



Making Suffolk a safer place to live, work, travel and invest

ORIGINATOR: CHIEF CONSTABLE

PAPER NO: AP22/31

**SUBMITTED TO: ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL
– 8 JULY 2022**

SUBJECT: IMPROVING CONFIDENCE AND SATISFACTION

SUMMARY:

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

RECOMMENDATION:

1. The Police and Crime Commissioner is asked to consider the contents of this report.

DETAIL OF THE SUBMISSION

1. KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION – CONFIDENCE AND SATISFACTION

- 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 forces performance frameworks, as they are a key indicator of how well a force is delivering its core functionality, and are prioritised within the Suffolk Police and Crime Plan. 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 sample¹ 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. 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 were 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 to enable a return to full topic coverage in 2022. The success of in-home face-to-face research over the coming months was 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 alongside at home interviews 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-month data set 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:
 - Hate Crime

¹ 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.

- 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 (hereafter 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, 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)²

- % 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 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

² 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.

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. Data for the twelve-month rolling period to April 2022 is displayed in Table 1 below, alongside comparable data from the previous report which covers the period up to October 2021 (table 2).

Table 1: Victim satisfaction up to April 2022

Suffolk		% satisfied		
		12 months ending Apr-22	Apr-21	Diff. PP
Business Crime	First contact	65.1%	80.9%	-15.7%
	Action taken	68.1%	79.5%	-11.4%
	Kept informed	71.6%	80.3%	-8.8%
	Treatment	87.9%	90.6%	-2.6%
	Whole experience	70.7%	82.7%	-12.0%
<i>Number of respondents</i>		116	127	
Hate Crime	First contact	60.5%	63.3%	-2.7%
	Action taken	65.1%	67.2%	-2.1%
	Kept informed	70.4%	71.2%	-0.8%
	Treatment	87.5%	84.0%	3.5%
	Whole experience	75.7%	68.8%	6.9%
<i>Number of respondents</i>		152	125	
Online Crime	First contact	65.5%	73.5%	-8.0%
	Action taken	68.5%	76.6%	-8.1%
	Kept informed	68.9%	77.1%	-8.2%
	Treatment	86.0%	92.2%	-6.2%
	Whole experience	76.1%	78.6%	-2.5%
<i>Number of respondents</i>		222	192	
Rural Crime	First contact	59.6%	76.6%	-16.9%
	Action taken	83.1%	71.5%	11.5%
	Kept informed	72.3%	70.0%	2.3%
	Treatment	96.9%	91.5%	5.4%
	Whole experience	83.1%	78.5%	4.6%
<i>Number of respondents</i>		65	130	
Total	First contact	63.4%	73.6%	-10.1%
	Action taken	69.2%	74.0%	-4.9%
	Kept informed	70.3%	74.9%	-4.6%
	Treatment	88.1%	89.9%	-1.8%
	Whole experience	75.7%	77.4%	-1.7%
<i>Number of respondents</i>		555	574	

Table 2: Victim satisfaction up to October 2021

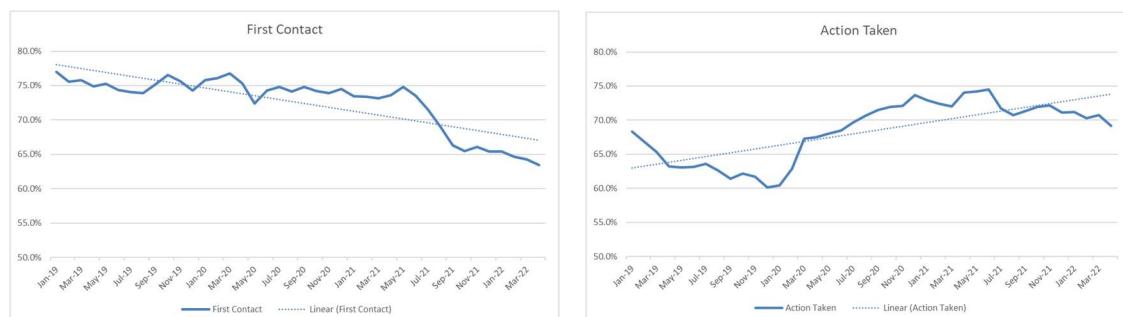
Suffolk		% satisfied		
		12 months ending Oct-21	Oct-20	Diff. PP
Business Crime	First contact	68.2%	88.9%	-20.7%
	Action taken	79.6%	72.1%	7.6%
	Kept informed	84.1%	72.1%	12.0%
	Treatment	89.4%	92.8%	-3.4%
	Whole experience	81.4%	78.4%	3.0%
<i>Number of respondents</i>		113	111	
Hate Crime	First contact	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%
<i>Number of respondents</i>		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%
<i>Number of respondents</i>		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%
<i>Number of respondents</i>		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%
<i>Number of respondents</i>		546	477	

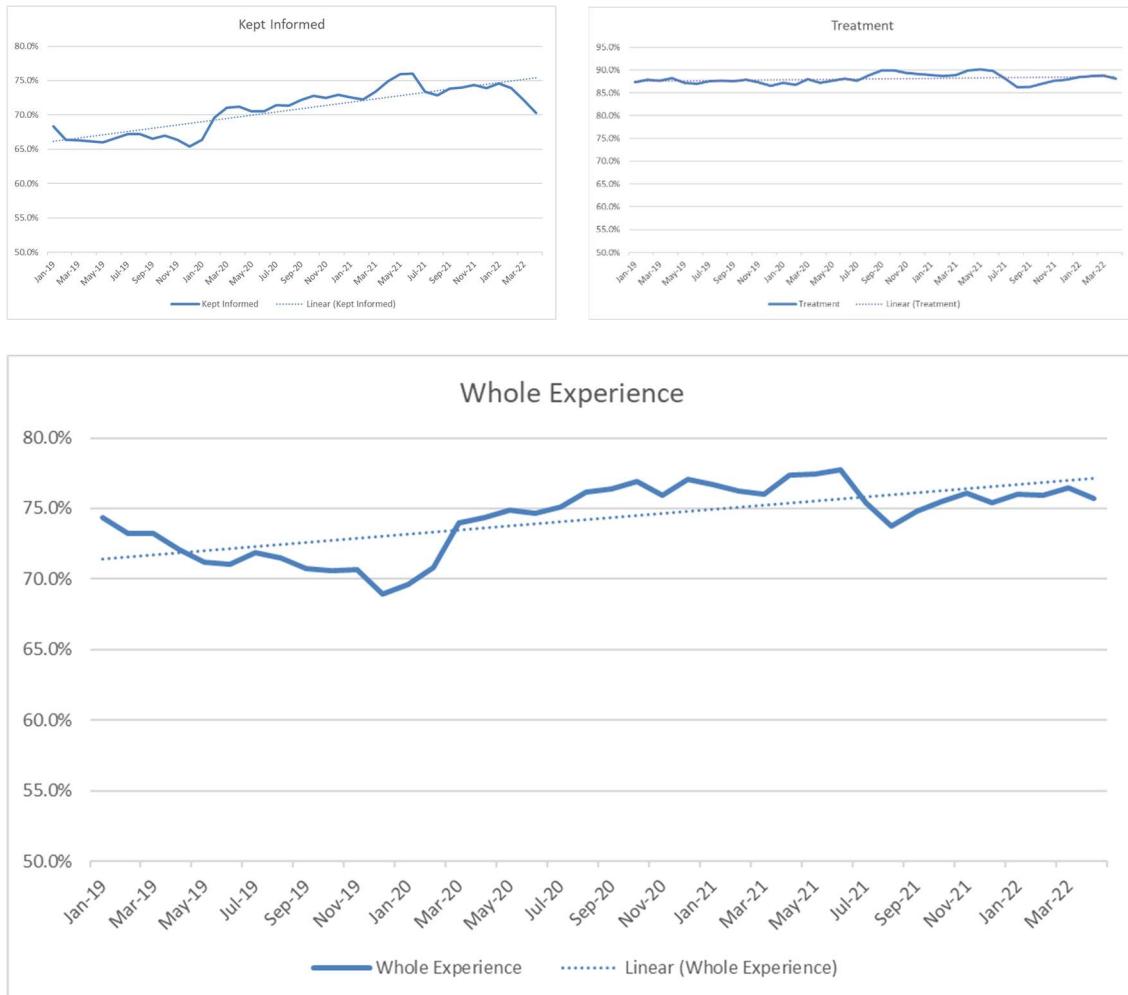
1.15. It is not possible to compare levels of satisfaction with other police forces as each force will be surveying different victim types, in different ways. However, with the ability to make year

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 April 2022 indicate decreases in satisfaction rates across some measures for all four crime types. In particular for business crime and online crime, 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 October 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 2.7pp for hate crime to 16.9pp for rural crime. Overall satisfaction with first contact is at 63.4% and remains the area where satisfaction is lowest overall and for each of the four crime areas.
- 1.19. In contrast to reductions in satisfaction seen for other crime types, an increase in satisfaction was seen across all measures, except First Contact, for victims of rural crime. Satisfaction with the whole experience for victims of rural crime increased by 4.6pp to 83.1% in comparison to the previous twelve months.
- 1.20. 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. For instance, variation across the crime types shows that some factors are more impactful for certain victims than others.
- 1.21. Following recent reductions in satisfaction across a number of survey and crime areas, further analysis of satisfaction by survey areas was commissioned by the Confidence, Satisfaction and Engagement Board which began with an analysis and discussion of first contact satisfaction.
- 1.22. 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.





1.23. 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 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. However, despite a rise in Autumn 2021 levels have been falling since December 2021.
- 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. However, levels of satisfaction have been falling in this area since the start of 2022.
- 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 since recovered back 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

- 1.24. 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'.
- 1.25. 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.
- 1.26. 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.
- 1.27. Survey of non-domestic related stalking offences has now been added to the mandatory Home Office data request for domestic abuse victims (ADR 444) for all forces after proposed changes were signed off in April 2022. A working group was formed to review and implement the changes required for the annual data return. While ADR 444 stipulates that the data collection is mandatory from April 2022, victim safety is, and must always be, paramount. The Home Office is clear that collection should only commence when forces can assure victim safety. It is preferable for there to be a retrospective or a limited dataset in the first year than to begin surveying victims before safety can be assured. The working group is currently focused on how to integrate the new measures.

Current Position

- 1.28. 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).
- 1.29. 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.
- 1.30. 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.
- 1.31. 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.
- 1.32. The Constabulary 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 to 31st March 2022 and compares this to the preceding 12 month period:

- 90% satisfied with the first contact they had with police (+7pp)
- 89% satisfied with the initial service received from the attending officer (-1pp)
- 93% satisfied with the way they were kept informed (+8pp)
- 91% satisfied with the treatment they received (-5pp)
- 91% satisfied with their overall experience (-3pp)

- 1.33. Since the previous report, the Constabulary has sought to better understand and develop the way in which it makes use of available data sets to understand the socio-dynamic makeup of our communities. Through the introduction of multi-level neighbourhood profiles (drawing from data collected as part of the Output Area Classification 2011, Community Engagement Area Classification (CEAC) and Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019); and strengthening of our Key Individual Networks, we are now better placed to understand and foresee how our communities are most likely to engage with us and which areas of criminality are causing the most concern to them.
- 1.34. Neighbourhood profiles can be an effective way of compiling a range of police and partnership data to assist in the understanding of neighbourhoods and the people living and working in them. Neighbourhood profiling enables the police and partners to identify areas of risk, community tension and vulnerable individuals and groups, which can then be targeted, and issues addressed through collaborative problem-solving activity. The approach taken by Suffolk Constabulary was recently recognised by HMICFRS as adding significant value in helping local commands to understand the changing communities that we police.
- 1.35. In recent months a significant effort has taken place to upskill and develop the investigative abilities of our relatively “young in-service” front-line officers. These officers are responsible for responding and investigating many crimes reported by the reviewed victim groups. It is therefore essential that as a Constabulary we have provided these officers with the skills and understanding of how to effectively manage these investigations on behalf of the victims they are serving.
- 1.36. All front line officers have received dedicated training inputs which include awareness and reinforcement of the importance of key themes such as Victims Code, Voice of the Child and Violence against Women and Children. A regime of regular scrutiny and audit is in place to ensure positive progress, particularly in terms of the way in which we respond and engage with victims.
- 1.37. The Contact and Control Room (CCR) continues to make improvements to enhance the service provided to the public from initial contact. In 2021 the introduction of THRIVE (Threat, Harm, Risk, Investigation, Vulnerability, Engagement) recording resulted in a consistent approach to prioritising calls from the public. The training delivered to staff and subsequent review of THRIVE also focussed on identifying vulnerable people and the importance of effective engagement with the public as part of the policing response.
- 1.38. Between March and November 2021, a Live Chat trial took place to respond to public reports of non-urgent crime and ASB. As a result of a questionnaire which followed, 91% of public users rated the Police as ‘Good’ or ‘Very Good’ and nearly 94% said they would recommend the service to a friend or use it again. Victims of serious domestic abuse and historic sexual offences came forward to disclose abuse; something the victims said they wouldn’t have done

if it wasn't for the Live Chat option. The CCR is planning to reintroduce this function again in 2022.

- 1.39. A new anti-social behaviour procedure includes a realigned risk assessment process with an additional victim risk assessment. Additional CCR supervisor responsibilities now include reviewing standard risk incidents and CCR staff were provided a training refresher on High, Medium and Low risk levels and actions which follow.
- 1.40. Following the advice of the Constabulary's Domestic Abuse Team, the Domestic Abuse Improvement Plan was created and a number of changes have been made as a result. The standard operating procedure has been reviewed and updated and a new domestic abuse question set has been introduced to prompt call takers with more appropriate questions to capture all information accurately. All of these processes now include a focus on 'Voice Of The Child'. A newly formed DA working group conduct DA audits each month and each audit asks if a good level of customer service was provided.
- 1.41. Inspector audit processes have been amended and now include a total of 25 ASB specific audits a month alongside 25 audits which focus on Concern for safety, Missing People, Hate Crime, Harassment/Stalking and Domestic Abuse. There is also a CCR Call Taker Scrutiny Panel which involves calls from the public being listened to and feedback of the customer service provided to the caller to include positive attitude, communication, empathy, patience and active listening.
- 1.42. In April 2022 Suffolk CCR hosted a 'tweetathon' event which involved 10 hours of live tweeting to the public. The twitter team consisted of volunteers from the control room who reported on the majority of incidents throughout a typical shift alongside signposting to partner agencies and crime prevention advice to the public and advice to victims of crime. The event was promoted externally in unison with corporate communications and received an overwhelming response from the public. A public poll identified how 61% were surprised by the calls the Police deal with. Comments from the public included 'Amazing to see live reports from Suffolk police showing how hard they work with other agencies', 'Should be a daily thing to show people what goes on' and 'I always believed that Suffolk police work stupidly hard behind the scenes and SPLive10- brings home just how many calls they take in a day'.

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). It is currently scoping work, with support from Ipswich and Suffolk Council for Racial Equality (ISCRE) and others, into reducing the "confidence gap" between different communities in policing as part of Suffolk's Race Action Plan. Progress in relation to this will be reported to future boards.
- 2.2. Since the last meeting in January, work has continued in using a dedicated 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 completed a survey of the Suffolk officers and staff who are in key roles that involve engagement with the public and is widening this to other roles. This will connect closely to the work being led by Chief Superintendent Marina Ericson on our Operating Model: a review of the way we provide services in local policing so we are as efficient and effective as possible, and prepared for future challenges. The first iteration of the Operating Model team's findings will be reviewed by Chief Officers in July with input from key partners, which will plan where we make decisions in future. After this scoping, a report will come to APP to outline the plans in terms of implications for public confidence, satisfaction and engagement.

- 2.3. The previous report on Public Confidence explained how the expansion of our Kestrel teams into every area in Suffolk significantly improves our capacity and capability for engagement. In preparation for the summer demand on policing, these teams have been trained in Operation Servator tactics. These tactics, developed by the City of London Police to protect critical infrastructure and crowded places from the threat of a terrorist attack, are being adapted and implemented across Suffolk. They are based on active engagement within local communities, especially those that may have a high footfall, such as businesses in town centres, or railway stations. The locations, the timing and the duration of the tactic are based on evidence of what works, maximising the impact in an area before moving on, so that we are as visible as possible. The officers then use scientific behavioural detection to identify suspicious behaviour, and will actively engage those who may come to attention to assess any risk, and confirm or dispel suspicion. This may lead to a stop and search; but often concludes with information about Operation Servator being shared with the individual and reassurance that the police are patrolling and intervening to keep people safe. Operation Servator launched across Suffolk in June and the Constabulary will report on its progress in using the tactic.
- 2.4. The Board will also commission pilots for different ways of providing a service for victims. Building upon the success of our general LiveChat service that we implemented during the pandemic, in January 2022, Suffolk Police implemented a Live Chat service that was designed specifically for victims seeking help from domestic abuse. The new service is innovative, drawing from the best practice from across the UK, and was tested through a Randomized Controlled Trial. In partnership with our technology company FUTR, features like a "safe" exit button and clearing search history (so it is not visible to perpetrators) were developed and implemented. In terms of satisfaction, the evaluation showed from an analysis of the exit survey that victims who chose this service rather than an officer attending in person felt safe and supported. The overwhelming majority said they would use it again, as well as recommending it to someone else. This showed us that provided they are designed with care, victims with complex needs and vulnerability can find a "virtual" response as helpful and reassuring as a personal visit, and that many will choose this if given a choice. It did not replace all the risk assessment the Constabulary does, or the need to get help to victims who are in immediate danger, but it did provide another way for domestic abuse survivors to engage with the police and to be signposted to domestic abuse charities and services in Suffolk, as well as managing the demand more efficiently and effectively. The trial was featured in Policing Insight magazine and the learning will inform our future digital services, including the design of a "digital desk" from investment in the Contact and Control Room.

3. PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

Introduction

- 3.1 Public complaints are made by members of the public in relation to the conduct of those serving in the Force and are recorded under Schedule 3 of the Police Reform Act (PRA) 2002.
- 3.2 The Policing and Crime Act 2017 made significant changes to the police complaints system to achieve a more customer-focussed complaints system. From 1 February 2020 Forces were required to log and report complaints about a much wider range of issues including the service provided by the police as an organisation, handled outside of Schedule 3 of the PRA 2002.
- 3.3 The data included here is extracted from the Professional Standards Department live case management system, Centurion. There are several terms mentioned in this section, which for ease of reference are explained below:
- 3.4 Schedule 3: The complaint must be recorded and handled under Schedule 3 of the legislation if the complainant wishes it to be or if it meets certain criteria as defined within the guidance.
- 3.5 Outside of Schedule 3: The complaint can be logged and handled outside of Schedule 3 with a view to resolving the matter promptly and to the satisfaction of the complainant without the need for detailed enquiries to address the concerns.
- 3.6 Complaint: Any expression of dissatisfaction with police expressed by or on behalf of a member of the public. Nationally complaints are grouped under specific categories and sub-categories as directed by the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC).
- 3.7 Allegation: Complaints are made up of allegations. Alleged behaviour from officers/staff which has resulted in dissatisfaction and a complaint can contain any number of allegations.

Public Complaints in Focus

- 3.8 During the period 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022, a total of 371 complaints were received. Of these complaints, 288 were recorded under Schedule 3 and 83 were logged outside of Schedule 3 of the PRA 2002.
- 3.9 To compare this with 2020/21, 403 complaints were received and of these, 264 were recorded under Schedule 3 and 139 were logged outside of Schedule 3. This is a decrease in complaints received of 8% compared to the previous year.
- 3.10 The largest area of complaint has been recorded under the category of Delivery of Duties and Service. Of the 1,007 allegations recorded under new Regulations in the reporting period, 380 have been recorded under this category, which is 37.7% of the total.
- 3.11 The types of complaint recorded under Delivery of duties and service relate to the service received, the action of officers following contact received, operational and organisational decisions, information provided and the general level of service.
- 3.12 Sub-categories of complaint were introduced to better understand the concerns raised by the complainant. Of the complaint allegations recorded, the top 5 sub-categories of complaint across the Force are:
 - A1 Police action following contact (211 allegations – 21%)
 - H5 Overbearing or harassing behaviours (73 allegations – 7.2%)

- B4 Use of force (67 allegations – 6.7%)
- H1 Impolite language/tone (65 allegations – 6.5%)
- A2 Decisions (60 allegations – 6%)

3.13 Chapter 6 of the IOPC Statutory Guidance states that complaints should be logged, and the complainant contacted 'as soon as possible'. Of the 371 complaints received in the reporting period, 86.8% were logged within 2 working days and 58.7% of complainants were contacted within 10 working days.

3.14 Complaints recorded under Schedule 3 are handled reasonably and proportionately by way of investigation, otherwise than by investigation (responding to concerns raised and seeking to resolve them) or by taking no further action. A total of 244 complaints have been finalised in the reporting period and of those, 11.5% were investigated, 51.6% were handled otherwise than by investigation and 27.9% were resulted as no further action as they were assessed that the complaint had already been addressed or that there was insufficient information to progress. The remaining 9% of complaints were either withdrawn or discontinued under Regulation 41 (complainant decided not to proceed with the complaint).

3.15 The 244 complaint cases finalised contain 670 allegations and of these it was determined the service provided was acceptable in 40%, there was a case to answer in 1% of allegations and no case to answer in a further 1%. In 27% of allegations it was determined that the service was not acceptable, and no further action was required for 20% of allegations finalised. In 4% of allegations the complaint handler was unable to determine if the service was acceptable and the remaining 7% of allegations were withdrawn or discontinued under Regulation 41.

3.16 Cases handled under Schedule 3 took on average 65 working days to finalise from the date the complaint was recorded to the date the complainant was informed of the result. This does not include any time the case was suspended due to being sub judice.

3.17 The outcome for complaints handled outside of Schedule 3 will be either resolved or not resolved. Of the 87 complaints finalised in the reporting period, 78 were resolved which is 89.7% of cases. The 9 cases not resolved is 10.3% of complaints finalised. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of their complaint, they can ask for their complaint to be recorded under Schedule 3. Cases handled outside of Schedule 3 took on average 43 working days to finalise from the date the complaint was recorded to the date the complainant was informed of the result.

3.18 All allegations are finalised to show the action taken as a result. Actions can include providing the complainant with an explanation, offering an apology/acknowledging that something went wrong, individual and organisational learning, and review of policy/procedures.

3.19 A member of the public is considered a complainant if they are directly or adversely affected by the conduct, witnessed the conduct or are acting on behalf of someone who meets the criteria of a complainant. As such, more than one complainant can be recorded on a complaint case. A total of 395 complainants have made the 371 complaints received in the reporting period. The ethnicity of complainant has been recorded where it has been provided and in the reporting period 72% of cases contain the complainants' ethnic details. This is a slight decrease from 2020/21 where 74% of complainants provided their ethnicity.

3.20 Of the 395 complainants recorded on the 371 complaint cases, 10.9% are BAME, 61% are White and 27.8% are unknown ethnicity.

3.21 Of the total 1,007 allegations recorded in the reporting period, 42 have been made alleging discrimination. Of these, 26 have been made under the protected characteristic of race which is 62%. The complainants feel the service they received was not acceptable, or they were treated less favourably, due to their ethnicity or ethnic appearance.

3.22 A total of 444 Suffolk Police officers, Special Constables and members of police staff are identified on the complaints recorded. Of the 422 Police officers and Special Constables, 3.6% are BAME, 95% are White and 1% are unknown/not stated.

Organisational Learning

3.23 Organisational and individual learning is a vital part of the complaints process and is closely monitored by the service improvement team within the Professional Standards Department (PSD). Opportunities to learn are identified in a variety of ways and from a number of sources. The service improvement team seek to share learning and implement processes to prevent similar occurrences in the future.

3.24 The following examples highlight some of the organisational learning from the reporting period where follow up action has been completed to reduce the likelihood of the same problem reoccurring:

3.25 As a result of several high-profile cases, Officers in Suffolk have been reminded of the standards expected of them whilst engaging in private WhatsApp groups. An article was included in the learning times publication to highlight the positive obligation placed on officers & staff to report any inappropriate behaviour from their colleagues.

3.26 Custody Officers have been reminded of the importance of correctly recording medication on Athena in custody. This arose from a complaint whereby two people were arrested and taken into custody and the medication for one of the detainees was booked into the property of the other. This resulted in the detainee being released from custody without their medication.

3.27 The Professional Standards Department (PSD) has recorded complaints relating to poor levels of communication between the investigating officers and victims of crime. This has been addressed with individual officers by their line managers. In addition, further guidance has been produced and disseminated to all officers which highlights their responsibility under the Victim's Code of Practice (VCOP). This guidance has been published internally to all officers and members of staff.

3.28 A common theme of individual learning is under use of Body Worn Video which has been addressed accordingly – poster guidance has been produced and circulated to all operational bases across Suffolk. PSD have worked closely with the Learning and Development Department to improve the use of Body Worn Video by providing additional support to student officers during their training period; to help them create the muscle memory of using body worn video. As a result, body worn video is now allocated to student officers at the start of their training and is used to record footage when completing role play scenarios. Officers are also reminded during taser courses of the importance of using BWV when deploying this use of force.

3.29 A concern was highlighted following an IOPC investigation into the safeguarding of vulnerable adults in Suffolk. It was identified that medium and high-risk Adult Protection Investigations

(API) were not being routinely shared with mental health services. Suffolk Constabulary is currently reviewing its practices to ensure APIs are shared with mental health services via an uplift of mental health nurses in the control room. Officers have also been provided a phone number to call from scene whilst members of the public are in crisis. The purpose of the phone call is to provide support to the individuals in circumstances where Section 136 of the Mental Health Act cannot be used by officer i.e., within private dwellings.

3.30 The majority of individual learning is managed by line managers through advice which can be recorded as part of the PDR process and in some cases reflective practice. The use of reflective practice is under review. It is the desire of PSD that reflective practice becomes a daily practice whereby supervisors are empowered to challenge behaviour and actions and record this information centrally. The introduction of the electronic PDR should assist PSD to track the use of reflective practice and identify any trends.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1. There are no financial implications relating to this report.

5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

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