

The Rt Hon Yvette Cooper MP
Home Secretary
Home Office
2 Marsham Street
London

Our ref:TP/AH09

26 August 2025

Dear Home Secretary

RE: Joint case building by the police and Crown Prosecution Service.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this Joint National report.

There were three recommendations which impacted on police forces. Suffolk Constabulary has provided a response to these recommendations which I attach and will publish on my website.

The force has established governance and decision-making processes to ensure timely investigations with ongoing improvements to facilitate effective communication with the CPS. I will continue to monitor these measures through my Accountability and Performance arrangements.

Yours sincerely



Tim Passmore, Police and Crime Commissioner for Suffolk



Response to HMICFRS' report: *Joint case building by the police and Crown Prosecution Service: final report*, July 2025

In July 2025, HMICFRS and His Majesty's Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate (HMCPSI) published the findings from their joint thematic inspection of the building of prosecution cases by the police and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS).

The report made a total of 18 recommendations aimed at improving the efficiency of the criminal justice system and leading to better outcomes for victims.

Of the 18 recommendations made in the report, three of these are for police forces. Suffolk Constabulary accepts these recommendations and the below sets out the constabulary's response to these.

Recommendation 5

By July 2026, police forces should have in place as part of their gatekeeping or comparable arrangements:

- an effective governance and decision-making capability to ensure investigations are timely and completed to the appropriate standards
- agreed contact arrangements in place in forces and Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) Areas to facilitate clear, consistent, and transparent communication between police and CPS
- sufficient, trained, and competent decision-makers
- effective and efficient systems and processes to manage case file submission queues, to avoid unnecessary delays and risks to cases subject to statutory time limits.

The below sets out Suffolk Constabulary's response to each point.

An effective governance and decision-making capability to ensure investigations are timely and completed to the appropriate standards

In relation to all investigations, Suffolk adopts an 8-Point Plan (8PP) to ensure good governance, decision making and a timely approach. Guidance is available on the intranet which has been shared with colleagues as a link and is available to print out as an easy to digest A4 memoir. It provides specific instructions in the form of the following prompts to investigating officers/staff and their supervisors:

- *Inputting/Investigating officers/staff: Using the information in your 8PP complete a separate entry explaining your plan to progress this investigation, your proposed lines of enquiry and the timescales to complete. If there is any threat or risk to any person, discuss with your supervisor/manager.*

- *Supervisors/Managers: Review the 8PP and investigation plan. Is it reasonable and proportionate? Will it maximise the opportunity for the best positive outcome? Are there any enquires missing? Are you content with the timescales proposed?*

The 8PP then forms a key part of Inspector audits, with feedback provided to officers and staff, both positive and negative. The audits specifically ask whether the review from the Supervisor is entered in a timely fashion following the crime being recorded.

Supervisors are required to conduct regular reviews of investigations to check quality and timeliness and set appropriate actions. This process is supported by the ‘Mi Team’ Power BI tool which all first- and second-line managers have been trained to use. This dashboard provides real time data on live investigation workloads and flags impending Statutory Time Limits (STLs) (and cases where a STL may apply according to charging standards). For RASSO investigations, there is a further requirement for a Detective Inspector to review new investigations within seven days and then every six months.

In terms of governance of investigative processes, this data is then used to inform local performance meetings where timeliness and progress of investigations is monitored. Any investigation that has a suspect outstanding for more than 28 days has an Inspector’s audit recorded and is monitored through local management meetings and through Suffolk Constabulary’s Local Policing Board, chaired by a Chief Officer.

Timeliness of recording investigations is also routinely audited by the Crime Data Integrity (CDI) team and is an agenda item on the constabulary’s Investigation Standards Board.

Agreed contact arrangements in place in forces and CPS areas to facilitate clear, consistent and transparent communication between police and CPS

Suffolk Constabulary has a good working relationship with East of England CPS with appropriate governance and clear lines of communication functioning well at strategic and tactical levels.

Senior leadership from the police and CPS meet quarterly at Strategic Joint Operational Improvement Meetings (JOIMs) to oversee performance and establish joint priorities and shared objectives around case building and progression.

The tactical delivery of improvements in case building sits with the Operational JOIM, which is chaired by the police CJS (Criminal Justice Service) team and attended by CPS operational and legal managers and police representatives from an array of investigative and support teams. This JOIM develops actions and uses data to monitor progress. It is a forum in which the police and CPS hold themselves and one another to account for performance and delivery of actions.

Police and CPS leaders involved in the Strategic and Operational JOIM structures are also in regular contact outside of these scheduled meetings to build relationships and enable fast, joined up responses to changes in legislation and other emerging issues.

Improvements are also being made to the way in which the agencies communicate ‘on the ground’. There is a clearly defined, resilient escalation process between the CPS and the police with CJS senior management oversight.

The police and CPS will also be introducing live Microsoft Teams channels to address minor case issues and real time conversations and are scheduled to pilot expedited charging in some Domestic Abuse cases later in 2025. All of these initiatives will involve direct communication between CPS admin teams, lawyers, police officers and CJS staff.

Sufficient, trained and competent decision-makers

Recommendations 6 and 7 (below) will formalise and define a national standard for training and supervisory competence around case building and decision making, but Suffolk Constabulary is committed to raising standards in the interim.

Case building performance in Suffolk is assessed thorough the CPS Director's Guidance Assessment (DGA) process and is consistently above the national average, but it is accepted that, due to the complexity of case building requirements, enhanced support for practitioners is critical to improving timeliness, outcomes and victim experience.

The CJS team have developed a Power BI dashboard to track performance against key case building metrics which will be used at a tactical level to identify themes and training needs down to team and individual officer level. This data will inform the activities of a newly established Joint Norfolk and Suffolk File Quality Improvement Group and enable the targeting of resources to provide support where it is most needed.

Joint Norfolk and Suffolk CJS case progression staff were trained in July 2025 on evidence review and DG6.

Evidence review training is currently provided to Sergeants in Suffolk by Learning & Development as part of the Stripes programme and through packages available on the online Learning Management System.

Effective and efficient systems and processes to manage case file submission queues, to avoid unnecessary delays and risks to cases subject to statutory time limits

The current process makes use of the Mi Team dashboard referred to above, enabling the effective tracking of investigations with no case attached. Once a case has been created, the following processes and safeguards are in place:

- *Case submissions to Suffolk and Norfolk's Joint Criminal Justice Unit (CJU) are added to a triage list and monitored for offence dates, submission dates and STLs*
- *Postal Requisition allocation is prioritised according to STLs and other flags (e.g. sexual offences, domestic violence, youth and CPS advice)*
- *Charge and Bail custody data is used to monitor file submissions and identify any cases that have not been submitted to CJU by the target date. To mitigate risks, the CJU will chase any missing submissions with the Officer in Case at this stage and will force workflows if needed.*

In addition, there are the following planned improvements:

- *Development of an allocations tracker is in train to monitor timeliness of NGAP (Not Guilty Anticipated Plea) cases from allocation to CJ Case Progression and support officers to CPS Submission. This will provide management with better visibility of NGAP cases and any*

- backlogs building and enhance the ability of section leaders to review data and mitigate risks around STLs. A traffic light system will be incorporated to assist with prioritisation.*
- *Re-introduction of insight reports (previously disabled by a system upgrade) providing live crime system data on cases approaching STLs that haven't been submitted to CJU.*

Recommendation 7

Within 12 months of the completion of recommendation 6, police forces should ensure that every supervisor responsible for assessing case files prior to referral to the Crown Prosecution Service for a charging decision is trained in case file building and Director's Guidance on Charging (6th edition) (DG6) quality assurance.

A strategy to support the delivery of this training programme within the recommended timescale in Suffolk Constabulary will be developed between the CJS Disclosure and File Quality Support Team, the Learning & Development Team and Investigation Improvement teams. This will be done jointly with Norfolk Constabulary.

Recommendation 8

By July 2026, the police and Crown Prosecution Service at Joint Operational Improvement Meetings should develop a joint local training plan to increase awareness and understanding of each other's roles, including the operation of IT systems.

This recommendation will be progressed through the Operational JOIM where it was added as a joint CPS and police action in July 2025.