



People for Proper Policing in North Wales

The Essex Police Financial Model

Operation Apex has been championed by the Police Federation and many more as an example of good management practice. The approach has caused **some controversy among ACPO members** but it may well be a route that other senior officers will have to consider.

<http://www.essex.police.uk/cms/global/meetings/EPA13308.pdf>

Police Oracle looks at Operation Apex in detail...

Essex Chief Constable, Roger Baker launched Operation Apex in September 2008 after an agreement with the Police Authority to allow the force to find funding for **an additional 600 police officers**.

The force has raised £10,600,000 to date which has funded an additional 212 frontline police officers.

CC Baker is adamant that Essex Police will meet their overall target and secure recurrent funding of £27 million to increase police numbers to 4,000 by September 2013, because it is what the public want.

He believes in doing "face to face" business. ***"The policing style in Essex puts the customer at the forefront of everything we do. The public are our biggest partner and we are committed to doing our business differently in order to provide them with a first class service and to make them feel as safe as possible."***

The Chief would also like to see more police managers following in the footsteps of Essex Police to recruit **fully warranted officers**. ***"It is my view that we have removed far too many sworn officers from the frontline. I don't mean to be critical of anybody else, I just want to share Essex ideas and show what is really working for us. We cannot forget that the British Police Service is the best in the world, we are brilliant at what we do, but the future is in our hands. We could have an extra fifteen or twenty thousand police officers on our streets by 2011 if we all applied the Apex model."***

Baker insists more chief officers and staff associations need to take greater responsibility to improve the future of policing. ***"We have significantly lowered public expectation of what we do. We have to raise the game and say we can deal with crime, we are best placed to deal with these issues and we are trained to deal with them. I think we have over-complicated our mission. We protect life and property. We are not teachers, probation workers or social workers. We are the police."***

Director of Finance at Essex, Rick Tazzini, says it is not as difficult to make savings as everybody thinks and improvements can be made without burdening tax-payers.

"Careful forensic analysis is the best way to make savings. Previously three quarters of our fuel was purchased at branded fuel stations so we asked officers to fill our cars at supermarkets wherever possible. Last year we saved almost £50,000 in fuel costs alone and funded an extra police officer; every little helps."

Tazzini says stationery cuts can also make significant differences. ***"During 2008, in Essex alone we used 43 million sheets of paper equating to a pile which is two miles high. This is absurd!"***

Another extraordinary finding was the amount spent on pens by the force last year. *“We found that staff had ordered a whopping 73,000 pens during 2008. There were 146 different types of pens ranging in price from 8p to £5.”*

“That worked out at 12 pens for every member of staff. We put an end to that and banned people from ordering gel pens, instead staff are only allowed to order pens which cost 8p,” adds Tazzini.

*“We have cut down on printer costs by buying fewer laser printers which saved £80,000 and has funded another two officers. We have also recently introduced a very strict policy on where and when we offer hospitality. Coffees and biscuits must only be offered to external guests. **Over-generous hospitality was costing us £120,000 per year.**”*

Essex Police Federation has applauded the achievements of the force. A spokesperson said, *“More officers on the street means less overtime is required. It means officers can enjoy a better work-life balance and are not having to work crippling hours.”*

Tazzini also told Police Oracle that there is much to be achieved through collaboration. *“We have accomplished great savings through collaborating with forces such as Kent on our IT systems and we have secured great deals from manufacturers as a result of collaboration. In one year we saved an incredible £400,000 which allowed us to employ 10 extra officers at absolutely no additional cost to the tax payer.”*

He adds, *“We have had a lot of interest in our achievements. Lots of chief officers from other forces have come to visit us to see how our approach is working. We didn’t come up with the initiative on our own; we simply did a lot of research and gathered best practice from all over the country.”*

CC Baker says more chief officers could follow in Essex’s footsteps sooner than everyone thinks. *“ACPO are listening. We are sharing our ideas and methods with them and other forces. We need to drive this agenda because it’s what the public want.”*

Baker is due to retire next month but the force is adamant it will continue with Operation Apex until all the goals are met.

“We are not concerned that Operation Apex will cease once CC Baker retires in July because we have strong support from our Police Authority. The Chairman, Robert Chambers has said he expects Mr. Baker’s successor to continue our goal. It is a three to five year plan and we are determined to see it through,” adds Tazzini.

Roger Baker’s views on other policing hot topics

PDRs are a waste of time...

CC Baker believes that too much time and focus is wasted on PDRs and other forms of bureaucracy. *“We are wasting time. We do not need arch-lever-files to say we managed to dress ourselves this morning. This is no way to do business. We have become introspective; **we need to be out on the streets instead of sitting in offices clearing emails.**”*

Lock up criminals...

“Some senior police leaders have decriminalised serious crimes and we have seen the erosion on our streets. Giving a Fixed Penalty Notice to somebody who assaults a police officer has got to be outrageous!”

Policy review...

Baker also called for a shift in current policy. *“We need to return notices back to where they belong; with the custody sergeant. We also need to **stop spending so much money on back office functions** because many of our business processes do not help the public or help reduce the fear of crime.”*

The PPP comments...we really like the sound of this program.

For the force to actively search for and achieve savings to directly increase front line officers is exactly what we need. We have highlighted the key points.

Regarding e.mails, we had the full list of a Denbighshire district Inspectors e.mail contacts, most had NOTHING to do with frontline policing!

Regarding Brunstrom’s favourites, penalty notices, CC Baker’s comments apply to assaults on any member of the public.

We don’t know about hospitality costs but all the fringe hobbies of the ACPO members of NWPF must have cost £millions over the years and likewise for their vendettas often resulting in IPCC investigations costing and wasting huge sums.

Again we haven’t counted the pens or paper but the silk shirts and huge numbers of boots need scrutiny.

We draw this program to the attention of OUR Police WATCHDOGS as they entitle themselves, maybe there are lessons to be learnt here.