



PAPER AP22/01

ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL

A meeting of the Accountability and Performance Panel was held via Microsoft Teams at 09:30 on Friday 19 November 2021.

PRESENT:

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

Sandra Graffham (Head of Communications and Engagement), Christopher Jackson (Chief Executive), Anna Parkinson (EA to the PCC and CEO), Tim Passmore (PCC) and Vanessa Scott (Head of Policy and Performance).

Kenneth Kilpatrick (Chief Constable's Chief Finance Officer and Temporary PCC Chief Finance Officer)

Suffolk Constabulary

Eamonn Bridger (Temporary Assistant Chief Constable), Rob Jones (Assistant Chief Constable), Steve Jupp (Chief Constable) and Rachel Kearton (Deputy Chief Constable).

In attendance for the Public Agenda

John Burns (Member of Police and Crime Panel), James Finch (Member of Police and Crime Panel), Jason Gwillim (Detective Chief Superintendent, Metropolitan Police), Theresa Harden (Democratic Services, Suffolk County Council), Mark Jepson (Chair of Police and Crime Panel), Debbie Richard (Member of Police and Crime Panel) and Keith Welham (Member of Police and Crime Panel).

PUBLIC AGENDA

1 Open minutes of the meeting held on 3 September 2021 (Paper AP21/52)

- 1.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 3 September 2021 were agreed as an accurate record and approved by the PCC.
- 1.2 The actions were noted as complete.

2 Revenue and Capital Monitoring (Paper AP21/53)

- 2.1 The Assistant Chief Officer presented this report.

2.2 The PCC was pleased to note the financial position and had no substantive questions.

3 Performance Priorities Monitoring Report (Paper AP21/54)

3.1 DCC Kearton introduced this report.

Performance Report: Domestic Abuse (DA)

3.2 The PCC expressed his concern over the DA victim satisfaction figures, in particular the 42 percentage point drop in victims satisfied with first contact.

3.3 DCC Kearton said that she would revert to the PCC with more detail behind these figures as it is likely that the sample sizes are very small, therefore leading to apparently large percentage changes in response. She added that obtaining satisfaction data from DA victims is challenging and needs to be carefully handled. The victims are vulnerable and may not be able to respond freely to questions if they are taking the telephone call with their abuser also present.

3.4 The Head of Policy and Performance suggested that the detail behind these figures could be explored in the next Victim Satisfaction and Confidence report coming to the Panel in January 2022.

ACTION: DCC Kearton to provide further detail behind DA victim satisfaction figures and explore in the January 2022 Victim Satisfaction and Confidence report.

3.5 The PCC then asked when the work of the DA Perpetrator unit could be discussed in more detail, in order to understand the benefit of investment in this area. DCC Kearton said that at least 12 months of data would need to be considered to inform a meaningful discussion. This will be brought to the PCC in due course.

Performance Report: Serious Sexual Offences (SSO)

3.6 There is a steady increase in volume of SSOs and a drop in the solved rate. This situation is reflected nationally and is not unique to Suffolk.

3.7 In terms of Detective capacity, the Chief Constable said that Suffolk has been at the forefront in running a Direct Entry Detective scheme and there are currently two intakes coming through. The role of Detectives within the Force is being carefully considered and the work being undertaken in this area will be brought to the PCC at a future Weekly Conference meeting for discussion.

ACTION: Detective roles to be discussed at a Weekly Conference.

3.8 The current Crown Court trial backlog is having an effect on case progression. The Chief Constable said that he has had discussions with the Head of Courts as well as regularly meeting with the Senior Crown Prosecutor. However, there are no simple ways to resolve the difficulties. There are no nightingale courts in Suffolk due to suitable venues being unavailable and a lack of Recorders.

Performance Reports: Violence with Injury and Violence Without Injury

3.9 DCC Kearton drew attention to the increasing use of Out of Court Disposals and their effective use. The newly created Out of Court Disposals Scrutiny Panel is another positive step in this area.

4 Victims' Code of Practice (VCOP) Compliance Report (Paper AP21/55)

4.1 T/ACC Bridger presented this report, which the PCC was pleased to note.

4.2 Work on VCOP Compliance is undertaken on a joint Norfolk/Suffolk basis, and progress is reported into both Performance Boards. This provides an appropriate level of oversight and scrutiny. There have been key areas of development such as ensuring victims are provided with as much information as possible, not only at the initial reporting stage but also when a case is finalised – whether this is in court or not.

4.3 Inroads are being made around the traditional problems, such as whether or not a victim would like - and gives permission for - their details to be passed to victim support services. An increasing number of victims are now being asked the appropriate questions and the answers recorded accurately.

5 Contact and Control Room (CCR) and Public Access (Paper AP21/56)

5.1 ACC Jones presented this report.

Emergency / Non Emergency Call Handling

5.2 The increase in 999 calls over the summer was due to the usual summer demand but also the end of lockdown. The increase in calls has not led to increase in the amount of crime reported as the demand increase has been more around vulnerability and mental health issues. The Force has therefore been working closely with the ambulance service which is known to be under great pressure.

5.3 While acknowledging that the time taken to answer 999 calls has increased, Suffolk remains well above the national average.

5.4 With regard to 101, the triage system of prioritising calls is working in terms of providing assistance where it is most needed. This can be seen where DA calls have a very low abandonment rate as these calls are prioritised due to the vulnerability of victims.

5.5 Abandonment rates can now be differentiated as being for positive reasons (for example reporting online instead) or for negative reasons (callers simply hanging up in frustration).

CCR Staff and Environment

5.6 The CCR is an area of high staff turnover within the Force. This has recently been exacerbated by an unusually high number of retirements combined with sickness absences.

- 5.7 Significant efforts therefore continue to be put into recruitment and staff retention. 11 new operators are currently undergoing training and will join the CCR by the end of December; a Recruitment Assessment Centre took place in October for the March/April 2022 intake; and recruitment events are also planned for February and May 2022.
- 5.8 Over-recruitment into the CCR has recently been authorised to help increase resilience which the PCC was very pleased to note.
- 5.8 The CCR is a tight and cramped environment. Improvements, along with COVID controls, have been implemented to make it a more comfortable place to work. As COVID restrictions are lifted, there will be opportunity to make further improvements. These measures should help towards retaining staff by creating a better working environment.
- 5.9 Changes to the shift pattern in the CCR – along with further future changes – have been designed to maximise leadership and resource, as well as ensuring that it is the most effective model for meeting demand.

6 Progress with HMICFRS Inspections and Recommendations Update (Paper AP21/57)

- 6.1 The PCC noted this report.

7 Joint Custody Services Update (Paper AP21/58)

- 7.1 The PCC was pleased to note the consistent good work in this area of the business.

8 Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership – Annual Report (Paper 21/59)

- 8.1 The PCC was pleased to receive this report, which was presented to him at a meeting outside the Panel by the Independent Chair of the Safeguarding Partnership in order that the Board's statutory obligation to report to the PCC was fulfilled.

9 Any Other Business

- 9.1 There was no other business.

The open part of the meeting closed at 10:50 and members of the public left the meeting.

PRIVATE AGENDA

[A detailed account of the discussions and decision on the following items is contained in the confidential minutes]

10 Closed minutes of the meeting held on 3 September 2021 (Paper AP21/60)

10.1 The confidential minutes of the meeting held on 3 September 2021 were agreed as an accurate record and approved by the PCC.

11 Protective Services Command Update (Paper AP21/61)

9.1 T/ACC Bridger presented this report.

12 Chief Officer Risk Report and Constabulary Risk Register (Paper AP21/62)

12.1 The Chief Constable presented this report.

13 Any Other Business

13.1 There was no other business.

The meeting closed at 11:10

Summary of Actions

Item	Action	Owner
3.4	Performance Report – Domestic Abuse: Further detail behind DA victim satisfaction figures to be provided and explored in the January 2022 Victim Satisfaction and Confidence report	DCC Kearton
3.5	Detective Capacity: Detective roles to be discussed at a Weekly Conference.	Chief Constable