



SUFFOLK CONSTABULARY

ORIGINATOR: CHIEF CONSTABLE

PAPER NO: AP25/15

SUBMITTED TO: ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL –
7 MARCH 2025

SUBJECT: COLLABORATION UPDATE REPORT (SUFFOLK)

SUMMARY:

1. The attached report (Appendix A) provides an overview of the strategic aspects of collaboration and the impact on Suffolk Constabulary. It reports on national, regional and local future change plans for collaborated functions within the preferred partnership by exception.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) is asked to consider the progress made by the Constabulary and raise issues with the Chief Constable as appropriate to the PCC's role in holding the Chief Constable to account.

DETAIL OF THE SUBMISSION

1. KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

- 1.1 This report provides an update on critical and strategic changes across all of the collaborated units, be they local, regional or national. The information contained in the report is by exception.
- 1.2 Governance of the overarching programme is currently being reviewed.
- 1.3 New projects and significant changes to the overarching programme plan are reviewed and discussed through the Strategic Planning and Monitoring Meeting which is also chaired by a Deputy Chief Constable. The Board attendees includes the Assistant Chief Officer so that an early impact assessment can be made as to the resource implications from any proposed changes.
- 1.4 Implementation of the overarching change programme is monitored through regular Project/ Programme Boards that are chaired by the Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) for that project or programme. The SRO role is normally of a rank of Chief Officer or Head of Department. The Board attendees include a range of key stakeholders to ensure that progress is communicated throughout the organisation(s).

2. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 None, other than those outlined in Appendix A.

3. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

- 3.1 None, other than those outlined in Appendix A.

4. CHIEF OFFICER CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The strategic partnership between Suffolk and Norfolk is very strong and enables us to deliver a very good level of service, particularly in specialist teams. It means we can also invest in neighbourhood policing and public contact, with the benefits of low levels of crime and high levels of public confidence. The Joint Transformation Programme (JTP) will change some of the governance and oversight of collaboration to make it more effective and efficient. This includes Strategic Planning and Monitoring transitioning into a Transformational Change Board (TCB). This will continue to be chaired by a Deputy Chief Constable but will include a more unified and transparent view of the resources committed into change and alignment with strategic priorities.
- 4.2 Additionally, some important changes to criminal justice structures are being implemented to make it more efficient and effective. Case progression, business support, criminal disclosure and file quality will all be managed differently, and the Roads Collisions Support Team will now form part of a broader Traffic Justice Unit. Our new criminal justice model will provide a better service for investigators and victims by expediting and improving case submissions.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Working in partnership remains a key enabler for Suffolk Constabulary allowing not only delivery of the Constabularies core vision but the more efficient and effective delivery of public sector services as a whole. The constabulary continues to develop partnerships with various public bodies in the local policing arena including; Probation, NHS, Fire. However, this report focusses on the preferred partnership with Norfolk Constabulary. This partnership includes; Business Support functions; such as HR and Finance, Specialist Operations; such as Roads Policing, Forensics and Intelligence, and Criminal Justice.
- 1.2 Through the preferred partnership, Suffolk (and Norfolk) have saved a minimum of £24.7M (the combined total is £52.1M across both forces) and continue to make savings in existing collaborative spaces.
- 1.3 The annual Service & Financial Planning process continues to generate savings from existing collaborative efforts. Moving forward, efforts are focusing on reviewing service levels and risk tolerance, using tools like the Force Management Statement and Risk Registers.
- 1.4 A new Joint Transformation Programme (JTP) has been established to deliver significant and recurrent financial savings through transformational change. The transformational changes will be delivered by strengthening the Constabularies' current collaboration and building process improvement and automation capabilities.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 This report provides an update on any strategic change to the ongoing collaborative work across Suffolk and Norfolk in relation to the preferred partnership between the Constabularies but also linked to wider workstreams at a regional and national level.
- 2.2 The paper includes; new requirements, progress since the last report, and any risks or challenges being experienced.
- 2.3 The report focusses on change programmes/projects that involve wider collaboration and therefore does not cover the local Suffolk only change programme.

3.0 Local Collaboration

3.1 **People Portfolio**

- 3.1.1 The People Directorate implemented their final phase of its new Target Operating Model (TOM) in March 2024. The changes allowed the directorate to strengthen and enhance services responding to the national and local challenges, including but not limited to; the national uplift programme, detective shortages, attraction, organisational culture programme, and engagement and retention.

- 3.1.2 The Joiners Movers Leavers (JML) programme included the implementation of a new e-recruitment system. The system has improved the candidate recruitment experience and has the potential to deliver organisational wide efficiencies within recruitment processes in the longer term.
- 3.1.3 Work is ongoing to enhance vetting processes and reporting metrics in light of the recent Vetting Authorised Professional Practice (APP). An overarching task and finish group, chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable (DCC), also tracks and monitors the recommendations outlined for Policing as per the recent Angelini report.
- 3.1.4 A skills management project is nearing completion to implement a module-based system that tracks operational skills across the organisation. The Custody module successfully went live in September. It is anticipated that, the Professionalising Investigation Programme (PIP) module, and related skills, will launch by the end of the financial year. The project's aim is to ensure that the forces have adequately trained officers in specific skill areas, enabling efficient deployment. The project will also assist in managing the longer-term succession planning of core skills across the organisation, thus reducing unnecessary abstraction from the front line and reducing the strain on the Resource Management Unit (RMU) when handling mutual aid or internal deployment requests to incidents.
- 3.1.5 Work is ongoing on the Public and Personal Safety Training (PPST) project, which is to ensure compliance with updated guidelines from the College of Policing. The latest guidance requires at least 12 hours of PPST per annum, which is an increase based on our current training regime. This additionality requires investment in the number of training posts that we have in the joint Learning and Development department. To ensure we maximise the investment required we are reviewing the curriculum requirements to ensure that the training is delivered in the most efficient way minimising abstraction from the front line. The project is due to go live in April 2025.
- 3.1.6 Finally, the project which saw the delivery of the implementation of the new Joint Learning Management System (LMS) has been successfully delivered on time.

3.2 Joint Operational Portfolio

- 3.2.1 The Athena version 6 upgrade, originally scheduled for late January 2024, went live in July 2024. During this period, Norfolk and Suffolk had to implement several of their business continuity processes to manage several issues that arose until they were fully resolved.
- 3.2.2 The Athena/Digital Case File (DCF) project aims to streamline and digitise the creation and sharing of case files across criminal justice agencies. The project consists of two phases. The first phase, focused on enhancing the Athena interface to improve data quality and create efficiencies in data review and correction, went live in July. Phase 2 of the Athena DCF project will introduce a two-way interface between the police and criminal justice partners, driving additional efficiencies. Currently, Phase 2 delivery is delayed until late 2025, whilst phase 1 is embed and the impact of any National Standard changes are reviewed and financial year 25/26 budget approvals.

- 3.2.3 A Business Case was approved, and implementation is being finalised in relation to the restructuring of the Joint Criminal Justice Services (CJS) crime, disclosure, and business support functions. The aim was to streamline the current team and management structure, enhance service delivery and accelerate the Criminal Justice Service process. This initiative seeks to improve the experience for victims while achieving cost savings.
- 3.2.3 In April 2024, a new shift pattern for the Road and Armed Policing Team (RAPT) was successfully implemented, enhancing operational efficiency, and reducing overtime, while also boosting team morale and overall wellbeing.
- 3.2.4 A review of the current Electronic Property System has resulted in an options paper that recommends a new supplier that will deliver an enhanced product and improved functionality. Funding has been approved as part of the budget build for FY25/26 when implementation will commence.
- 3.2.5 Other joint projects of note include the delivery of the in-cell video technology which will reduce the need for Inspectors and other professionals to travel to different Police Investigation Centre's (PICs) across the counties of both Suffolk and Norfolk. Further utilisation of technology has been agreed through the installation of Logitech Video Conferencing (VC) units which allows for a remote interpretation service for detainees in a secure room, which has seen an increase in video use of interpreter service and a reduction on in-person attendance and resulting contract costs.

3.3 Pan-Organisational Portfolio

- 3.3.1 A project to deliver an accredited Forensic Medical Examination service for Norfolk and Suffolk is underway. The objective set by the Forensic Science Regulator (FSR) is to have all Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) facilities across England and Wales accredited to the standards set out in ISO 15189 by October 2025. Due to the nature of the services required a decision was made to outsource this to a third-party provider. A new 4-year contract has been commissioned that means that the Forensic Medical Examinations will be managed in their entirety by a third-party provider, and they will hold the accreditation. This work has been delivered in partnership with local health justice teams and other regional forces. Work remains ongoing to bring estates facilities up to the level required for accreditation and a new site has just been identified for Suffolk. The contract and the estates modifications come at additional cost to the force.
- 3.3.2 The Digital Investigation Transformation Programme is currently reviewing best practice across Forces Nationally and ensuring compliance with International Organisation for Standards (ISO) requirements. This will continue over the next year. Benchmarking amongst other force Digital Investigation teams continues. ICT resource has now been secured to start scoping options available to hold the significant amount of data we hold within Digital Forensics. A full review of software and tools across all Digital investigation teams is taking place to ensure we have the right products available, to best optimise the service to victims of crime. We are expecting a new Forensic Service Regulator's Code of Practice early 2025 which will be incorporated into the programme's plans. A recent report into training opportunities

amongst the Digital Investigation teams has been written and will be considered by the programme lead.

3.4 **Infrastructure Portfolio**

- 3.4.1 Work has completed in delivering the ICT Strategy to support the current local and national version of the Digital Strategy. This included consolidating and rationalising systems to streamline the ICT environment and maximise return on investment. To meet all the existing demands, requirements and strategies, a new ICT Target Operating Model (TOM) was implemented in Spring/Summer 2024. The TOM will also focus on ensuring we have the right resources, skills and opportunities to retain and attract suitable staff. This review was in response to risks and issues raised regarding capacity and capabilities within the department which the business case aimed to address.
- 3.4.2 A Joint Programme Board has been established to review the Command-and-Control (C&C) system used by both Suffolk and Norfolk Command and Control Rooms (CCR). The current system is due to be updated by the end of next year. Work to date aims to enhance and stabilise the existing platform before implementation of any upgrades. A review of CCR processes will enable us to ensure we maximise the benefits of any new technology deployed.

4.0 **National Collaboration Initiatives**

4.1 **Digital Public Contact – Single Online Home (SOH)**

- 4.1.1 Suffolk have transitioned to the Single Online Home (SOH) website. The website makes use of a nation-wide digital platform allowing all constabularies to offer the public a consistent way of engaging with their local force and accessing police services online.
- 4.1.2 Analysis of the new digital platform indicates that benefits range from improved user experience, including less attrition in online reporting, fewer and reduced call lengths along with fewer requirements for the public to visit a station in person through to improved data quality and more efficient data input into core systems.
- 4.1.3 Work is ongoing within the joint Digital Communications department building integrations between the website and the core operating systems to provide internal efficiencies and improved data quality. National pilots of a 'MyPolice Portal' which is the next generation of SOH, allows the public greater access to digital police services are being followed and closely monitored.
- 4.1.4 The introduction of the SOH platform has helped deliver more robust solutions for: Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), Rape and Sexual Assault and Missing Persons, all of which can now be reported online. Online reporting services have been further enhanced, including; Report a vehicle with no tax or MOT (from December 2023), Report Stalking & Harassment (from June 2024) and Report Spiking (from November 2024). A 'Your area' was added to the force website in February 2024 and it focuses on community matters relevant to where people live/work. In addition, a

national police.uk app was launched in March 2024 and drives traffic to the force website.

4.2 National Law Enforcement Data Programme (NLEDP)

- 4.2.1 The Law Enforcement Data Service (LEDS) system is set to replace the current Police National Computer (PNC) system which will be decommissioned in 2025/2026.
- 4.2.2 Suffolk are live with all four of the currently available modules and LEDS Property becomes the system of record, is taking place at the start of November 2024. There remains a significant amount of work to deliver before full parity with the PNC system is achieved. This includes update modules for vehicles, implementation of the Criminal Justice, wanted and missing person modules.
- 4.2.3 The LEDS product has allowed the force to make considerable progress in utilisation of identity access management and SailPoint technology, receiving recognition at a national level.

5.0 Regional Collaboration Initiatives

- 5.1 Suffolk continues to be part of Eastern Region Innovation Network (ERIN). ERIN maintains focus on regionally identified priorities and local force requirements including improving productivity by reducing the administrative burden on officers and staff, improving the service to victims of violence against women and girls, improving staff and officer skills and capabilities. Projects include; Rapid Video Response (RVR), exploring the use of The Doc-Defender tool utilises Artificial Intelligence (AI) to redact personal information from documents such as witness statements, and Robotic Process Automation (RPA) which looks at the automation of new and existing business processes using robots or a 'digital workforce' which can be replicate the activities and actions of staff and officers; thus, taking away repetitive tasks from staff and freeing up the capacity which can be deployed to achieve better outcomes and savings.
- 5.2 The Eastern Region Special Operations Unit (ERSOU) leads the response to both Serious Organised Crime and Counter Terrorism across the Eastern Region. With geographical coverage for seven Forces (Norfolk, Suffolk, Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Essex and Kent), it is one of nine Regional Organised Crime Units (ROCUs) within England and Wales. The Counter Terrorism Intelligence Unit (CTIU) within ERSOU leads the CT response to six constituent forces, with the CT response in Kent provided by the South East Region. ERSOU operates closely with not only its constituent forces, but also with the National Crime Agency (NCA), CT Policing HQ in London, and partners from the UK Intelligence Community (UKIC).
 - 5.2.1 ERSOU is led by Assistant Chief Constable Adam Ball. ACC Ball has regular direct contact with the Suffolk Chief Officer group and provides updates to the regional Deputy Chief Constables and Chief Constables meetings. ERSOU is governed by the ERSOU Board. This regional quarterly board provides the governance, strategic direction, and oversight for ERSOU and is furnished with a detailed quarterly performance report.

5.2.2 During 2024, ERSOU introduced a cryptocurrency asset recover team (CART) following a successful bid for Home Office grant funding. This team provides a specialist function for the seven forces in the Eastern Region and is already demonstrating benefit through the identification and subsequent seizure of cryptocurrency assets suspected to be proceeds of criminal activity. Year two funding has recently been secured enabling this team to continue to develop and build on their initial successes.

5.3 The 7Force regional network continues to have management and oversight of the following legacy projects:

5.3.1 Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP) with an estimated delivery date of 2029/2030.

5.3.2 7F Forensic - Nimbus System (new forensic case management system, replacement for the current Socrates system) Go live currently been delayed from Quarter 3 of 2024/25 to Quarter 4.

5.3.3 5Force Digital Asset Management System (DAMS) -_project closed in January 2024 however work continues to migrate legacy data over to the new system, this will further assist benefit realisation through enhanced search facilities along with cost savings through the removal of the legacy system.

6.0 Corporate Governance

6.1 A number of Section22a Collaboration Agreements operate across Suffolk Constabulary operating at national, regional, and local levels.

6.2 The following agreements have been entered into / renewed in 2024:

- 7F Strategic Management of the Chronicle solution
- Corporate Communications (Digital Comms Team)
- Estates & Facilities
- Information, Communications and Technology (ICT)
- Transport & Uniform Services
- HR / People Directorate

6.3 The following agreements are in the process of being developed / reviewed:

- 7Force Firearms Training & Compliance Function
- Athena Hub
- Eastern Region Specialist Operations Unit (ERSOU)
- Suffolk Civil Nuclear Constabulary

6.4 The Suffolk only drone's collaboration with Suffolk County Council (Fire and Rescue) ended in March 2024. The local Investigation Management Unit (IMU) was withdrawn in 2024.