

**ORIGINATOR: CHIEF CONSTABLE**

**PAPER NO: AP22/04**

**SUBMITTED TO:            ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL –  
14 JANUARY 2022**

**SUBJECT:                    VICTIM SATISFACTION AND CONFIDENCE**

**SUMMARY:**

1. This report illustrates Constabulary activity and performance in respect of public confidence in policing and the satisfaction of victims.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. The Accountability and Performance Panel is asked to note the contents of this report.

## DETAIL OF THE SUBMISSION

### 1. KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

- 1.1. Public Confidence in policing and the satisfaction of victims of crime in relation to the service they receive from police is of huge importance.
- 1.2. Measures of public confidence and victim satisfaction are prominent within most police force performance frameworks and as they are a key indicator of how well a force is delivering its core functionality are prioritised within the Suffolk Police and Crime Plan 2017-2020. While the two are often discussed together it is important to emphasise the distinction between confidence and satisfaction.
- 1.3. Public confidence relates to the views of the general public regardless of whether they have had contact with the police. Like most forces, Suffolk Constabulary has used the Office of National Statistics Crime Survey of England and Wales (CSEW) to track the confidence of the Suffolk public. The CSEW is an independent national survey which provides results from a statistically reliable sample<sup>1</sup> using a consistent method of asking questions ordinarily from face to face interviews. It is not only used to track confidence within the county but can be used to compare to other police Constabulary areas and the country as a whole. Prior to May 2020, survey results were published every quarter with each measure referring to results from at least 600 interviews taken from the county within the previous 12 months. As a result of restrictions imposed due to Covid-19 the CSEW surveys have been conducted by telephone between May 2020 and October 2021. Due to reduced operating periods this produced a lower sample size during this period than would ordinarily be captured. There was no CSEW confidence data published since the period ending March 2020 due to the impact on the comparability of the reduced sample size with the historical data.
- 1.4. A phased reintroduction of the face-to-face CSEW began in October 2021. This will enable a return to full topic coverage with the aim to complete 15,000 - 17,000 adult CSEW interviews by the end of March 2022. The success of in-home face-to-face research over the coming months is an unknown. The return of the CSEW is, therefore, being carried out on an experimental basis with the situation under constant review. Telephone-based interviewing will continue to operate throughout the winter months to ensure the continuity of survey estimates during the 2021/22 survey year. It is anticipated that publication of the first estimates from the face-to-face CSEW will take place once a full six months of data is achieved. However, this is subject to the success of the experimental return to in-home interviewing.
- 1.5. Victim satisfaction relates to the views and experiences of victims of certain types of crime reported to Suffolk Constabulary. Prior to March 2017, the Home Office required each police Constabulary to submit statutory returns on satisfaction in relation to burglary dwelling, violent crime (excluding domestic violence), vehicle crime and hate crime. This requirement was discontinued in April 2017 and replaced with a new requirement relating only to domestic abuse although the Home Office set out clear non-prescriptive expectations that each Constabulary would continue to seek feedback from victims of other forms of crime. In Suffolk, a third-party research company is used to conduct telephone interviews (in line with the Police and Crime Plan priorities) with victims of:

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<sup>1</sup> The sample is representative of the general population of the county and we can have strong confidence the results are accurate within a small margin of error.

- Hate Crime
- Rural Crime
- Online Crime
- Business Crime

- 1.6. It is made clear to all survey participants that the questions are being asked in respect of a specific recent service received from Suffolk Constabulary (thereafter referred to as 'the police' for simplicity).
- 1.7. Survey results have been available each month and are usually reported as rolling satisfaction rates over the prior 12 months to ensure sufficiently small margins of error.
- 1.8. Surveys of a similar nature are also undertaken with victims of Domestic Abuse (as part of the Home Office mandated ADR 444), however these are undertaken by the in-house Domestic Abuse Victim Satisfaction Survey Co-ordinator due to the sensitivities of the crime and with victim safeguarding as the primary consideration.
- 1.9. Within the Police and Crime Plan 2017-2020, the Police and Crime Commissioner prioritised the measurement of the following areas:

#### Confidence Measures:

- % of respondents who agree police are doing a good job
- % of respondents who agree police deal with community priorities
- % of respondents who agree police would treat them fairly
- % of respondents who have confidence in the police overall

#### Satisfaction Measures:

(Domestic Abuse, Hate Crime, Online Crime, Rural Crime and Business Crime)<sup>2</sup>

- % of victims satisfied with overall service
  - % of victims satisfied with accessibility
  - % of victims satisfied with actions taken
  - % of victims satisfied with treatment
  - % of victims satisfied with how well they were kept informed
- 1.10. This paper outlines the current position in respect of each of these indicators, as well as detailing several of the key programmes of activity the Constabulary is operating to sustain and improve performance in these areas.

#### Public Confidence

- 1.11. As a result of the changes to CSEW surveying during the Covid-19 pandemic, data is only available up to March 2020, which has been reported alongside associated commentary, in

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<sup>2</sup> Plans to conduct similar surveys for victims of Serious Sexual Offences have been paused whilst the Constabulary considers the processes and output of the Domestic Abuse surveys.

previous APP reports and so has not been included on this occasion. Public confidence is often linked to the quality of service delivered during interactions with the public.

## Victim Satisfaction

1.12. Since April 2017 forces have been able to choose the victim groups they survey based on what they felt were most appropriate, with the stipulation that all forces would survey victims of Domestic Abuse. Since then, Suffolk Constabulary have surveyed the following victim groups:

- Hate Crime
- Rural Crime
- Online Crime
- Business Crime
- Domestic Abuse (Home Office mandated)

1.13. Results for surveys conducted with victims of hate crime, rural, crime, online crime and business crime have been available since June 2017. For domestic abuse victim surveying, a process was developed to ensure the necessary scrutiny around safeguarding considerations are applied prior to contacting victims, meaning results became available in November 2018.

## Hate Crime, Online Crime, Rural Crime and Business Crime

1.14. For hate crime, online crime, rural crime and business crime the Constabulary awarded a contract to the research company SMSR in June 2017, which was renewed in 2020 for another operating term. SMSR previously conducted victim satisfaction surveys for Suffolk over several years and began reporting findings for the new topics in August 2018. Data for the twelve-month rolling period to October 2021 is displayed in Table 1 below, alongside comparable data from the previous report which covers the period up to April 2021 (table 2).

Table 1: Victim satisfaction up to April 2021

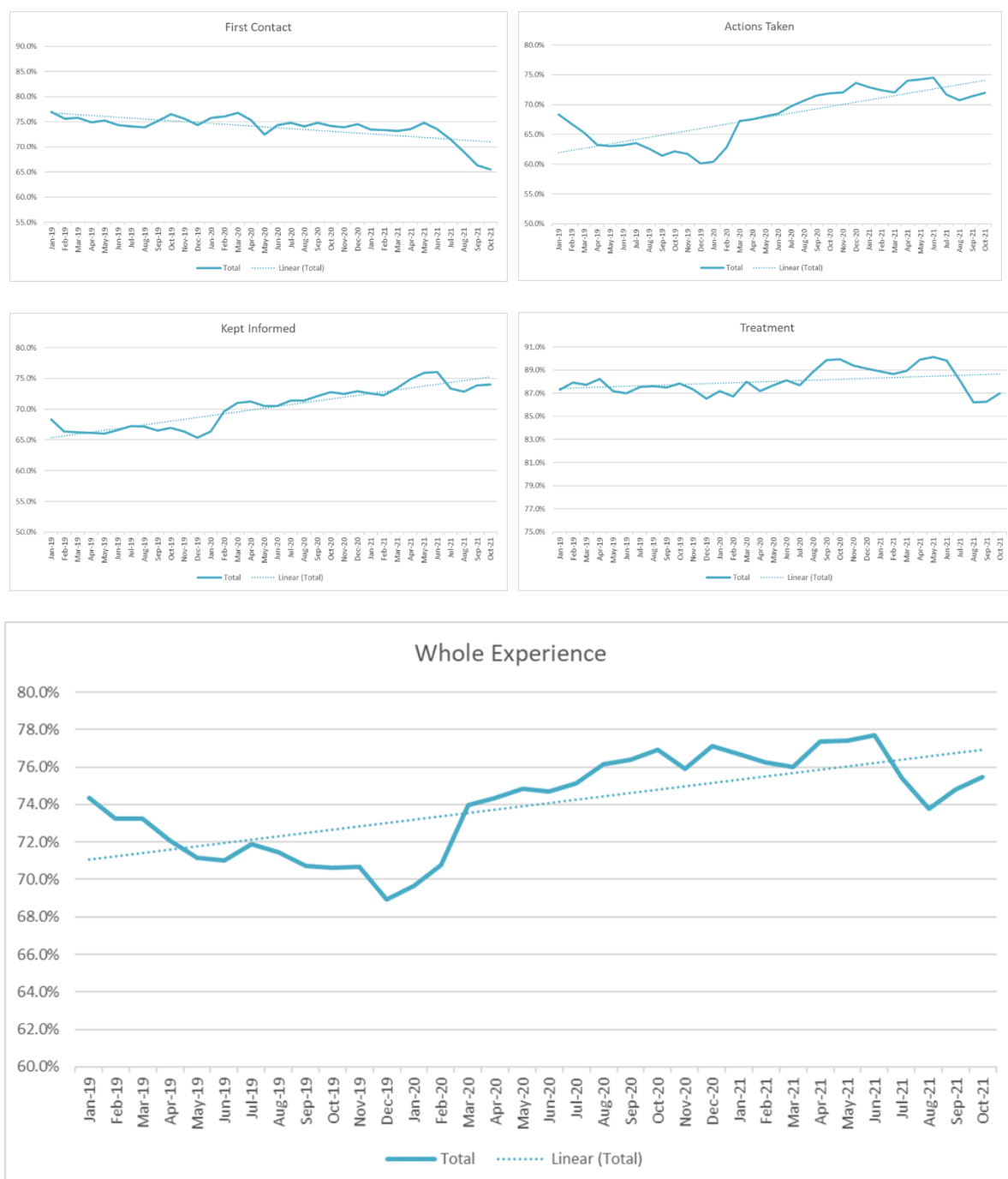
Suffolk		% satisfied		
		12 months ending Apr-21	Apr-20	Diff. PP
Business Crime	First contact	80.9%	87.8%	-7.0%
	Action taken	79.5%	62.5%	17.0%
	Kept informed	80.3%	63.5%	16.8%
	Treatment	90.6%	87.5%	3.1%
	Whole experience	82.7%	68.8%	13.9%
Number of respondents		127	96	
Hate Crime	First contact	63.3%	75.0%	-11.7%
	Action taken	67.2%	64.8%	2.4%
	Kept informed	71.2%	69.5%	1.7%
	Treatment	84.0%	87.6%	-3.6%
	Whole experience	68.8%	72.4%	-3.6%
Number of respondents		125	105	
Online Crime	First contact	73.5%	72.4%	1.2%
	Action taken	76.6%	81.4%	-4.8%
	Kept informed	77.1%	82.6%	-5.5%
	Treatment	92.2%	88.4%	3.8%
	Whole experience	78.6%	83.7%	-5.1%
Number of respondents		192	86	
Rural Crime	First contact	76.6%	63.8%	12.8%
	Action taken	71.5%	60.9%	10.6%
	Kept informed	70.0%	70.3%	-0.3%
	Treatment	91.5%	84.4%	7.2%
	Whole experience	78.5%	73.4%	5.0%
Number of respondents		130	64	
Total	First contact	73.6%	75.3%	-1.8%
	Action taken	74.0%	67.5%	6.5%
	Kept informed	74.9%	71.2%	3.7%
	Treatment	89.9%	87.2%	2.7%
	Whole experience	77.4%	74.4%	3.0%
Number of respondents		574	351	

Table 2: Victim satisfaction up to October 2021

Suffolk		% satisfied		
		12 months ending Oct-21	Oct-20	Diff. PP
Business Crime	First contact	68.2%	88.9%	-20.7%
	Action taken	79.6%	72.1%	7.6%
	Kept informed	84.1%	72.1%	12.0%
	Treatment	89.4%	92.8%	-3.4%
	Whole experience	81.4%	78.4%	3.0%
Number of respondents		113	111	
Hate Crime	First contact	57.7%	69.3%	-11.6%
	Action taken	64.0%	69.9%	-5.9%
	Kept informed	69.8%	70.7%	-0.9%
	Treatment	84.2%	87.0%	-2.8%
	Whole experience	70.5%	72.4%	-1.9%
Number of respondents		139	123	
Online Crime	First contact	68.6%	70.9%	-2.3%
	Action taken	72.3%	76.3%	-4.0%
	Kept informed	72.8%	78.6%	-5.9%
	Treatment	85.9%	90.1%	-4.2%
	Whole experience	75.6%	78.6%	-3.0%
Number of respondents		213	131	
Rural Crime	First contact	65.2%	71.0%	-5.8%
	Action taken	74.1%	68.8%	5.3%
	Kept informed	70.4%	68.8%	1.6%
	Treatment	91.4%	90.2%	1.2%
	Whole experience	75.3%	78.6%	-3.3%
Number of respondents		81	112	
Total	First contact	65.5%	74.2%	-8.7%
	Action taken	72.0%	71.9%	0.1%
	Kept informed	74.0%	72.7%	1.2%
	Treatment	87.0%	89.9%	-2.9%
	Whole experience	75.5%	76.9%	-1.5%
Number of respondents		546	477	

- 1.15. It is no longer possible to compare levels of satisfaction with other police forces as each force will be surveying different victim types, in different ways. However, with the ability to make year on year comparisons with local data we can now track progress internally, which is helped by the rise in the number of surveys completed in a twelve-month period.
- 1.16. Comparisons for the period up to October 2021 indicate decreases in satisfaction rates across several measures for all crime types, in particular hate crime and online crime where all measures in each crime group have decreased compared to the figure for the previous year. Not only have the figures decreased against the last year for these crime types but they have also decreased across most measures when compared to the last report, which focused on the 12 months up to April 2021.
- 1.17. Satisfaction with the whole experience for the four survey groups combined has fallen compared to the previous 12 months and to April 2021.
- 1.18. Satisfaction with first contact has dropped in all four crime areas when compared to the last reporting period as well as the previous 12 months. This fall in satisfaction ranges from 2.3pp for online crime to 20.7pp for business crime. Overall satisfaction with first contact is at 65.5% and remains the area where satisfaction is lowest overall and for each of the four crime areas. Satisfaction with action taken and being kept informed for business crime show marked improvement, whilst satisfaction with treatment has dropped by 3.4pp. Levels of satisfaction in this area are lower than we would like or expect them to be and will be subject to further analysis for presentation and discussion at the January Confidence, Satisfaction and Engagement Board.
- 1.19. To better understand the driving factors behind satisfaction levels, the Confidence, Satisfaction and Engagement Board commissioned SBOS to analyse the satisfaction survey results in each individual crime area. The findings and discussion provided valuable insight into what is contributing to levels of satisfaction. Analysis of victim feedback for each crime type over a period of 12 months indicated that the most impactful factors on levels of satisfaction are perceptions about how well the investigation progressed, how often the victim was updated, and the length of time to complete the investigation. Variation across the crime types shows that some factors are more impactful for certain victims than others, for instance.
- 1.20. Following recent reductions in satisfaction across a number of survey and crime areas, further analysis of satisfaction by survey areas has been commissioned by the Confidence, Satisfaction and Engagement Board. This will begin with a focused analysis of First Contact for the January meeting of the board.
- 1.21. The general trends over time show fluctuation across the five satisfaction measures (see charts 1-5 below).

Figures 1-5: Satisfaction levels from 2019 to date for the four crime types combined.



1.22. Points to note from the above charts are:

- Current levels of satisfaction with first contact are lower than at any time since January 2019 and have been falling steadily since May 2021.
- The level of satisfaction with the actions taken reached its highest point in June 2021, and for the last 12 months has been consistently much higher than previous years. After a dip in July and August this year, rates are now rising again, which is promising.
- The level of satisfaction with how victims were kept informed reached its highest point in June 2021, and for the last 12 months has been consistently higher than previous years.

- Although satisfaction with treatment by police has fallen since June 2021, it remains at a high level compared to all other satisfaction measures.
- Overall satisfaction with the whole experience dropped between June and August 2021, however, has recovered in the last two months to a level above that of previous years.

(Note that the charts show data for each month as a rolling 12-month value in line with tables 1 & 2).

### **Domestic Abuse Surveys (ADR 444) and Sexual Offences**

- 1.23. Suffolk Constabulary has a requirement to comply with ADR444 (Service Improvement Survey – Domestic Abuse). This is a mandatory collection requirement and was introduced in 2015/16 to meet recommendation 4 from the 2014 report by HMICFRS entitled ‘Everyone’s Business: Improving the police response to domestic abuse’.
- 1.24. The Home Office worked with forces and third sector organisations to develop a survey tool and methodology and to identify learning around how to collect victims’ views effectively. A survey tool, guidance, principles and FAQs for this collection were sent to forces in June 2016 and remain unchanged.
- 1.25. Locally, a number of options were considered to meet that requirement including outsourcing to external providers or to other forces undertaking the work, however the risks involved and the criticality of having local information on each victim prior to calling meant that an in house solution was deemed most appropriate.
- 1.26. Proposals to include victims of non-domestic related stalking offences are currently being considered by the Home Office in conjunction with all forces and it is anticipated that this data will begin to be collected over the 2022/23 financial year, subject to confirmation by the Home Office.

### **Current Position**

- 1.27. In Suffolk, a Victim Satisfaction Survey (VSS) Co-ordinator delivers the Home Office mandated requirement to carry out satisfaction surveys with victims of Domestic Abuse (ADR444).
- 1.28. The VSS Co-Ordinator (VSC) is trained to hold comprehensive understanding of domestic abuse and to be able to access the necessary information to conduct a risk assessment prior to contacting a victim. Applying this knowledge and background checks means that victims are sometimes excluded from our survey cohort based on identified risks that could cause harm if we were to make contact.
- 1.29. Data from the Domestic Abuse surveys is recorded and stored on an in-house database which allows analysts from the Strategic, Business and Operational Services (SBOS) department to access the results and review for a variety of purposes including to inform the Domestic Abuse delivery board.
- 1.30. The VSC role sits within the Crime, Safeguarding & Incident Management (CSIM) Directorate under the supervision of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Detective Inspector. The surveying process is owned and managed by CSIM, with support from SBOS in reporting on

survey results. Since the Suffolk VSS co-ordinator has been in post (November 2018), and up to the end of October 2021 195 victims have been successfully surveyed.

- 1.31. The Constabulary now has data for a full two-year period so year on year comparisons are included below. The proportion satisfied reflects those that gave a satisfied response (fairly satisfied, very satisfied or completely satisfied) in the 12 month period from 1<sup>st</sup> November 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2021 and compares this to the preceding 12 month period:

- 89.3% satisfied with the first contact they had with police (+3.0pp)
- 82.8% satisfied with the initial service received from the attending officer (-12.3pp)
- 87.9% satisfied with the way they were kept informed (+9.9pp)
- 89.7% satisfied with the treatment they received (-6.6pp)
- 89.7% satisfied with their overall experience (-1.8pp)

## **2. PUBLIC CONFIDENCE, SATISFACTION AND ENGAGEMENT BOARD**

- 2.1. The Constabulary's Public Confidence, Satisfaction and Engagement Board is led by the Assistant Chief Constable for Local Policing. This Board commissions specific research on public confidence and satisfaction, and meets bi-monthly to explore the main themes in greater depth each month and to set priorities and direction. This board's agenda and scope has adapted through the Covid epidemic and has considered emerging themes and challenges alongside the traditional data, and in lieu of reliable surveys (such as the Public Confidence survey, as described above). It has also enabled us to respond effectively locally to national public confidence challenges like Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) and Black Lives Matters (BLM).
- 2.2. Since the last meeting in July, we have created a dedicated (but temporary) role for a Chief Inspector to develop our understanding of the different ways we engage with the public in Suffolk, and to explore how we can do this better, particularly in using digital technology. The Chief Inspector has already completed an initial survey of the Suffolk officers and staff who are in key roles that involve engagement with the public. Themes have been what we do to address Antisocial Behaviour, Drugs and Speeding and our plans, under locality Inspectors, take a Problem Solving approach to this which involves the communities in the solutions. The expansion of our Kestrel teams to every area in Suffolk significantly improves our capacity and capability to do this. On the basis of the Chief Inspector's initial report, the Board has tasked tactical work in more depth to look at the role of PCSOs, the local public engagement aspects of the Violence Against Women and Girls strategy (VAWG), the development of the digital desk and the role of our volunteers.
- 2.3. The Board is also closely focused on the important role of our Force Contact and Control Room. The work of our Contact and Control Room and the performance in 999 and 101 calls is considered in more depth in the papers that look at performance, so are not included in this report; but it is of note that the increased demand has created real pressure during the last quarter, which is reflected in a fall in victim satisfaction with initial contact. The twelve new control room staff are just completing their training and will be extremely welcome when they join control room teams at the end of December.
- 2.4. The Contact and Control Room team is also developing a new approach to using Live Chat, a digital text based communication channel which has been running very successfully in a general sense in Suffolk this year and has helped us to free up capacity in 101 and 999



response. This new approach will be to make use of Live Chat that is designed specifically for victims seeking help from domestic abuse. The new service is innovative, drawing from the best practice from across the UK, and will be tested through a Randomized Controlled Trial during January 2022, with evaluation so we can develop the next iteration and determine future investment as appropriate. It does not replace all the risk assessment we do, or the need to get help to victims who are in immediate danger, but we hope that this will provide another way for domestic abuse survivors to engage with the police and to be signposted into our domestic abuse charities and services in Suffolk, as well as managing the demand more efficiently and effectively, improving public confidence and satisfaction. Future reports will share the findings of the trial and next steps.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1. There are no financial implications relating to this report.

### **4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

- 4.1. There are no other implications and risks associated with this report.