the county. The VVU continues to develop countywide approaches where it is appropriate, as well as more locally specific targeted work.
 - As referenced above, in 2020/21, the Commissioner worked with the VVU to develop a new community grants programme, which would support local community not for profit organisations, to enhance the work with children and young people in communities. This funding allocated £130k to local VCS organisations to reduce the risk to young people of being exposed to or exploited by criminal drug gangs. Funded organisations included Changing Lives, UTurn4Support, The London Bus Theatre Company, Essex Boys & Girls Clubs, and Street Pastors.
 - prevent vulnerable people being pressurised into returning to gangs once they leave custody.
 - The VVU developed a spoken word project in HMP Chelmsford, with a focus on young men with gang affiliations, prior to release. The project explored the theme of identity as

4. Reverse the trend in serious violence (*continued*)

2019/20 – 2020/21 Priorities (*continued*)

Working through the Violence and Vulnerability Partnership, we will: support staff, including front line workers, to respond to the needs of young and vulnerable people (*continued*)

- opposed to explicitly considering gangs and education skills. The project was able to focus on recognising the importance of having positive relationships in the community in the young man's own right and move away from the risk of being associated with a gang due to the perceived feeling of belonging or, in some instances, the status that gang affiliation is linked to.
- Examples of the outcomes from this approach include 14 young men achieving BTec level qualifications. We also noticed an improvement for individuals in relation to self-harm (for their own wellbeing and reduced time required from prison officers to monitor through checks for safety). The second programme offered the opportunity for three of the members of the first cohort to become mentors.
- Secure extra funding from government and use this on evidence based initiatives that are proven to tackle gangs, County Lines, and exploitation in Essex.
- The VVU has attracted significant additional investment in this programme from the Home Office and from Essex County Council, which has committed £1m between 2019 to 2021. Total Home Office funding secured from 2016/17 to 2020/21 from central government amounted to £2.8m
- In 2021, the VVU received confirmation of continued funding secured from Home Office to maintain the work of the VVU.
- Essex is learning from and adding to the national evidence base about what works in relation to violence and vulnerability, having established a close working relationship with central government and the national Youth Endowment Fund. As part of the VRU learning network, the VVU is offered the opportunity to present on work from Essex and share lessons learned with other VRUs as well as learning from their experience and transferring knowledge into the local VVU approach.
- Essex violence and vulnerability conference Perspective on Violence was held in March 2020, with more than 300 professionals from across the county learning from existing areas of work and sharing the developing evidence base.

5. Tackle Gangs and Organised Crime

2016/17 – 2019/20 Priorities

Develop and deliver on a Gangs Strategy as part of the wider Violence Prevention Strategy.

- The Violence and Vulnerability Framework for Essex was authored by the Commissioner office and adopted by Safer Essex in 2018.
- The Violence and Vulnerability Framework provided a strong basis for the Business Case to form the Violence and Vulnerability Partnership, which was established in April 2014, using Early Intervention Youth Funds (of £350,000) from the Home Office. As detailed in the Serious Violence chapter, this was the precursor to the establishment of the Essex Violence & Vulnerability Unit and investment of additional Home Office, local partner, and Commissioner funding.
- The Commissioner appointed a Violence and Vulnerability Programme manager in 2019 to oversee the work of the emerging V&V Partnership

Prevent the exploitation of children and vulnerable people by gangs through early intervention initiatives and jointly commissioning diversionary activities

- Since 2016, the Commissioner has supported the Children At Risk of Exploitation (CARE) project, delivered by the Children's Society. The Commissioner has made an annual investment in this project, which aims to enhance protective factors, improve wellbeing and resilience, as well as reduce the risk of physical, emotional, and sexual harm for young people that may be exposed to criminality. Between 2016 and 2019, the project supported 300 individuals at risk of child sexual exploitation.
- As referenced elsewhere in this report, Commissioner facilitated the creation of joint education teams in 2016/17 delivered by Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, providing messages about fire safety, and broader community safety issues including an element focused on knife crime prevention and gang awareness for those in Key Stages 3 to 5.
- As detailed in the Serious Violence chapter, the Commissioner also invested in the A&E navigator programme in Basildon which reached 125 young people by the end of 2019/20

Support victims of human trafficking and modern slavery, including sexual exploitation, working closely with UK Border Agency (UKBA), National Crime Agency (NCA) and national and regional partners to bring perpetrators to justice

- Through the Eastern Region Special Operations Unit (ERSOU) Operation Venetic, an international operation was undertaken which resulted in the identification and disruption of several organised crime groups in the UK and in Essex. The dedicated specialist resources that have been invested in Essex gave the force the capacity to respond proactively to the national intelligence secured under Operation Venetic and resulted in a significant number of arrests and seizure

Support rural communities and businesses to counter organised crime through improved communication and information sharing

- In 2017, a new Rural Crime Strategy for Essex was launched. This was the first time the strategy was developed in partnership and was launched as a joint strategy between Essex Police, the Commissioner for Essex, and Essex Rural Partnership, itself representing more than 40 individual organisations.
- The formation of the Rural Engagement Team (originally the Gypsy Traveller and Rural Engagement Team) was established in 2017/8 to focus specifically on issues impacting on Essex's rural communities

5. Tackle Gangs and Organised Crime (*continued*)

2016/17 – 2019/20 Priorities (*continued*)

Channel funds seized from criminal groups back into policing priorities for local communities

- The Essex Police policy for Proceeds of Crime was reviewed in 2019. This policy ensures that Essex Police will financially investigate all persons charged with a drug trafficking offence or an acquisitive crime with a view to making an application to a court for a confiscation order to be made to the value of the benefits derived from the crimes. Essex Police will seek to use the provisions of the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 and seize cash to the value of £1,000 and above if it is found while lawfully on premises, or while searching any person or vehicle. Police financial investigators will investigate the origins of any cash, so seized with a view to requesting its forfeiture at the magistrates' court.
- Between 2016/17 and 2020/21, Essex Police received £3.24m from the POCA Asset Recovery Incentivisation Scheme. Over this period, £1.60m was allocated from the POCA reserve. The force contributed £0.23m to the Essex Community Foundation which provides vital funding to local community groups, £0.40m towards the funding of Financial Investigator staff within the Serious Crime Directorate (SCD), and £1.05m allocated via the Essex POCA Board.
- The Essex POCA board allocations contributed towards specialist equipment, proactive operations, Essex Search & Rescue, Body Worn Video, drones, 'Method of Entry' training, digital forensics, knife arches covert equipment, digital forensics training, and fraud prevention campaigns.

Disrupt and prevent organised drug distribution through improved intelligence shared between the police, partners, and local communities to limit the harm drugs cause

- Between 2016 and 2020 the Serious Violence Unit was implemented within Essex Police. The Unit is made up of Five Op Raptor teams that are dedicated to the investigation and disruption of gangs and county lines. They are supported by the SVU intelligence team and the Op Orochi team whose function are to develop intelligence and identify those that are involved in the supply of controlled drugs across Essex.

Encourage local authorities and employers to work with landlords and private sector partners, ensuring immigrant identification checks and controls by landlords are implemented in the right way, in order to limit the ability of illegal gangs to operate

- Engaged with local housing leads, including Registered Social Landlords, through the Reducing Reoffending Board, where partners receive a regular update on housing issues.
- We also include a member of the Essex Housing Officers Group on the SETDA Board

Use roads policing to target people and vehicles who cause harm to our communities, especially those who are involved in serious and organised crime, through automatic number plate recognition (ANPR), other intelligence gathering and disruption activities

- The Essex Police ANPR estate was significantly expanded over the period between 2016 to 2021 in order to better protect the policing area. During that time ANPR has played a pivotal role in such important investigations as murders, human trafficking, and illegal immigration (Op Melrose – the murder investigation into the deaths of Vietnamese people being smuggled into the UK), and drug trafficking as well as crimes such as domestic violence and stalking, vehicle theft and burglary to name but a few. ANPR has supported many types of investigations from the point of the initial offence right through to providing evidence at trial.
- Also, during this period, Essex Police became a user of the National ANPR Service which allowed the team to develop tactics to identify vehicles from mobile phone data, meaning Essex Police is no longer dependent on having a vehicle's details to determine its journey. This, especially, has been a game/changer for policing and its use of ANPR

5. Tackle Gangs and Organised Crime (*continued*)

2019/20 – 2020/21 Priorities

In the 2020/21 Police and Crime Plan Extension, the “Tackling gangs and organised crime” priority evolved to “Disrupt and prevent organised crime”. The gangs element was picked up in an evolved priority to “tackle gangs and serious violence”.

Support victims of human trafficking and modern slavery, including sexual exploitation, working closely with UK Border Agency (UKBA), National Crime Agency (NCA) and national and regional partners to bring perpetrators to justice

- Essex Police retained focus on identifying possible victims of modern slavery in 2020/21. Despite some forces seeing a decrease in modern slavery and human trafficking (MSHT) referrals during the pandemic, Essex data continued with an increasing overall trend. Officers are now more knowledgeable of the MSHT signs, and this has contributed to increased referrals. Each Local Policing Area has a designated MSHT point of contact to drive the information and sharing of learning out to the staff from the centralised Serious Crime Directorate dedicated team.
- Essex Police have excellent working relationships with Justice and Care. This partnership has seen three victim navigators provided by the charity to work within the force (one within MSHT, one within Organised Immigration Crime and one within the force's Violence and Vulnerability Unit). This has greatly enhanced the victim experience within the county, with 42 adult victims and 28 child victims currently being supported. The force also maintains a local safe facility through partnership with Communities and Asylum Seekers Together (CAST) and Justice and Care. The details of how to access this facility have been passed to all supervising officers and within the Force Control Room (FCR). These details are also available within the MSHT advice pages on the force intranet.
- The force has created a learning environment and, with strategic partners, has developed a system that captures learning from police activity to enhance future victim service. Working with Stop the Traffik, a victim of sexual exploitation was able to share experiences of how earlier intervention could have been achieved by police had certain behaviours not existed. This information was shared with LPA colleagues via the MSHT SPOCs.

Channel funds seized from criminal groups back into policing priorities for local communities

- The receipt and allocation of POCA funds

Disrupt and prevent organised drug distribution through improved intelligence shared between police partners and local communities to limit the harm drugs cause

- This is managed through Essex Police's Serious Crime Directorate (SCD) which uses its Strategic Serious Organised Crime (SOC) Board with senior representation from Trading Standards, HMIC, Environment Agency, Border Force and Crimestoppers.
- Examples of some of the local operations that are in place which aim to disrupt and prevent organised drug distribution include:
 - Operation BURNS which targets drug supply in the Barnhall area of Colchester.
 - Operation LANDSEAR, which proactively targets taxi drivers to reduce the use of drug suppliers using them to transport drugs.
 - Operation MONACO, which involved a strike on an Organised Crime Group operating in Colchester. This resulted in class A drugs and cash being seized, and a number being remanded and several remaining on court bail.
- In March, the South Disruptor Team carried out a strike day for Operation SWEEP, which was a drugs investigation for cocaine supply whereby the main offenders were using females to run the drugs line; violence was threatened if these females spoke about their actions in the Organised Crime Group. Twelve warrants were executed across Southend and Benfleet by 45 officers; eight suspects were arrested and charged, and £25,733 in cash and a significant amount of drugs were seized. The results of this were circulated on social media which garnered a positive response from the communities affected.
- The Disruptor Team, in conjunction with other partner agencies, have conducted a number of successful warrants resulting in significant custodial sentences for those arrested. They have successfully dismantled a number of drug lines within the Harlow district, preventing the influx of large quantities of drugs into the local communities

5. Tackle Gangs and Organised Crime (*continued*)

2019/20 – 2020/21 Priorities (*continued*)

Limit the ability of illegal gangs to operate by encouraging local authorities and employers to work with landlords and private sector partners to ensure immigrant identification checks and controls by landlords are implemented in the right way

- The Commissioner continued to engage with local housing leads, including Registered Social Landlords, through the Reducing Reoffending Board, where partners receive a regular update on housing issues.
- A member of the Essex Housing Officers Group continues to represent and share information through the SETDA Board

Use roads policing to target people and vehicles who cause harm to our communities, especially those who are involved in serious and organised crime, through automatic number plate recognition (ANPR), other intelligence gathering and disruption activities

- Operation SPITFIRE was an ANPR operation in Harlow that targeted vehicles with gang markers around the border with the Metropolitan Police Service. This operation was aimed at targeting Organised Crime Groups that use road networks to facilitate their criminality and resulted in the arrest of eight suspects, including five who were involved in a knife-point robbery

Work with the Environment Agency and rural communities to tackle largescale industrial fly tipping committed by Organised Crime Groups

- Essex Police and the office of the Commissioner attended the Essex Fly Tipping Task and Finish Group (founded by Essex Rural Partnership), later known as the Essex Fly Tipping Group, from its establishment in 2016. This group brought together statutory agencies with differing and complementary powers, to collate data collected which was stored independently to provide a holistic picture and to ensure maximum effect in addressing this issue.
- The Fly Tipping Group researched and adopted good practice from neighbouring counties.
- The ERP Task and Finish Group supported a number of joint operations (led by Essex Police, the Environment Agency, and a variety of Essex Local Authorities) to gather intelligence and deter large scale fly-tipping

Work with businesses and individuals to help them to protect themselves from cyber enabled crime, such as online fraud

- Cyber enabled crime has grown exponentially over the last ten years as criminals have used new technology to commit crime. Through the precept funded growth in 2016/17 the Chief Constable recruited a specialist cyber protect officer to coordinate Essex Police's work with individuals and businesses to help build resilience against these forms of crime.
- Further specialist investment was made in 2020/21 with a further position created. Between these new specialist officers were funded the creation of a business engagement team. This team was supported by and worked closely with a newly created Business Crime Strategic Board, a business led board that connected the team with businesses, provided business views and share prevention activity.
- Through this partnership a variety of focused activities have taken place including three large cyber security conferences, over 70 individual engagements at business networking events and hundreds of pieces of prevention advice.
- In 2020/21 the Strategic Business Board agreed to establish a Cyber Security Subgroup with representatives from a variety of cybersecurity focused businesses, the Eastern Regional Cyber Security Centre and representatives from the Essex Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses, and academic institutions. This board has started to grow the activity across Essex and coordinate the partnership approach to reaching, engaging, and protecting businesses and individuals.

6. Protecting children and vulnerable people from harm

2016/17 – 2019/20 Priorities

Promote prevention and early intervention to keep children safe from all forms of abuse, including child sexual abuse, emotional abuse, physical abuse and neglect and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

- In 2016, the Commissioner invested in the Risk Avert model which is an emotional health and wellbeing programme for young people, delivered through schools. During the 2018/19 academic year, 211 young people participated in an independent evaluation of the award winning programme. The findings showed that 72 per cent of young people achieved positive outcomes relating to their mental wellbeing and 74 per cent of young people achieved positive outcomes relating to both their self-efficacy and their resilience.
- Since 2016, the Commissioner has also worked with local authorities and the National Lottery to support the Children At Risk of Exploitation (CARE) project. The Commissioner has made an annual investment in this project, which aims to enhance protective factors, improve wellbeing and resilience as well as reduce the risk of physical, emotional, and sexual harm for young people that may be exposed to criminality. Between 2016 and 2019, the project supported 300 individuals at risk of child sexual exploitation.
- Through the precept investment and the national Police Uplift Programme, the force has received an increase in funding for additional staff and officers, including to undertake child abuse investigations. A dedicated Quest team of officers was formed in February 2019 to investigate cases of non recent child sexual abuse where the victim is now an adult. Following a growth bid, the CSE Investigation Team went live in July 2020, to supplement work already undertaken in Community Policing Teams and to deal with cross-border matters. The team investigates the most serious, complex, and organised child sexual exploitation, proactively targeting suspects who are prolific abusers of children. Dedicated Children and Young People Officers now also work with vulnerable young people through engagement with educational institutions, youth clubs and social care to identify support networks for young people and create referral pathways to divert potential victims of exploitation by building self confidence, respect for self and others and contributing to society

Promote and encourage partnerships to challenge and support Essex Police to deliver and sustain improvements to outcomes in child protection interventions

- The Commissioner attended and engaged through partnerships including Health and Wellbeing Boards, the Essex Criminal Justice Board, Safeguarding Adults and Children Boards, the Sexual Abuse Strategic Partnership and the Southend, Essex, and Thurrock Domestic Abuse Board (SETDAB).
- With regards to police performance, in the 12 months to February 2020, the force achieved nearly 200 more child abuse outcomes than in the previous 12 months, but also saw an increase in incoming demand, recording a rise of more than 50 per cent in offences during the same period

Work with front line professionals, including doctors, nurses, teachers, and social workers, to identify signs of abuse and understand how best to refer victims for support

- The Commissioner has supported the SETDAB, which has developed e-learning packages providing basic DA awareness for professionals. The Commissioner also invested in and supported the development and rollout of the community J9 domestic abuse programme which raises awareness of abuse among the public and professionals and upskills individuals in how to signpost people to support. The J9 campaign held five sessions and trained 79 professionals, including Job Centre staff, churches, doctors and hospitals between October 2018 and March 2019. From May 2019 through to Spring 2020, 66 sessions were delivered at venues including Basildon, Harlow, Southend and Colchester Hospitals, St Clare and St Helena Hospices, Harlow College, and a number of local authorities. More than 550 people attended J9 training sessions in 2019/20

6. Protecting children and vulnerable people from harm (continued)

2016/17 – 2019/20 Priorities (continued)

Bring more perpetrators of rape and sexual abuse to justice

- Recorded rape offences have gradually increased over the Plan period, with projections anticipating this trend continuing. As noted in the chapter on serious violence, although rape convictions as a percentage of the total caseload increased between 2016/17 and 2020/21 (from 60 per cent to 69 per cent), the total number of rape convictions in Essex reduced from 67 in 2016/17 to just 20 in 2020/21. For the 12 months to the end of March 2021, Essex had the eighth highest rate per 1,000 population of recorded rape offences nationally, and the joint highest within its Most Similar Group of forces. Only 4 per cent were solved during this period, giving Essex the sixth lowest solved rate across England and Wales.
- To address this, Essex Police has consulted with other forces to identify and implement areas of good practice and a Rape Improvement Plan has been developed, informed by a review undertaken in 2016/17 of 60 rape cases.
- To bring additional focus to work with the Crown Prosecution Service to progress prosecutions, an independent, multi-agency Rape Scrutiny Panel was established in 2017/18 which meets quarterly and is chaired by an Assistant Chief Constable. Partner agencies are invited to identify cases for scrutiny, so that learning and improvement can be shared.
- In early 2020, the Crime and Public Protection Command built on this by formalising a Rape Prevention Strategy 2020 to 2025 which sets out activity within the force to prevent rape and serious sexual offences and to tackle repeat victimisation and offending. As part of this, in June 2020, the combined Op Ratify (which identifies and tackles repeat offenders) and Op Yalta (which identifies and reduces repeat victimisation) was established, focusing on preventative activity. The board identifies new subjects based on intelligence, professional judgement and data analysis and oversees a structured, coordinated, multi-agency approach where appropriate.
- Through the Force Growth Programme, significant resource has been invested in specialist sexual offence roles, including 18 Adult Sexual Abuse Investigation Team (ASAIT) officers (representing a 40 per cent uplift) and 19 detective constables on the Detective Fast Track joining the teams.

Improve reporting rates of sexual abuse and ensure victims have access to appropriate support

- As documented in the chapters on domestic abuse and serious violence, the Commissioner commissions the Synergy Essex Rape Crisis partnership to deliver specialist support for victims of sexual abuse. This is a consortium of three Rape Crisis Centres: The South Essex Rape and Incest Crisis Centre (SERICC), the Centre for Action on Rape and Abuse (CARA) and Southend-on-Sea Rape Crisis (SoSRC). The service includes provision of Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs) as well as counselling, therapy, and advocacy for all victims, regardless of their age, gender, or when the abuse happened. Synergy offers a single point of access via telephone and its website. The Synergy partnership has seen significant increases in demand over recent years. Services delivered have increased from 9,722 in 2016/17, 12,524 in 2017/18, 13,713 in 2018/19 to 15,747 in 2019/20.
- Since taking office, the Commissioner has sought to increase reporting of sexual abuse, recognising data from the Crime Survey of England and Wales that around eight in ten incidents of sexual abuse are not reported. We have seen an increase in the number of people coming forward for help since the Commissioner inherited responsibility for the commissioning of local support services in 2014. For instance, service users entering support increased from 4,690 in 2016/17 to 7,117 in 2018/19.
- The Commissioner has commissioned local rape crisis centres to provide specialist support for victims and survivors of sexual abuse since 2016, increasing investment in services as demand has increased. In 2016/17, the Commissioner invested about £840k in sexual abuse support. By 2020/21, this figure had increased to £1.1m. In April 2020, the Synergy Rape Crisis Partnership was commissioned to deliver specialist support across the county, including therapeutic support, advocacy, counselling and 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. The contract value is about £1m per annum

6. Protecting children and vulnerable people from harm (continued)

2016/17 – 2019/20 Priorities (continued)

Support those with mental health, alcohol, and drug misuse issues, intervening early to prevent harm and divert away from the Criminal Justice System wherever appropriate, through initiatives such as street triage

- During 2016/17, the Commissioner, in collaboration with local authorities, health partners and Essex Police, facilitated the introduction of new legislation – section 136 of the Mental Health Act – which ensures that individuals in mental health crisis are no longer arrested, but instead receive appropriate assessment and intervention within a health based place of safety. Only where any threat cannot be managed within a hospital can a detainee under section 136 now be taken to a police station which, in effect, means that only individuals displaying extreme violence will be detained in custody. During 2016/17, the Commissioner and Essex Police also signed the Crisis Care Concordat, which was then a new arrangement setting out how relevant organisations will work together effectively to help people in mental health crisis.
- Since 2018, the Commissioner has co-commissioned an integrated health and justice service with local authority and health partners. The service combines street triage, liaison and diversion, and custody healthcare services. In 2019/20, 38.2 per cent of substance misuse referrals from the integrated health and justice service resulted in successful entry into a service, with a total of 480 people supported.
- In 2019/20, the street Triage service operated at about a 70 per cent avoidance rate for A&E and a higher rate of about 77 per cent for S136 avoidance. These figures represented improvements from about 50 per cent in 2018/19. In 2019/20, it was also noted that the street triage service was increasingly seeing people who were new to the service (rather than repeat attendees), which possibly demonstrates the sustainability of mental health interventions and an improvement in the wider mental health system

Deliver awareness campaigns for children and young people to improve understanding of healthy relationships through schools and public health information

- As set out above, in 2016, the Commissioner invested in the Risk Avert model which is an emotional health and wellbeing programme for young people delivered through schools. During the 2018/19 academic year, 211 young people participated in an independent evaluation of the award winning Risk Avert programme. The findings showed that 72 per cent of young people achieved positive outcomes relating to their mental wellbeing, and 74 per cent of young people achieved positive outcomes relating to both their self-efficacy and their resilience

Tackle perpetrators who groom individuals or groups, with a particular focus on victims who are targeted online

- In response to an increase in cases of indecent images of children being created and / or shared online, additional posts have been created to form a Proactive Team in the Police online Investigation Team (POLIT).
- In 2018/19, Essex Police collaborated with the Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, and Surrey Constabularies to launch a significant public awareness campaign and educational tool to highlight the dangers of online grooming and child sexual exploitation. Breck's Last Game tells the story of Surrey teenager Breck Bednar, who was killed by Essex computer engineer Lewis Daynes in 2014, following months of online grooming.
- Continuing to lead the way in utilising innovative methods to support and protect young people, the Dot Com project was launched in Essex in June 2019 and nationally in January 2020. Essex Police worked with teachers and pupils at a school in South Ockendon to identify the greatest risks facing young people and to develop an online programme to help them to identify dangerous situations, tell their teacher if something is worrying them, and feel confident about exploring the internet, in safety. This resulted in the creation of Dot Com, a digital resource that is now available to all schools across Essex.

6. Protecting children and vulnerable people from harm (continued)

2016/17 – 2019/20 Priorities (continued)

Respond to the needs of individuals and local communities who are vulnerable to specific crime types, such as hate crime, elder abuse, harassment, human trafficking, female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage and honour based abuse (HBA)

- As referenced in the chapter on serious violence, in 2018/19, the Commissioner led the development and publication of Essex's first partnership Sexual Violence and Abuse Strategy. The strategy was developed through the Essex Sexual Abuse Strategic Partnership which includes representatives from Essex Police, local rape crisis centres, health, and local authorities. The partnership reviews progress against the strategy at each of its quarterly meetings. The strategy outlines the holistic approach the partnership is taking to tackle abuse, and focuses on the following partnership priorities:
 - Prevent abuse from happening.
 - Support for victims and survivors.
 - Develop consistent, impactful communication and campaigns.
 - Challenge perpetrators to break the cycle of abuse.
 - Deliver an effective criminal justice response which bring victims justice and holds perpetrators to account.
- Through the SETDAB, more than 800 professionals attended seminars and workshops in 2019/20, which included stalking seminars, Complex Needs training, Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) and domestic abuse training, stalking and honour based abuse (DASH) risk assessment, Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) seminars and Learning from Reviews. Event feedback showed that professionals' confidence in these areas increased, e.g., 93 per cent of those who completed evaluations for the stalking seminars confirmed it would influence their practice and that their confidence increased across all the learning outcomes.

Improve reporting of hate incidents through improved community engagement and greater use of Hate Crime Reporting Centres

- In 2016, the Commissioner invested in the recruitment of a Hate Crime Prevention Coordinator who reported into the Partnership Strategic Hate Crime Prevention Partnership (SHCPP). The coordinator developed the first partnership strategy on preventing hate crime, which was published in 2018 and included the following key themes:
 - Understanding hate crime.
 - Preventing hate crime.
 - Increasing the reporting of hate crime.
 - Increasing access to support for victims.
 - Improving the operational response to hate crimes.
- Since 2017, the Commissioner has commissioned Stop Hate UK to provide a dedicated, specialist helpline for victims of hate crime to report incidents and seek information, advice, and support. The helpline also provides information and advice to professionals. The service is available 24/7 as part of a direct response to Recommendation 16 of the MacPherson Inquiry.

'All possible steps should be taken by Police Services at local level in consultation with local Government and other agencies and local communities to encourage the reporting of racist incidents and crimes. This should include: the ability to report at locations other than police stations; and the ability to report 24 hours a day.'
- Between 2017 and 2020, Stop Hate UK received 141 contacts to its dedicated phone line. The Commissioner supported multiple campaigns throughout the period to promote the availability of the service.

6. Protecting children and vulnerable people from harm (continued)
2019/20 – 2020/21 Priorities
Promote prevention and early intervention to keep children safe from all forms of abuse, including child sexual abuse, emotional abuse, physical abuse and neglect and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Commissioner continued to support and promote the Risk Avert programme which delivered the following achievements in 2020/21: • 45 schools participated in the programme with 82 school staff being trained to deliver the Risk Avert and the new RSE and HE Curriculum. • 3,776 Year 8 surveys were completed for Risk Avert. 1,478 Year 6 surveys were completed for Risk Avert: Primary. • New videos were made available on the Risk Avert portal to assist primary and secondary schools to teach RSHE. • As noted in the serious violence chapter, through the Emergency Service Collaboration programme, in 2016/17 the Commissioner facilitated the creation of joint emergency services education teams delivered by Essex County Fire and Rescue Service. The teams provide messages to young people in Key Stages 1 to 4 about fire safety and broader community safety issues, such as healthy relationships, gang awareness and cyber safety. Between November 2020 and November 2021, the Joint Education Team gave safety information to 93,837 young people across Essex. 100 per cent of schools in Essex are engaged in this process annually. • In the 12 months to February 2021, there was a 5.1 per cent reduction in the number of recorded child abuse offences in the county (a reduction of 284 compared with the previous 12 months). While positive, there remains more that can and will be done to protect those affected by these crimes
Promote and encourage partnerships to challenge and support Essex Police to deliver and sustain improvements to outcomes in child protection interventions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Commissioner continued to attend and engage through partnerships including Health and Wellbeing Boards, the Essex Criminal Justice Board, Safeguarding Adults and Children Boards, the Sexual Abuse Strategic Partnership and Domestic Abuse Board
Work with front line professionals, including doctors, nurses, teachers, and social workers, to identify signs of abuse and understand how best to refer victims for support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2020/21, the SETDAB launched new e-learning courses focused on working with LGBTQ+ victims, MARAC basic awareness, and DA and older people. 682 individuals subscribe to the SETDAB newsletter, and in 2020/21 the partnership received 18,566 visits to its website. In response to the challenges presented by the COVID pandemic, the SETDAB adapted its training and communication activities for online platforms. All partners continued to promote positive messages about service availability throughout 2021/22. • As referenced in the chapter on domestic abuse, the Commissioner attracted an additional £1m investment in victim services in 2020 which supported local organisations to adapt their offer to continue to provide much needed support during COVID different ways. The funding was allocated to 12 different services, including one dedicated to supporting the Gypsy and Traveller community.
Improve reporting rates of sexual abuse and ensure victims have access to appropriate support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2020/21 saw an increase in services requested from the specialist support service for victims of sexual abuse to 15,824, continuing the trend of annual increase since the original support contract launched in 2016
Use initiatives such as street triage to intervene early to help people with mental health, alcohol, and drug misuse issues, to stay safe and stay out of the Criminal Justice System where appropriate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The integrated health and justice contract continued to provide street triage, liaison and diversion, and custody healthcare services in 2020/21. During the year, 42.2 per cent of substance misuse referrals from the service resulted in successful entry into a service, with a total of 528 people supported (an increase from 480 in the previous year). • In 2020/21, the street triage service operated at about a 70 per cent avoidance rate for A&E and a higher rate of about 81 per cent for S136 avoidance. These figures represented improvements from about 70 and 77 per cent in 2019/20

6. Protecting children and vulnerable people from harm (continued)

2019/20 – 2020/21 Priorities (continued)

Deliver awareness campaigns for children and young people to improve understanding of healthy relationships through schools and public health information

- Since 2020, the Commissioner has funded the Goodman and Sisters in Strength mentoring programmes delivered by the Essex Youth Service. The programmes are aimed at individuals at risk of entering an abusive relationship, or currently experiencing such abuse. The sessions can be delivered in group work or 1:1. The projects educate young people about the value of respect and the characteristics of healthy relationships. The intervention equips young people with the necessary skills to recognise, develop and maintain healthy relationships

Respond to the needs of individuals and local communities who are vulnerable to specific crime types, such as hate crime, elder abuse, harassment, human trafficking, female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage and honour based abuse (HBA)

- The SETDAB supported the launch of the Stay Safe campaign in April 2020 which focused on five key risk areas to keep people safe during the first national lockdown. The domestic abuse content attracted the most views and interactions with 35,998 video views and 104,688 people viewing the post on Facebook. The partnership also:
- Delivered five webinars in place of the SETDAB annual conference.
- Launched two new e-learning packages, focused on Domestic Abuse Basic Awareness and Drug and Alcohol Basic Awareness.
- Moved the SETDAB Newsletter from monthly to bi-weekly to ensure that up to date service information could be cascaded to partners.
- Moved J9 and Alpha Vesta training to online platforms.
- The Commissioner funded Alpha Vesta project trained more than 2,500 employees in 394 businesses and organisations across the country, including 189 SET based businesses.

Improve reporting of hate incidents through improved community engagement, improved reporting through Victim Support and greater use of Hate Crime Reporting Centres

- A review of the partnership strategy in early 2021 reported that the following achievements had been delivered:
- Essex Police received more than 3,600 reports of hate crime from January to December 2020 (a 14.4 per cent increase from the previous 12 months).
- Victim Support received nearly 1,000 referrals for victims affected by hate crime in Essex during the COVID pandemic, including 90 children and young people.
- Hate crime education has been delivered to more than 18,000 students since 2018.
- Essex Police trained more than 800 Hate Crime Ambassadors and 50 more Hate Incident Reporting Centres were established across Essex.
- Essex Police and Victim Support revamped the Stop the Hate leaflet, printing 15,000 copies and translating it into five languages.
- A Crimestoppers online hate crime campaign made 1.2 million impressions.
- An increased rate of hate crime contacts was received via the dedicated Stop Hate UK helpline, with 168 contacts in 2020/21 compared to 141 contacts in 2017 to 2020. 61 per cent of contacts were received outside office hours (9am to 5pm Monday to Friday).
- Essex Police continues to support the training of Hate Crime Ambassadors and the availability of hate incident / crime reporting centres. By the end of the Plan period, more than 800 Hate Crime Ambassadors had been trained by Essex Police to take reports of hate crime and to provide advice and support to those affected, and there were more than 50 Hate Incident Reporting Centres across Essex.

7. Improving safety on our roads

2016/17 – 2019/20 Priorities

Reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads through the work of the multi-agency Safer Essex Roads Partnership on enforcement, engagement, and education

- Through a combination of enforcement, engagement and education, the total number of people killed or seriously injured on Essex roads fell from 850 in 2015/16 to 641 in 2020/21 (a 24 per cent reduction). This was the result of significant work across the Safer Essex Roads Partnership, launched in 2015. However, as the country emerged from most stringent COVID lockdowns, the numbers of people killed and seriously injured on Essex roads returned to pre pandemic levels.
- At the start of each financial year, a programme of road safety activity is agreed by the Safer Essex Roads Partnership Board with the project team responsible for its delivery. The plan will include operational activity focused on a prioritisation of funding provided to those at most risk when using the roads, with road traffic collision analytical data directing that prioritisation. Activity (A) covers direct policing involvement and supports police officers working overtime on dedicated policing operations focusing on road safety and those who use the road network to commit crime or look to bring harm to communities. Such operations are intelligence led using historic and recent collision trends, which inform priority patrol areas and routes. For example, Operation CALYPSO provides intelligence directed patrols on key routes and at key locations that have been identified as hotspots for people being killed and seriously injured. Activity (B) focuses on broader education and engagement activity undertaken by the Safer Essex Roads Partnership, with progress monitored throughout the year by a dedicated Activity (B) delivery team.
- Excess speed is consistently an area of public concern. As a way of addressing this, in December 2017, Essex Police launched the TruCAM project with Maldon District Council. TruCAM is a hand held speed detection device that calculates speed. One of the distinguishing features of this device is that it has specific targeting, which enables officers to distinguish the speed and direction of a single vehicle in multi-lane traffic effectively. TruCAM not only calculates speed, but it also produces video and still images of the offence. The trial scheme gave Maldon District Council Community Protection Officers the powers and equipment to enforce speed limits within their district. This was the first scheme of its kind to operate across the country and attracted national interest. This project has been a great success with 171 deployments and 1,024 prosecutions in its first nine months of operation. 54 enforcement sites across the Maldon district have been selected based upon road traffic collision casualty data or in response to local community consultation. While the direct results have been very positive, the opportunity to engage local communities in the selection of the sites has also created a stronger sense of ownership within the local community, helping to improve public confidence.
- In July 2019, following a successful pilot, the Harwich Community Speed Watch group also went live with TruCAM speed enforcement activity, allowing the group to enforce speed limits across the Tendring District. Later in 2019/20, Brentwood Borough Council's Community Safety Team adopted the use of TruCAM too, operating at approved sites across the borough to enforce speed limits. TruCAM deployments by Community Policing Teams, local authority representatives and authorised community groups increases visibility across the county and provides reassurance to law abiding citizens who report concerns in their local area. The rollout of TruCAM to non roads policing officers, partner agencies and volunteers has also increased the number of prosecutions for speeding.
- In September 2018, the Safe Pass scheme was launched by the Safer Essex Roads Partnership to reduce the risk to vulnerable road users, including cyclists and horse riders. This scheme promotes a safe passing distance of 1.5 meters and has been promoted in Essex through multi-agency partnership days.
- In addition to theoretical and practical training, powered two wheeler riders (including riders of e-scooters) have been targeted through Safer Riding media campaigns, while other campaigns have sought to increase driver awareness of the vulnerability of riders on two wheels.
- More detailed information on this work is available via the Safer Essex Roads Partnership and more detailed information on the Police element of this work is available through the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's Annual Reports.

7. Improving safety on our roads (continued)

2016/17 – 2019/20 Priorities (continued)

Improve take/up of safe driving programmes, working with drivers to prevent harm and help change behaviours, so they understand their responsibilities for safe driving, with a particular focus on use of mobile phones, speeding and drug and drink driving

- Since 1989, Essex Police has, in partnership with the local highway authorities, enforced offences of excess speed and red traffic light offences through the use of mobile and static safety cameras. Alongside the use of TruCAM and other conventional roadside speed detection devices, a total of 10,500 offences are detected and processed each month by the Road Policing Process Team.
- The key safer driving programme across the country is the National Driver Offending Retraining Scheme (NDORS). This scheme has been used significantly in Essex with 61,865 drivers being referred by Essex Police in 2017 and similar numbers being referred in 2018 and 2019. However, the number of referrals reduced significantly in 2020 (to 39,653) due to COVID and in 2021 (to 36,167) due to the introduction of a national online programme which made it possible for people offending in Essex to take courses nationally. This reduced the ability to track drivers caught in Essex completing the course. Significant capacity issues have also caused issues leading to a reduction in referrals. New technology was introduced in 2021 to overcome this, however, there is no evidence that this has had a positive impact yet.
- Operation CALLA focuses on mitigating the risks posed by unauthorised car meets while Operation WAGTAIL, delivered in partnership with Essex County Fire and Rescue Service and wider SERP, focuses on car cruise events and young drivers. Greater Essex remains a hotspot for such activity in both urban and rural locations. Street racing is common practice alongside other anti-social road use, causing nuisance to residents and a high risk of harm to those who take part or remain as a spectator.
- Essex Police's Rural Engagement Team (RET) provides and promotes a high level of speed enforcement activity in rural locations, mainly across the North Local Policing Area (LPA).
- Essex Police also supports road safety operations and campaigns endorsed by the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) focused on enforcing and educating road users around topics including mobile phone use, seatbelts, motorcycle safety and excess speed. .

Encourage people to report poor driving and engage with the police and partners to reduce driver/related crime on the roads

- Significant media campaigns have been run since 2016 with targeted campaigns focused on the most vulnerable groups and separate campaigns for those most likely to offend. This activity is run in partnership and is supported by all SERP partners.
- Essex Police received national recognition at the National Transport Awards, winning the Road Safety Traffic Management and Enforcement Category for its Extra Eyes project. This initiative allows road users to forward footage to the police which they believe highlights dangerous or poor behaviour on the roads, with Essex Police being one of the first forces in the country to utilise the growth in dashcam devices to gather evidence against poor drivers. Within the first few months of the scheme being launched in December 2017, 79 reports had been received by the force, with 39 identifying enough evidence to support a prosecution. Following the initial success of the programme, Essex Police took over the administration of the scheme in 2018 and has improved and developed it. During the 2018 calendar year, 2,718 reports were received containing hundreds of pieces of valuable evidence which have in turn led to hundreds of intelligence reports and convictions. During 2019, positive action was taken in relation to more than 500 incidents, including more than 100 cases of using a mobile phone while driving and 120 cases of passing too close to a cyclist. In 2020, the number of submissions through the site grew to 1,896. This increased to 2,460 in 2021 and again to 2,831 in 2022.

7. Improving safety on our roads (continued)

2016/17 – 2019/20 Priorities (continued)

Maximise the use of police technology such as drug wipes, speed detection devices and automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) to prevent harm, identify and change the behaviours of those who break the law, while also using Dashcam footage from the public in an effective and proportionate way

- There has been a steady increase in the number of drivers arrested for the offence of drug driving since December 2018, such that there are now more monthly arrests for drug driving than drink driving. This steady increase in arrests for drug driving is reflected in data from across the country.
- With the increase in drug driving, Essex Police has continued to train specific front line officers in the use of roadside drug wipes, including all road policing officers and Special Constables, plus Local Policing Area response teams, Community Policing Teams and proactive teams focused on disrupting drug gangs. Essex Police has been recognised by the Department for Transport for this approach.
- Funding has been provided for the provision of vehicle mounted ANPR in Roads Policing vehicles.
- Operation ANIMAL has returned positive results through dedicated operations to respond to ANPR hits on the M11, A13 and A127.

Work with partners to ensure appropriate road traffic regulations are in place, such as speed limits, cameras, and safe road design

- The highways authorities in Essex are key members of the Safer Essex Roads Partnership and are directly in control of speed limits, cameras, and safe road design. Through SERP, all highways' agencies are promoting the Safe System approach to reducing road deaths, which includes lowering speed limits, the effective use of cameras and the 'roads and roadsides' pillar of the Safe System. The largest highways authority in the county, Essex County Council, is currently undertaking a road hierarchy review that will underpin a future speed limit review.
- Throughout the Plan period, Essex Police continued to promote, through local planning authorities, consideration of the inclusion of technology to enforce speed limits within new housing developments and infrastructure projects. The force promotes the wider use of average speed systems within the design and build stage, looking for opportunities to build out the risk of collisions and support Vision Zero

Encourage and develop volunteer action to improve road safety, such as Community Speed Watch

- In Essex, the Roads Policing Team is supported by dedicated Roads Policing Special Constables who provide more than 12,000 operational hours to the team and arrest more than 150 people per year. Each of these Special Constables is fully integrated into the Roads Policing Team and is highly trained, having been provided with additional driving skills including Response, Initial Phase Pursuit and Advanced Driving. Some are also trained to ride police motorcycles.
- By December 2018, the Community Speed Watch scheme had 37 active groups and more than 870 volunteers. By April 2021, this had grown to more than 60 active Community Speed Watch groups. The scheme provides a tough, community based deterrent against poor driving. In 2017, 15,001 warning letters were sent to drivers because of the work of these volunteer groups. In 2018, this number increased to 21,479, then to 24,333 in 2019. Following the outbreak of the COVID pandemic, the numbers fell to 3,550 in 2020, but grew again in 2021 to 13,739 and in the first six months of 2022 had already reached 8,456.

7. Improving safety on our roads (*continued*)

2019/20 – 2020/21 Priorities

Build on the success of reducing those killed or seriously injured on our roads by working with our partners on the Safer Essex Roads Partnership to set an ambitious long term target for significant further reductions

- The Partnership undertook a significant review of activity in 2019 following the success of its previous strategy. This resulted in the Partnership taking the ambitious step to commit to its Vision Zero Strategy in 2020/21. This builds on the success over the previous few years and aims to achieve zero people killed or seriously injured on Essex roads by 2040. This will require a cultural change by communities, stakeholders, and industry, acknowledging that everyone has a responsibility for safe use of the road network.
- You can find out more on Vision Zero at the [Safer Essex Roads Partnership Website](#).

Undertake targeted, preventative operations to make it harder for criminals to use our road network to commit crime

- Roads Policing provides a vital role in targeted and preventative activity to target criminals using the road networks. During 2018/19 alone, the team was involved in nearly 80 operations across the county alongside other teams to target locations where intelligence shows criminality is happening and where the road network is being used for criminal activity, such as organised crime, the movement of drugs, vehicle related crime, burglary, and violence. An example of this approach was an operation in November 2018 focused around the A13/A127 area. This two day operation resulted in seven arrests for drug driving, one arrest for drink driving, one arrest of somebody wanted for fraud, one arrest of somebody wanted for threats to kill, three arrests for possession of a class A drug, 16 vehicles seized for no insurance, 116 seatbelt offences and 64 other traffic offences. These types of operations have a significant impact both on the safety of the roads, and also in tackling crime more generally.
- Following the uplift in officer numbers in 2019/20 (17 officers) and 2020/21 (24 officers), the teams have additional capacity to focus proactively on road safety and the disruption of those who use vehicles with criminal intent. Operation GAMBLER targets roads to the west of Essex that link the county to north and east London. This cross border operation with the Metropolitan Police focuses on high harm road traffic offences and cross border criminality, acting upon those who use the road network at the highest level of risk, often through the identification of multiple occasions of drink / drug driving, identifying disqualified drivers and identifying other road crimes. The first operation resulted in 16 arrests over an eight hour period for offences including dwelling burglary, robbery, drug driving and possession with intent to supply class A drugs. The operation has arrested more than 700 people since it started back in 2019.
- A similar proactive approach has been taken with the approach to commercial vehicles. Through Operation TALON, frequent operations have been coordinated with partners from National Highways, the DVSA, the Metropolitan Police Service, local authority licencing teams and the Environment Agency at MOTO services, Boreham Services and at Junction 7 of the M11 focused on mechanical and drivers' hours offences for heavy and light goods vehicles.
- Operation DUNKER, carried out in collaboration with Uttlesford District Council, Transport for London and the DVSA, provides road checks at Stansted Airport linked to human trafficking, modern slavery, and money laundering

7. Improving safety on our roads (continued)

2019/20 – 2020/21 Priorities (continued)

Train more Community Speed Watch Volunteers to use technology, so they can issue enforcement notices for bad driving

- As set out in the commitment above relating to the growth of Community Speed Watch, the number of volunteers has increased over this period. In December 2018, the Community Speed Watch scheme had 37 active groups and more than 870 volunteers, and by April 2021, this had grown to more than 60 active Community Speed Watch groups. COVID presented a significant challenge to the operation of the scheme, but this has now largely been overcome with more groups being trained.
- The scheme provides a tough, community based deterrent against poor driving and in 2017, 15,001 warning letters were sent to drivers because of the work of these volunteer groups. In 2018, this number increased to 21,479, then to 24,333 in 2019. Following the outbreak of the COVID pandemic, the numbers fell to 3,550 in 2020, but grew again in 2021 to 13,739 and in the first six months of 2022 had already reached 8,456.
- While a pilot undertaken to support Community Speed Watch Volunteers to issue enforcement notices themselves rather than warning letters has not been extended, the results feed into a wider revised Speeding Reduction Strategy being developed by the Safer Essex Roads Partnership which is due to be completed in 2023.

Invest in the rapid expansion of the Extra Eyes programme, so drivers can report poor and dangerous driving

- As set out above, the growth of this programme has continued since it was first established and has accelerated since this further commitment was made by the Commissioner in 2020.
- During Quarter 4 of 2019/20, the Extra Eyes campaign progressed onto a new cloud based system which provides far greater capacity for processing offences, ensuring a secure and safe platform to store image data that can be used by the courts. This also enables the increased use of digital images to enforce, educate and influence road user behaviour in the future.

Increase enforcement activity against drug drivers, provide a focused deterrence for repeat offenders and a clear public messaging campaign to detect and deter people from committing this offence

- Following the growth of drug driving offences as a proportion of the total number of drug and drink driving offences, a coordinated enforcement programme was put in place during 2020. This included a sustained period of enforcement activity and a high profile media campaign.

Improve take up of safe driving programmes, working with drivers to prevent harm and change behaviours, so they understand their responsibilities for safe driving, with a focus on high risk drivers such as young men between the ages of 18 to 24

- The Street Spirit initiative offers young riders the opportunity to win a new motorcycle and safety equipment when they access a host of resources around safety equipment, clothing, skills, and hazards which are all designed to help riders make safer decisions on the road. The aims of the project are to raise awareness of the risks and consequences of riding a scooter or moped on the road; to highlight the benefits of wearing appropriate protective clothing; to encourage a safer, more responsible approach to riding and personal safety, and to encourage further training for those riders who go on to pass their full motorcycle tests.
- Following the identification of a long term upward trend in the number of collisions involving older drivers, especially those aged over 70, along with a greater propensity for collisions involving this group to be serious or fatal, the Safer Essex Roads Partnership identified a number of at risk groups and individuals and introduced a 90 minute practical course for this high risk group of drivers to help to keep them and other road users safe

7. Improving safety on our roads (*continued*)

2019/20 – 2020/21 Priorities (*continued*)

Maximise the use of police technology such as drug wipes, speed detection devices and automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) to prevent harm, identify and change the behaviours of those who break the law

- During 2020/21, Roads Policing continued to respond to and mitigate risks using new speed detection devices, Laser Cam 4, which can be operated during the hours of darkness.

Work with partners to ensure appropriate road traffic regulations are in place, such as speed limits, cameras, and safe road design

- During 2020/21, the Roads Policing Team actively engaged at the design stage on a number of strategic projects, including the A12 upgrade between Junction 19 and Junction 25, Dunton Village, Maldon District Council's Limebrook Way development, the Lower Thames Crossing, the Boreham Railway development, the Chelmsford A131 and Wethersfield HMP proposals. Working with partners within the SERP, the Commissioner will continue to influence local and county planning authorities, developers, and National Highways in this way.

Report title: The 2023/24 Budget – Update of Progress on setting the 2023/24 Budget	
Report to: Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel	
Report author: Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex	
Date: 08 December 2022	For: Noting and comment
Enquiries to: Janet Perry, Chief Financial Officer and Strategic Head of Performance & Resources E-mail: janet.perry@essex.police.uk	
County Divisions affected: All Essex	

1. Purpose of Report

This report provides an update of the progress on setting the 2023/24 budgets for both Essex Police and Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, including the background issues and latest assumptions being used in drafting the 2023/24 budgets.

2. Recommendations

To note the background issues, the latest assumptions, and the progress in setting the 2023/24 budgets for Essex Police and Essex County Fire and Rescue Service.

3. Context

- 3.1. The 2023/24 budgets for Essex Police and Essex County Fire and Rescue Service are being set against the backdrop of a challenging economic environment, with CPI annual inflation already having reached 10.1 per cent in September 2022, and 11.1 per cent by October 2022, interest rates rising and the likelihood of a recession increasing.

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

- 4.1. The Essex Police Baseline Challenge MTFS that was presented to the Police, Fire and Crime Panel in September 2022 showed the following position as laid out in figure 1:

Figure 1 Essex Police MTFS at September 2022

			Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023/24 - 2027/28						
2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	5 Year Total	
£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	
312.8	330.5	357.9	Net Budget Requirement - before appropriations to/from reserves	384.4	386.0	393.3	400.2	405.2	1,969.1
6.7	2.7	(2.0)	Net Appropriations to/(from) Reserves	(3.1)	(2.6)	(2.4)	(1.4)	0.0	(9.5)
319.5	333.2	355.9	Budget Requirement (Inc Appropriations to Reserves) - before Savings & Efficiencies	381.3	383.4	390.9	398.8	405.2	1,959.6
(4.8)	(2.9)	(3.7)	Savings & Efficiencies Plan (Cashable)	(7.8)	(3.0)	(3.0)	(3.0)	(3.0)	(19.8)
314.7	330.3	352.2	Net Budget Requirement - after savings applied	373.5	380.4	387.9	395.8	402.2	1,939.8
(314.7)	(330.3)	(352.2)	Total Funding	(369.4)	(379.5)	(386.3)	(393.4)	(400.8)	(1,929.4)
0.0	0.0	0.0	Annual (Shortfall)/Surplus	(4.1)	(0.9)	(1.6)	(2.4)	(1.4)	(10.4)

4.2. At this time the baseline challenge deficit in 2023/24 was £4.1m, based on the following key assumptions:

- A council tax precept increase, of 4.57% and 2.5% each year from 2024/25.
- A 1.75% increase in the tax base.
- Police officer FTEs at 3,755 from the start of the year.
- A £1,900 pay award for officers and staff in 2022/23 and 2.5% annually thereafter
- A £1.8m surplus on the Collection Fund (this includes a share of the 2021/22 deficit which local authorities have been able to spread over three years).
- £7.8m identified efficiency savings for 2023/24 and £3m planned annually thereafter.
- The Home Office police grants in line with the most recent Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR), with Essex receiving a share of the grant uplift in line with existing funding share allocations.

4.3. These assumptions have been reviewed and updated. The MTFS at November 2022 shows the position as laid out in figure 2, which demonstrates the progress in setting the 2023/24 budget.

Figure 2 Essex Police November 2022 MTFS

			Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023/24 - 2027/28 - Precept Increase 2.5% Annually						
2020/21	2021/22	2022/23*	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	5 Year Total	
£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	
312.8	330.5	364.4	Net Budget Requirement - before appropriations to/from reserves	390.3	391.2	398.4	405.9	412.4	1,998.2
6.7	2.7	(8.5)	Net Appropriations to/(from) Reserves **	(3.6)	(2.0)	(1.6)	(2.4)	(2.8)	(12.4)
319.5	333.2	355.9	Budget Requirement (Inc Appropriations to Reserves) - before Savings & Efficiencies	386.7	389.2	396.8	403.5	409.6	1,985.8
(4.8)	(2.9)	(3.7)	Savings & Efficiencies Plan (Cashable)	(8.9)	(3.0)	(3.0)	(3.0)	(3.0)	(20.9)
314.7	330.3	352.2	Net Budget Requirement - after savings applied	374.8	386.2	393.8	400.5	406.6	1,961.9
(314.7)	(330.3)	(352.2)	Total Funding	(369.6)	(379.7)	(386.6)	(393.7)	(401.1)	(1,930.7)
0.0	0.0	0.0	Annual (Shortfall)/Surplus	(5.2)	(6.5)	(7.2)	(6.8)	(5.5)	(31.2)

- 4.4. The position in figure 2 for 2023/24 shows a deficit of £5.2m, compared to the £4.1m deficit in figure 1 at September 2022. This movement is made up of a number of updates and additional assumptions that have arisen since September 2022.
- 4.5. The main changes and additions to the latest MTFS for the year 2023/24 are detailed below:
- There has been a detailed review of pay as part of budget setting which has reduced the pay budget by £1m.
 - Service demand and budget growth, including the South-East Allowance, which increased by £500 in 2022/23, has increased by £3.9m to £7.4m. This includes revenue costs associated with delivery of the Estates Strategy.
 - Updates to the Capital Programme have reduced the revenue consequences from £2.5m to £2.1m.
 - There has been a tri-annual actuarial review of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) resulting in an overall cost of £1.6m.
 - Revenue cost pressures for contractual and legal matters increased by £2.3m.
 - Allowance for an additional Bank Holiday in 2023/24, increasing costs by £0.3m
 - There are £12.2m identified efficiency savings for 2023/24 (which continues to include removal of £3.3m of recurrent budget for one off expenditure).
- 4.6. The table at figure 3 shows the detail of the MTFS at November 2022, whilst the table at figure 4 shows the impact that the current MTFS has on the General Reserve. In 2023/24 the General Reserve falls below the 3% target, and in the following years it progressively falls until it reaches 0.7%, which is not a viable position. Therefore, in the final iteration of the MTFS and the 2023/24 budget, options will be developed to build the General Reserve back to 3% in future years.

Figure 3 Essex Police detail of the November 2022 MTFS

Actual / Forecast			Medium Term Financial Strategy - 2022/23 to 2026/27						
2020/21 Actual £m	2021/22 Actual £m	2022/23 Forecast £m		2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	5 Year Total £m
312.8	333.8	330.3	Opening Budget Requirement	352.2	374.8	386.2	393.8	400.5	1,907.5
(1.9)	(1.4)	0.9	Prior year activity agreed at Budget Setting	0.5	3.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.2
		2.8	Pay Award	12.3	5.0	5.2	5.2	5.4	33.1
		2.3	Pay Progression	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	12.0
		3.7	Pay - Other	(1.7)	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	(0.5)
		0.0	LGPS Pension Shortfall & Auto Enrolment	1.7	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.0	2.2
		0.9	Contractual Inflation	3.5	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	8.5
		3.4	Contractual & Legal	3.4	0.4	0.5	1.2	0.0	5.5
		0.0	COG Approved Investment	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
		5.9	Committed Change (Includes FYE of PUP)	6.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.8
		2.1	Revenue Impact of Investment	2.1	1.7	2.4	1.0	2.8	10.0
		8.9	New Demand & Budget Growth	7.4	0.9	0.4	0.5	0.0	9.2
		(3.3)	Use of One-off Recurring Budget	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
6.7	2.7	(2.0)	Appropriations to/(from) Reserves	(3.6)	(2.0)	(1.6)	(2.4)	(2.8)	(12.4)
317.6	335.1	355.9	Net Budget Requirement - before savings	387.0	389.2	396.8	403.5	409.6	1,986.1
(2.9)	(4.8)	(3.7)	Savings & Efficiencies Cashable - Recurring	(12.2)	(3.0)	(3.0)	(3.0)	(3.0)	(24.2)
314.7	330.3	352.2	Net Budget Requirement - after savings	374.8	386.2	393.8	400.5	406.6	1,961.9
(314.7)	(330.3)	(330.3)	Opening Funding	(352.2)	(369.6)	(379.7)	(386.6)	(393.7)	(1,881.8)
		(10.9)	Government Funding	(8.5)	(3.5)	0.0	0.0	0.0	(12.0)
		0.0	Council Tax - Base	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
		(2.3)	Council Tax - Taxbase change	(2.7)	(2.7)	(2.8)	(2.9)	(3.0)	(14.1)
		(6.6)	Council Tax - Precept increase	(6.7)	(3.9)	(4.1)	(4.2)	(4.4)	(23.3)
		(2.1)	Collection Fund	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5
(314.7)	(330.3)	(352.2)	Total Funding	(369.6)	(379.7)	(386.6)	(393.7)	(401.1)	(1,930.7)
0.0	0.0	0.0	Adjusted Annual (Shortfall)/Surplus	(5.2)	(6.5)	(7.2)	(6.8)	(5.5)	(31.2)

Figure 4 Essex Police detail of the November 2022 MTFS on the General Reserve

Forecast Reserves (Year End Balances)					
	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
Earmarked Revenue Reserves	10.2	9.8	9.4	9.1	8.8
General Reserve	8.9	6.9	5.3	2.9	2.9
Total - Revenue Reserves	19.1	16.7	14.7	12.0	9.0
General Reserve as % of net revenue expenditure	2.4%	1.8%	1.3%	0.7%	0.7%

4.7. The table at figure 5 shows the assumptions at each stage of developing the MTFS since February 2022 and demonstrates the financial impact in 2023/24.

Figure 5 Police MTFS summary of November 2022 MTFS 2023/24 movements

Impact of Assumptions on 2023/24 Budget							
	Assumptions in the February 2022 MTFS	Brought Forward to February 2022 MTFS	Additional Assumptions in the September 2022 MTFS	Brought Forward to September 2022 MTFS	Additional Assumptions in the November 2022 MTFS	Brought Forward to November 2022 MTFS	Opening to November 2022 MTFS
		£m Surplus/ Favourable (Deficit /Adverse)		£m Surplus/ Favourable (Deficit /Adverse)		£m Surplus/ Favourable (Deficit /Adverse)	£m Surplus/ Favourable (Deficit /Adverse)
	Opening	0.0	Brought Forward	(2.8)	Brought Forward	(4.1)	0.0
Prior Year agreed at budget setting	Initial Prior Year	(0.9)	Reduction in Prior Year	0.4			(0.5)
Police Officers 31 March 2023	3,755 FTEs	(5.7)	3,755 FTEs	(1.1)	3,755 FTEs		(6.8)
Pay Award	2.5% each year (officers & staff)	(4.8)	2022/23 £1,900 increase (officers & staff) 2.5% each year thereafter (officers & staff)	(7.5)	2022/23 £1,900 increase (officers & staff) 2.5% each year thereafter (officers & staff)		(12.3)
Pay progression and other pay	Pay progression at £3.1m per annum	(3.1)	Pay progression at £2.4m per annum and Budget estimate Review	1.4	Pay progression at £2.4m per annum Budget Setting Review of Pay	1.0	(0.7)
New Demand and Budget Growth	Initial Budget Growth	(1.0)	Service Demand and budget growth increased to £3.5m (including SE Allowance increased by £500 in 2022/23 £2.1m)	(0.4)	Service demand and budget growth increased to £7.4m (including SE Allowance increased by £500 in 2022/23 £2.1m and Estates Services restructure	(3.9)	(7.4)
Revenue Impact of Investment	Revenue Consequences of Capital Investment £0.5m	(0.5)	Initial Revenue Consequences of the Capital Programme £2.5m	(2.0)	Updates to Capital Programme reduces revenue consequences from £2.5m to £2.1m	0.4	(2.1)
LGPS Pension Shortfall & Auto Enrolment		(0.6)			LGPS Pension tri-annual actuarial review has increased by £1.1m and is now £1.6m	(1.1)	(1.7)
Contractual and Legal	Initial Contractual and Legal	(0.4)	Contractual and Legal increased to £0.8m	(0.4)	Revenue cost pressures for contractual and legal and Extra Bank holiday is £0.5m 2023/24 increase of £0.3m	(2.3)	(3.4)
Inflation	Contractual inflation on previous year's trend	(0.5)	Contractual inflation on previous year's trend Utilities & fuel updated following global rises Contractual inflation updated based on bids	(3.0)	Contractual inflation on previous year's trend Utilities & fuel updated following global rises Contractual inflation updated based on bids		(3.5)
One off Budget pressures	Funded from recurring budget of £3.3m		Funded from reserves 2023/24 onwards.		Funded from reserves 2023/24 onwards.		
Appropriations (to) / from Reserves		0.8	Increase in appropriations from Reserves for one off expenditure	2.3	Increase in appropriations from Reserves for one off expenditure	0.5	3.6
Savings		3.0	2023/24 £7.8m identified by Efficiency Savings and Growth Board, £3m annually thereafter	4.8	2023/24 £12.2m identified by Efficiency Savings and Growth Board, £3m annually thereafter	4.4	12.2
Home Office Grants	Increase in line with 2021 CSR Share of uplift in line with Essex share of existing allocations Ring fenced element of 2022/23 PUP funding rolled up into main grant	5.3	Increase in line with 2021 CSR Share of uplift in line with Essex share of existing allocations Ring fenced element of 2022/23 PUP funding rolled up into main grant. Additional £3.2m of grant towards cost of police officer pay award and remains in core grant annually thereafter	3.2	Increase in line with 2021 CSR Share of uplift in line with Essex share of existing allocations Ring fenced element of 2022/23 PUP funding rolled up into main grant. Additional £3.2m of grant towards cost of police officer pay award and remains in core grant annually thereafter		8.5
Precept and tax base change	2.5% each year from 2023/24	6.1	4.57% (£9.99) in 2023/24 2.5% each year from 2024/25	3.1	4.57% (£9.99) in 2023/24 2.5% each year from 2024/25	0.2	9.4
Collection Fund	Reduction in Collection Fund Surplus from £2.3m to £1.8m	(0.5)	Reduction in Collection Fund Surplus from £2.3m to £1.8m		Reduction in Collection Fund Surplus from £2.3m to £1.8m		(0.5)
	Total Movement	(2.8)	Page 178 of 193	(1.3)	Total Movement	(1.1)	(5.2)
	Carry Forward	(2.8)	Carry Forward	(4.1)	Carry Forward	(5.2)	(5.2)

- 4.8. Sensitivities relating to the assumptions have also been considered. The possible impact of changes to inflation and pay award assumptions are reflected in figure 6 below:

Figure 6 Essex Police inflation and pay award assumptions sensitivities

Inflation and Pay Award Assumption Sensitivities	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m
Inflation		
The impact of fuel costs increasing by a further 10%	(0.2)	(0.2)
The impact of Gas and Electricity cost increasing by a further 10%	(0.3)	(0.3)
Pay Award		
The Impact of the Officer and Staff Pay Award being 5% in September 2023 with no further funding	(4.1)	(6.3)

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

- 5.1. The ECFRS Baseline Challenge MTFS that was presented to the Police, Fire and Crime Panel in September 2022 showed the following position as laid out in figure 7:

Figure 7 Essex County Fire and Rescue Service MTFS at September 2022

Actuals			Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022/23-2025/26				
2019/20 £m	2020/21 £m	2021/22** £m	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	Total £m
		80.6	85.3	88.1	90.3	92.6	356.3
		(0.6)	(2.2)	(2.4)	(2.4)	(2.4)	(9.4)
		(0.6)	(2.2)	(2.4)	(2.4)	(2.4)	(9.4)
78.0	80.9	80.0	83.1	85.7	87.9	90.2	346.9
0.0	0.1	1.7	1.9	0.4	0.0	0.0	2.3
(77.9)	(81.7)	(80.5)	(82.2)	(83.6)	(85.3)	(87.0)	(338.1)
0.1	(0.7)	1.2	2.8	2.5	2.6	3.2	11.1
0.0	(0.1)	(1.7)	(1.9)	(0.4)	0.0	0.0	(2.3)
(0.1)	0.8	0.5	(0.9)	(2.1)	(2.6)	(3.2)	(8.8)

- 5.2. At this time the baseline challenge deficit in 2023/24 was £2.1m, based on the following key assumptions:
- A Council Tax precept increase of 2% in 2023/24 and annually thereafter.
 - A 1.1% increase in the tax base annually.
 - Green Book (support staff) pay pressure of £0.5m (above 2%) in 2022/23 and Grey Book (firefighters) pay award still at 2% in 2022/23, and 2% annually thereafter.
 - £2.4m identified efficiency savings for 2023/24 and £2.4m annually thereafter.
 - Utilities and fuel pressure of £0.4m in 2022/23.
 - 2% non-pay inflation in 2023/24 and a further 40% increase in utilities and fuel costs for 2023/24.

- 5.3. These assumptions have been reviewed and updated. The MTFS at November 2022 shows the position as laid out in figure 8, which demonstrates the progress in setting the 2023/24 budget. The movements in the deficit for each year are shown in figure 9.

Figure 8 Essex County Fire and Rescue Service MTFS at November 2022

Actuals			Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022/23-2025/26					
2019/20 £m	2020/21 £m	2021/22** £m		2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	Total £m
		80.6	Budget before Savings & Efficiencies	87.9	88.8	90.6	92.4	359.7
	(0.6)		Identified Savings & Efficiencies	(2.0)	(2.6)	(2.4)	(2.4)	(9.4)
			Unidentified Savings & Efficiencies					0.0
			Total Savings & Efficiencies Planned	(2.0)	(2.6)	(2.4)	(2.4)	(9.4)
78.0	80.9	80.0	Core Budget after Savings & Efficiencies	85.6	86.2	88.2	90.0	350.0
0.0	0.1	1.7	Specific Costs funded by Earmarked Reserves	1.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.9
(77.9)	(81.7)	(80.5)	Core Funding	(82.9)	(82.1)	(83.8)	(85.5)	(334.3)
0.1	(0.7)	1.2	Total Annual Shortfall/(Surplus)	4.6	4.1	4.4	4.5	17.6
0.0	(0.1)	(1.7)	Annual (Shortfall)/Surplus - Funded From Earmarked Reserves	(1.9)	0.0	0.0	0.0	(1.9)
0.1	0.8	0.5	Annual (Shortfall)/Surplus - Funded From General Fund	(2.7)	(4.1)	(4.4)	(4.5)	(15.7)

Figure 9 Essex County Fire and Rescue Services movement in each year's deficit between September 2022 and November 2022

MTFS Key Movements Since September 2022					
	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	Total £m
General Fund (shortfall) in September 22 MTFS	(0.9)	(2.1)	(2.6)	(3.2)	(8.8)
Favourable / (Adverse) movement in General Fund Balance	(1.8)	(2.0)	(1.8)	(1.3)	(6.9)
General Fund (shortfall) per Latest MTFS Projection	(2.7)	(4.1)	(4.4)	(4.5)	(15.7)

- 5.4. The position in figure 8 for 2023/24 shows a deficit of £4.1m, compared to the £2.1m deficit in figure 7, at September 2022. This movement is made up of a number of updates and additional assumptions that have arisen since September 2022.
- 5.5. The main changes and additions to the latest MTFS for the year 2023/24 are detailed below:
- A £1.2m Grey Book pay pressure (above 2%) in 2022/23, based on the latest pay offer of 5%. This Grey Book Offer has now been rejected and there is now a ballot for industrial action.
 - £0.4m for the transitional costs of the day crew conversion.
 - £0.3m for On Call Liaison Officers.
 - £0.2m for Breathing Apparatus Instructors.

6. Next steps

- 6.1. The budget for 2023/24 and the MTFS for both Essex Police and Essex County Fire and Rescue Service will be presented to the respective December Strategic Boards. The work on the MTFS and budgets is progressing and will be updated following the Financial Settlement announcement expected mid-December, and following the budget letter on 13 January 2023, from the Chief Constable, in respect of Essex Police. The PFCC will also continue to work with the Panel Budget Setting Working Group. We have already had two very helpful meetings and a further one is planned in January.
- 6.2. The 2023/24 budget, the MTFS and the proposed 2023/24 precept for Essex Police and Essex County Fire and Rescue Service will then be presented to the Panel in February.

Report title: Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) Decisions	
Report to: Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel	
Report author: Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner	
Date: 22 November 2022	For: Noting
Enquiries to: Pippa Brent-Isherwood (Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer) (01245) 291613 pippa.brent-isherwood@essex.police.uk	
County Divisions affected: All Essex	

1. Purpose of Report

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

2. Recommendations

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

3. Context / Summary

- 3.1 This report contains information about decisions made since 16 September 2022 up to and including 25 November 2022.

4. Appendices

Appendix A: PFCP Meeting 8 December 2022: PFCC Decisions Detailed
Appendix B: PFCP Meeting 8 December 2022: PFCCFRA Decisions Detailed

Ref	Decision On	Value	Outline	Date approved
041	Budget Setting Timetable	N/A	Provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 require the force to set a balanced budget by no later than 11th March for the following year. The draft timetable for 2023/24 revenue and capital budget setting includes key stages for the proposed governance route within the Chief Constable's Office, and engagement with the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and subsequently the Police, Fire and Crime Panel's Budget Working Group and concludes with the PFCC's proposed precept being presented to the Police, Fire and Crime Panel in February 2023.	27/09/22
064	Internal Audit Services	£393,004 over 4 years	The purpose of this report is to seek the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's approval to enter into a contract with RSM UK Risk Assurance Services LLP for internal audit services.	26/10/22
068	Language Services	£900,00 over 3 years	This report requests that authorisation be given for the contract award for language services, which was discussed at the PFCC's Strategic Board in September.	28/09/22
081	Draft Unaudited Statement of Accounts	Appropriation of £1.72m to the General Reserve	To endorse the Draft Unaudited Statement of Accounts 2021/22 for the Chief Constable and the PFCC / Group, noting the outstanding information and the proposed way forward in respect of signing off these accounts in accordance with agreed deadlines. The report also seeks approval of the appropriation of the net underspend of £1.720m to the General Reserve.	25/11/2022
094	Capital Investment (Contract Award) – Modular Buildings and Boreham Complex	£654,580	This report recommends that the PFCC approve the award of a contract to Actacom Limited for the design and build of two modular buildings at a total cost of £654,580.	16/11/22
098	Essex Victim Referral and Support Service Retender 2023	£3,450,000 over the 6-year period	This report proposes the re-tender for six years of the Essex victim referral and support service contract currently delivered by Victim Support. The current contract is scheduled to expire at the end of March 2023.	07/10/22
104	Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Model 2022-24	£80,000 p.a. for 2 years	This report outlines a proposal for the PFCC's approach to funding domestic abuse perpetrator work for 2022-24, including an allocation of funding to The Change Project to continue with the Change Hub project for a further two years (2022-24).	25/11/22

Ref	Decision On	Value	Outline	Date approved
105	Alpha Vesta domestic abuse awareness training 2022-24	£60,000 over the 2-year period	This report proposes the allocation of a total of £60,000 funding (£30,000 in 2022-23 and £30,000 in 2023-24 from the PFCC's Victims Funds to Alpha Vesta to deliver domestic abuse awareness raising courses to businesses across Essex for the purpose of identifying victims, providing them with help and support, and signposting them to specialist agencies where appropriate.	07/10/22
117	Operational Transformation Reserve	£340K – OTR to Transformation Reserve £225K against the Estates line in that reserve & £85k to the IT line to continue supporting ecda	The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the current status and commitment of the Operational Transformation Reserve (OTR) and to seek the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's (PFCC's) approval to move the outstanding balance to the Transformation Reserve against the Estates and IT lines, to assist with the funding of consultancy support for the HQ project and ongoing finance to the Essex Centre for Data Analytics (ecda).	22/09/22
131	Essex Police College Headquarters L Block Demolition / Replacement of Modular Buildings (Contract Award)	£668,471	Seeks PFCC approval to award a contract to Wernick Group Ltd for a full turnkey solution for the demolition of the existing teaching block and the supply and erection of a new modular teaching block at the Essex Police College.	26/10/22
134	Ninefields Youth Club	£5,500	This report proposes the allocation of £5,500 from the PFCC's Community Safety Fund to Ninefields Residents Association to deliver a weekly youth club on the estate.	07/10/22
135	Maldon Police Office – Additional Accommodation	£14,250 per annum from estates budgets and £38,000 from the Police Uplift Programme	This report requests that the Commissioner enters a new lease for additional accommodation comprising locker and changing facilities to allow for expansion at Maldon Police Office, provided under existing leasehold arrangements with Maldon District Council.	10/10/22
137	Treasury Consultancy 2022/23	£13,665 p.a.	Renewal of the Arlingclose contract for 2022/23, to ensure treasury advisory services are in place until such a time that the new contract has	29/09/22

Ref	Decision On	Value	Outline	Date approved
			been awarded, either via 7F Procurement route or agreed local arrangements	
138	Legal Services Contract Extension	Demand led service with budget provision of £20k	The purpose of this report is to seek approval to extend the PFCC's contract for legal services for a further year from 20th April 2022 to 19th April 2023. This is the final extension permitted within the contract	10/10/22
139	Home Office Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Grant 2022-23	£291,272	This report proposes the acceptance of £291,272 funding from Home Office and its allocation to agencies in Essex for the purpose of preventing domestic abuse (DA) or delivering behaviour change projects for perpetrators of abuse.	07/10/22
140	Domestic Abuse business awareness pilot	£39,962.50	This report proposes the allocation of £39,962.50 funding from the PFCC's Victims Fund to the Essex Chambers of Commerce, working in conjunction with Practical HR, to undertake a pilot project delivering awareness raising of domestic abuse to Essex businesses.	18/10/22
141	Capital Business Case for Essex Covert Camera Platform Vehicles (restricted)	£*	The recommendation is that the PFCC approves the Stage 2 capital business case relating to the purchase of covert camera platform vehicles.	10/10/22
142	Police Property Act funding 2022-23	£7,000	Seeks PFCC endorsement of the allocation of £7,000 from the Police Property Act Fund, administered by the Essex Community Foundation, to the Chabad Lubavitch Centre, and Restitute CIC.	11/10/22
144	Sale of police estate - Deed of Modification	N/a	This decision report seeks approval of a Deed of Modification to vary the original Deed of Release of Restrictive Covenant on a former police house.	30/09/22
150	Essex Association of Local Councils Support	£10,000	<p>This report recommends that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The PFCC agrees to pay the Essex Association of Local Councils £10,000 from the Community Safety Fund for the provision of a series of engagement events and regular ongoing communications support in 2022/23. That the PFCC agrees to contribute 1/3 of the costs (estimated at £4,000 and no more than £5,000) from the Community Safety 	10/10/22

Ref	Decision On	Value	Outline	Date approved
			Fund to the EALC towards a shared conference in September 2023 for parish and town councils.	
151	Safer Streets Round 4 Outcome and Allocation	£1,182,795	To accept the associated Home Office funding and allocate that funding to local areas for the delivery of Safer Streets projects in four areas across Essex.	26/10/22
152	Re-appointment of Chief Constable Harrington	£183,603 p.a. w.e.f. 04.10.22	To re-appoint Ben-Julian (“BJ”) Harrington as the Chief Constable of Essex for a further three years (from 4 October 2023 to 3 October 2026) on expiry of his current contract.	05/10/22
154	Contract Extension – Commercial and Domestic Heating Planned Maintenance Agreement	£719,562.22 over 2 years	The existing provisions for commercial and domestic heating maintenance expired on 30/09/2022. The contract allows for 3 x one-year extension options. This report outlines the recommended extension proposal, a two-year agreement to ensure continuity of service and compliance against Essex Police’s statutory obligations. This proposal also ensures a minimised cost increase by leveraging a longer-term commitment.	25/11/22
155	Precept Survey 2023/24	£4,650	To agree the budget for the creation, promotion, and analysis of the Commissioner’s 2023/24 precept survey for policing and fire and rescue services in Essex	18/10/22
156	Laptop Purchase – Award of Contract of Sale	£968,400	The purpose of this report is to secure the PFCC’s approval to award a contract of sale for 1,007 laptops to the value of £968.4k. £792.3K of this has already been allocated via DR 066-22. The residual £176.1k is to be funded via the Police Uplift Programme.	19/10/22

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

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

Please note: This report contains PFCC decisions made after 16 September 2022, up to and including 25 November 2022 (ahead of submission for the PFCP meeting of 8 December 2022).

Ref	Decision On	Value	Outline	Date approved
023	Annual Plan Closure 2021-22	n/a	To continue the Annual Plan process, there is a requirement to close the Annual Plan 2021/22 now that the Annual Plan 2022/23 has been approved. The PFCC is therefore asked to approve the appended closure report in order that the Annual Plan 2021/22 can be formally closed.	26/10/22
029	Annual Approval of the Strategic Assessment of Risk (SAoR)	n/a	To seek approval of the new Strategic Assessment of Risk (SAoR) and consequent review of the service's Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP).	01/11/22
032	ECFRS Training Centre – Stage 1 Report	£550,000	The purpose of the report is to provide the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) with Stage One of the Royal Institute of British Architects' (RIBA's) outputs into the feasibility of transferring ECFRS training facilities based at Wethersfield to the Headquarters site, Kelvedon Park. Furthermore, it provides context to other facility moves based at other ECFRS sites that are under our Estates Strategy delivery model.	01/11/22
041	Annual Report and Statement of Assurance	n/a	To gain the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's (PFCC) approval of the publication of the Annual Report and Statement of Assurance 2021-2022.	19/10/22
047	Corporate Communication, Marketing and Brand Strategy	n/a	This report seeks the PFCC's approval for publication the final version of the Corporate Communications, Marketing and Brand Strategy	01/11/22
050	Sale of Surplus Property	£*	Relates to the sale of PFCCFRA estate	18/10/22

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

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

Please note: This report contains PFCC decisions made after 16 September, up to and including 22 November (ahead of submission for the PFCP meeting of 8 December 2022).

Report title: Essex PFCP Budget Half Year Outturn Report 2022/23	
Report to: Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel	
Report author: Sophie Campion, Secretary to the Panel	
Date: 8 December 2022	For: Noting
Enquiries to: Emma Tombs, Democratic Services Manager emma.tombs@essex.gov.uk / 03330 322709	
County Divisions affected: All Essex	

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report updates the Panel on the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel's outturn position for the period 1 April 2022 to 30 September 2022 as filed with the Home Office prior to the deadline of 31 October 2022. As Essex County Council is the lead authority for the Panel the return is required to be signed off by ECC's finance team once checked for accuracy. This is with respect to a grant claim to the Home Office who will only pay for reimbursement of actual expenditure incurred in year.

1.2

Expenditure Category:	Actual Resource Expenditure (£)
Administration Costs	
- Staff Salary re-charges	20,959.19
- Eastern Region PCP network (annual subscription)	420.00
- Training costs	270.00
- Meeting room usage	645.00
- Conference fees	1,400.00
Member Expenses	
- Allowances	5,956.91
- Travel Costs	20.70
TOTAL EXPENDITURE:	29,671.80

2. Recommendations

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

Report title: Dates of Future Meetings	
Report to: Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel	
Report author: Sophie Campion, Senior Democratic Services Officer	
Date: 8 December 2022	For: Noting
Enquiries to: Sophie Campion, Senior Democratic Services Officer sophie.campion2@essex.gov.uk	
County Divisions affected: All Essex	

1. Purpose of the Item

To inform Members of the remaining meeting dates for 2022-23 and set out the proposed meeting dates for 2023-24.

2. Meeting Dates

Tuesday 7 February 2023 at 10:00am
Monday 20 February 2023 (Reserve date if required)
Tuesday 21 March 2023
Thursday 15 June 2023 (Annual meeting)
Thursday 20 July 2023
Thursday 28 September 2023
Thursday 7 December 2023
Thursday 1 February 2024 (Precept meeting)
Thursday 15 February 2024 (Reserve date if required)

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

3. Recommendation

To note the future meeting dates

Report title: Forward Work Plan	
Report to: Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel	
Report author: Sophie Campion, Senior Democratic Services Officer	
Date: 8 December 2022	For: Consideration
Enquiries to: Sophie Campion, Senior Democratic Services Officer sophie.campion2@essex.gov.uk	
County Divisions affected: All Essex	

1. Purpose of report and background

1.1 To plan the business of the Panel.

1.2 The next Meeting of the Panel is scheduled for **Tuesday 7 February 2023**.

1.3 Business proposed to be taken to the meetings is as follows:

Provisional Date	Topic Title	Lead Contact	Purpose and Target Outcomes
7 February 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed Fire Precept Proposed Police Precept 	OPFCC OPFCC	Statutory Duty to review the proposed precepts
20 February 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reserve date for Precept process if required 		
March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Police and Crime Plan Performance Measures – Quarter 2 Fire and Rescue Plan Quarterly Performance Update 	OPFCC OPFCC	<p>Statutory Duty to review the Police and Crime Plan and monitor performance</p> <p>Statutory Duty to review the Fire and Rescue Plan and monitor performance</p>

TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review of the issues relating to E-Scooters 	TBC	As agreed at the Panel's meeting on 22 March 2022
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2. Recommendation

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