

ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL

A meeting of the Accountability and Performance Panel was held at Police Headquarters Martlesham, and via Microsoft Teams at 09:30 on Friday 17 January 2025.

PRESENT:

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

Colette Batson (Chief Finance Officer), Kate Boswell (Executive Assistant to the PCC and Chief Executive), Sandra Graffham (Head of Communications and Engagement and acting Chief Executive Officer), Tim Passmore (Police and Crime Commissioner), James Sheridan (Policy and Commissioning Officer).

Suffolk Constabulary

Eamonn Bridger (Assistant Chief Constable), Julie Dean (Assistant Chief Constable), Rob Jones (Deputy Chief Constable), Rachel Kearton (Chief Constable), Kenneth Kilpatrick (Assistant Chief Officer), Matt Paisley (Staff Officer to the Chief Officer Team).

In attendance for the Public Agenda via Teams

Darren Horsman (Essex OPFCC), Phaniel Mutumburi (ISCRE), Adriana Stapleton (Police and Crime Panel Support Officer), plus 2 members of the public.

PUBLIC AGENDA

1 Public Question Time

1.1 The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited both Constabulary and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner attendees to introduce themselves. He advised that no questions had been received in advance of this meeting.

2 Open minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2024 (Paper AP25/01)

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2024 were agreed as an accurate record and approved by the PCC.

2.2 All actions were noted as complete or in hand and were being followed up outside of the meeting.

3 Financial Monitoring (Paper AP25/02)

3.1 The Assistant Chief Officer (ACO) Kenneth Kilpatrick presented the Revenue and Capital Monitoring report as of the end of November 2024, for the full year forecast for 2024-25. The report highlights a revenue surplus of £2.7M and capital underspend of £270K. Table 3.1

in the report details the breakdown of these figures, and that the operational expenditure is in line with the operational budget. Pay related costs are higher moving forward than forecast, due to the additional National Insurance (NI) costs that will be incurred. The forecast capital budget underspend, of approximately £300K for this financial year, is due to IT spend and the technology refresh slipping into 2025-26.

- 3.2 The PCC commented that this is a favourable position and far better than having an overspend, stating that additional income is not a given from one year to the next. He noted that at point 3.3 of the report, the additional costs incurred due to the change in the Dangerous Dogs Act should be funded centrally from government as this was due to a legislative change.
- 3.3 The PCC mentioned the continuing challenge of ensuring the Constabulary achieve the police officer headcount of 1425, as any numbers below this result in a government issued fine.
- 3.4 The PCC commented that overall, the budget is reflective of a good performance.

4 Improving Confidence and Satisfaction (Paper AP25/03)

- 4.1 The PCC requested it be noted that Suffolk has the third lowest recorded crime rate in the country. This is a very good performance which should be recognised.
- 4.2 ACC Bridger highlighted that Suffolk Constabulary are a force that are challenged financially but are delivering above the public need. Confidence data is becoming more established, allowing for thorough interpretation and showing stability when compared to a 3-year average. The new local policing model, launched in December 2023, which responds to local need, has resulted in increased positive feedback, indicating that improvements have been delivered, contributing to the overall confidence and satisfaction figures. The other area driving positive results is the improved first contact with the Constabulary. There is currently good stability with the Domestic Abuse (DA) data, but this is a volatile area, and the data is prone to fluctuation. The paper provides a brief overview of Operation Spotlight, which has been a brilliant initiative from the Constabulary's perspective, seeing a 55% reduction on previous reporting in ASB hot spot areas.
- 4.3 The PCC asked if it would be possible to have some further information around the DA surveys, what lessons have been learnt, what themes have emerged, and if there are areas to be improved.
ACTION – ACC Bridger to provide the PCC with further information behind the DA surveys, to include lessons learned, emerging themes, and areas of improvement.
- 4.4 The PCC asked at point 3.9 what partnership funded activities within Operation Spotlight are being referred to, and do young people provide feedback on this area of work. ACC Bridger responded that there is a wide range of activities including ongoing work with youth justice services, such as the Ipswich Town Foundation diversionary programme, the education and engagement programme as discussed within the Pol Ed programme, and the 'Don't Be A Mug' campaign. The education programmes involve listening as well as learning from participants. Young people were consulted for the 'Don't Be A Mug' campaign, and recent work by the University of Suffolk and the Police Powers group allowed direct feedback from young people into the Constabulary. The PCC requested more details on the diversionary programmes within Operation Spotlight.

ACTION – ACC Bridger to provide further details on the diversionary programmes within Operation Spotlight to the PCC.

- 4.5 The Policy and Commissioning Officer asked, with hard-to-reach communities as referenced at point 3.13 of the report, what does the force see as areas of development to drive meaningful outcomes with these engagements. ACC Bridger replied that this is an ever-evolving long term commitment, the data at point 3.6 shows engagement with vulnerable and diverse communities and ensures contact is specific and targeted. DCC Jones added this is a great example of the scrutiny panel and the operating model coming together to build trust and confidence. The National Police Race Action Group is visiting Suffolk in February 2025 and is looking at adopting the Maturity Matrix which the local Race Action Scrutiny and Advisory Panel has implemented locally.
- 4.6 The PCC asked if there are plans to expand the Domestic Abuse Video Response (DAVR) service. ACC Bridger responded that the DAVR team is now well established and dealing with a high amount of demand, but it is important to note it is the victim’s choice to use the DAVR service. The level of satisfaction from this service is very high at 93%, and with the level of resource in place an increase in usage is expected. This is an area of innovation that can be expanded beyond domestic abuse, and the constabulary are piloting the technology and the ability to use it across a much wider range of crimes. Once the pilot has been completed, and the findings evaluated, the expansion of the service could be implemented, which could lead to greater level of satisfaction overall.
- 4.7 The PCC asked what the reasons are for the increase from 70% to 94% with victim satisfaction and the victims code. ACC Bridger replied that this relates only to a couple of elements of the victim code, but it is indicative of the level of scrutiny in place to deliver it. Benefits are also seen by having a centralised team within Joint Justice that support the delivery of updates to victims, particularly post-charge.
- 4.8 The PCC commented that the reduction of 4.2% of funding from the MOJ for victims is reprehensible, callous and unfair, and that he has raised this directly with the Policing Minister.
- 4.9 The PCC asked if there is any feedback from the changes to Police Misconduct hearings. DCC Jones responded that the changes were implemented to ensure complaints were dealt with swiftly, and early indications are that it will be faster, more consistent and fairer, and will reduce the impact on the public purse. For gross misconduct complaints the constabulary would expect to see accelerated case hearings. There will be a formal review of the current process and its effectiveness in August 2025, with a report brought to the PCC in due course outlining the next steps.
- 4.10 The CFO asked if there has been any indication of further funding for hotspot policing. ACC Bridger replied that no clear indication of funding has been received, but the force would like to continue the progress that has been achieved in ASB via Hotspot Policing.

5 Responding to Calls for Assistance (Paper AP25/04)

- 5.1 ACC Bridger summarised that Suffolk is in a strong position when it comes to responding to the public need, seeing stability in performance delivery, with the transformation programme continuing. The call level remains high, and the team are consistently meeting call answering times of 10-seconds. The response to the 101 demand has improved with

calls being answered within 5 minutes. The issue of abandonment remains a focus despite showing an improvement over the past 5-years. The introduction of the digital desk, Single Online Home and DAVR have been instrumental in seeing improvement in responses across the county. The Right Care Right Person (RCRP) initiative has seen a saving of over 1000 hours of officer time per month, which can be redirected into other areas of policing.

- 5.2 The PCC commented that he is pleased that improvements are being seen in the 101-service noting that the council tax precept investment is being well used. He asked the Constabulary to confirm that the 140 call-handler level is being maintained. ACC Bridger confirmed it is.
- 5.3 The PCC asked what the Constabulary are trying to achieve by taking part in discussions on National Standard Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). ACC Bridger responded that different forces count and interpret data in different ways, making comparisons difficult, Suffolk would therefore welcome some standardisation. It is the hope of the force that the Suffolk method of reporting becomes the national standard.
- 5.4 The Policy and Commissioning Officer asked if the increase in Single Online Home usage is showing a channel shift from the 101 service and are there any indications for how this will be developed further within Suffolk. ACC Bridger responded that monitoring a channel shift is hard, but the public appears to be becoming used to digital engagement, with continuing growth in this area alongside a downturn in 101-calls. Single Online Home is a national scheme so there will be consistency with changes across the country. Public feedback is gathered, and if there is anything being reported into the OPCC around its usage please pass the comments on to the Constabulary. ACC Dean added that there has been a 44% increase in the usage of Single Online Home between December 2023 and December 2024.
- 5.5 The Policy and Commissioning Officer asked if there is data identifying clear themes from those using the Single Online Home service. ACC Dean responded that areas of use can be measured, so for example 15% of submissions are for firearms licencing, and then joint criminal justice, which can then be broken down further.

6 Use of Police Powers (Paper AP25/05)

- 6.1 ACC Bridger highlighted that Suffolk Constabulary continue to maintain strong and positive partnerships around the governance in place for the use of powers. Suffolk has been identified nationally as a force to be followed in this area, and there is a national strategy under development which the constabulary is engaged with. The key areas of the report demonstrate that the overall volume of stop search has reduced by 12% compared to the previous year, with the rates of use in Suffolk are lower than the national average. Disproportionality remains an issue and is an area of focus for the Constabulary. The force are improving the exposure of Body Worn Video (BWV) with external partners, however this comes with challenges around data retention and sharing, so continues to be an area of development. Use of taser remains stable, however in the long-term there are challenges in terms of equipment, training and other services. There have been issues identified with data relating to previous strip search figures which has resulted in double counting. This issue has been identified and is now resolved. Overall, the use of police powers is low, leading to the right outcomes, with stability in all areas.
- 6.2 The PCC invited Phaniel Mutumburi from Ipswich and Suffolk Council for Racial Equality (ISCRE) to comment. Phaniel observed that the main reason for ISCRE's involvement is to address the issue of disproportionality with police powers, particularly for stop search. ISCRE

were fortunate to attend Constabulary training sessions during this reporting period which has allowed them to see the recommendations made by the public scrutiny group being taught to police officers. Phaniel reported a good, transparent and open relationship with Suffolk Constabulary.

- 6.3 Phaniel highlighted there are still issues with BWV not being retained for scrutiny purposes, and this is an area that continues to be discussed. ACC Bridger responded that whilst things are improving there are challenges around the system that is used and how to approach the problem. There has to be a reason for the video footage to be retained, noting if it is evidential, it will be retained. He provided reassurance that progress is being made in this area, however challenges around data protection and ensuring the data storage is legitimate remain.
- 6.4 Phaniel raised that within the Children’s Commissioner Report released during 2024, the data supplied was incorrect as there had been double counting relating to strip searches. He requested an update on what the correct numbers are and sought reassurance that these anomalies will be corrected going forward. ACC Bridger replied that work to identify the correct detail is underway. He was confident that the actions that have since been implemented will ensure this will not happen again.
- 6.5 The PCC asked at point 2.2.4 of the report, why the disproportionality shown in the table is so high for East Suffolk compared to other districts of a similar size. ACC Bridger replied that he would need to look at the data further to understand this and would update the PCC once he has this information.
ACTION – ACC Bridger to look at the disproportionality data at point 2.2.4 for East Suffolk compared to other districts of a similar size and update the PCC.
- 6.6 The PCC asked if the figure at point 2.3.4, is correct, as it seems a small number to have such a high influence in disproportionality. ACC Bridger to check the data and respond to the PCC.
ACTION – ACC Bridger to confirm if the figures at point 2.3.4 are correct and update the PCC.

7 Workforce Report (Paper AP25/06)

- 7.1 Deputy Chief Constable (DCC) Jones highlighted that the report shows how the investments made within People Directorate has enabled them to provide a better understanding of staff and has increased confidence in forwardplanning. The workforce has become notably younger in the past few years, and the next paper will report on a new method of entry that will sit alongside the apprenticeship entry for those looking for a career change. The next report will also cover wellbeing and the outcome of the people’s opinion survey.
- 7.2 The PCC requested the inclusion of figures for absenteeism, sickness and restricted duties in the next report.
ACTION – DCC Jones to include the figures for absenteeism, sickness and restricted duties in the next Workforce Report.
- 7.3 The PCC asked if the “Stay and Say” interviews are offered to everyone, and what insights have been gained. DCC Jones replied that the interviews are based on work completed by Greater Manchester Police, and how early intervention and changes to a situation can result in retaining people. There are two main insights, police staff mainly leave due to wanting more flexibility or career opportunities. For police officers the reasons are usually around

flexibility, and whilst there is a modern workplace programme, ultimately the police are a 24/7 service. The constabulary would like to be more ambitious with delivering these surveys, but to do this further resources would be required in People Directorate.

- 7.4 The CFO asked, of the 25 employees who engaged with the “Stay and Say interviews”, how many then stayed. DCC Jones replied he would have to check the data and confirm.
ACTION – DCC Jones to share the retention figures following the “Stay and Stay” interview with the OPCC.
- 7.5 The Acting Chief Executive asked if the constabulary keep in contact with leavers to see if they would consider returning, perhaps via a reminder campaign. DCC Jones replied that at present this is not done, but it is a consideration for the future.
- 7.6 The Policy and Commissioning Officer asked what does the term “open” mean with reference to the e-PDR system at point 6.1.2 of the report. DCC Jones responded that “open” means that within the system an employee has an annual development review set up, with set objectives for the year. All the PDR’s have an integrity health list, which prompts managers to have a conversation with an employee, as a check list to see if they have any areas of concern.

8 Any Other Business

- 8.1 There was no other business.

The open part of the meeting closed at 10.52AM when members of the public left the meeting.

PRIVATE AGENDA

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

9 Closed minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2024 (Paper AP25/07)

- 9.1 The confidential minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2024 were agreed as an accurate record and approved by the Police and Crime Commissioner.

10 Strategic Policing Requirements (Paper AP25/08)

- 10.1 Suffolk Constabulary gave a summary of this report and invited questions.

11 Civil Claims and Employment Tribunals (Paper AP25/09)

- 11.1 Suffolk Constabulary invited questions on this report.

The meeting closed at 11.09AM.

Summary of Actions

Item / Paper	Action	Owner
4.3 Improving Confidence and Satisfaction	ACC Bridger to provide the PCC with further information behind the DA surveys, to include lessons learned, emerging themes, and areas of improvement.	ACC Bridger
4.4 Improving Confidence and Satisfaction	ACC Bridger to provide further details on the diversionary programmes within Operation Spotlight to the PCC.	ACC Bridger
6.6 Use of Police Powers in Suffolk	ACC Bridger to look at the disproportionality data at point 2.2.4 for East Suffolk compared to other districts of a similar size and update the PCC.	ACC Bridger
6.7 Use of Police Powers in Suffolk	ACC Bridger to confirm if the figures at point 2.3.4 are correct and update the PCC.	ACC Bridger
7.2 Workforce Report	DCC Jones to include the figures for absenteeism, sickness and restricted duties in the next Workforce Report.	DCC Jones
7.4 Workforce Report	DCC Jones to share the retention figures following the "Stay and Stay" interview with the OPCC.	DCC Jones