



SUFFOLK CONSTABULARY

ORIGINATOR: CHIEF CONSTABLE

PAPER NO: AP25/48

SUBMITTED TO: ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL –
21 NOVEMBER 2025

SUBJECT: TACKLING SERIOUS VIOLENCE

SUMMARY:

1. This report details the current performance, demand, and activity in relation to Serious Violence. It provides an update in respect of activity being carried out within policing to tackle and prevent serious violence.
2. The period of reporting refers to the date range of 01/09/24 – 31/08/2025, the previous 12 months refers to 01/09/23– 31/08/24. The 2019 baseline has now been removed as any residual Covid impact should be viewed as permanent change.

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.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Tackling serious violence is a Constabulary commitment within the Police and Crime Plan 2022-2025 [Police-Crime-Plan-2022-2025.pdf \(suffolk-pcc.gov.uk\)](https://police-crime-plan-2022-2025.pdf (suffolk-pcc.gov.uk)) and as a priority within the Chief Constable's Force Strategic Plan 2023-2028. [Chief Constable's Delivery Plan 2023-2028 | Suffolk Constabulary](https://chief-constable-delivery-plan-2023-2028-suffolk-constabulary.pdf (suffolk-pcc.gov.uk)).
- 1.2 It is recognised that the Constabulary's response to offences involving serious violence is imperative to keeping people safe, protecting people from serious harm supporting victims and establishing wider trust, confidence, and satisfaction in our service.
- 1.3 The Serious Violence Duty is a partnership where relevant services work together to share information and target interventions, where possible through existing partnership structures and collaborate to prevent and reduce serious violence within their local communities. A panel convene to agree funding over 12 months around funding of specific intervention programmes. The Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment is completed by Suffolk Office and Data and Analytics, [Suffolk Observatory – SODA – Serious Violence Duty – Strategic Needs Assessment](https://suffolk-observatory-soda-serious-violence-duty-strategic-needs-assessment.pdf (suffolk-pcc.gov.uk)). This was refreshed in January 2025.
- 1.4 The Home Office serious violence strategy defines serious violence as specific types of crime such as homicide, knife crime, and gun crime and areas of criminality where serious violence or its threat is inherent, such as in gangs and County Lines drug dealing. It also includes emerging crime threats faced in some areas of the country such as the use of corrosive substances as a weapon.
- 1.5 This report does include violence without injury, although this is not defined as serious violence, it does provide the opportunity to reflect on Suffolks performance and holistic response to violence as a whole and provides reassurance that reduction in serious violent offending has not had a resultant increase in other violent offending.
- 1.6 The primary offences and themes this report refer to are:
 - Violence with injury
 - Violence without Injury
 - Knife Crime
 - County Lines
 - Clear Hold Build
- 1.7 Whilst Rape and Serious Sexual Offences and domestic abuse could be included within the Serious Violence criteria, these offences are reported on separately in the 'Supporting Vulnerable Victims' report. Other areas, such as Child Exploitation and Gangs, are reported in the Supporting Children and Young People paper. Some reference is, however, made to actions we are taking to tackle broader offences involving Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG), such as Project Vigilant.

2. SERIOUS VIOLENCE REDUCTION

- 2.1 The Constabulary has both internal and external governance structures that governs the constabulary response to Serious Violence. The external governance focuses on the partnership approach to tackling Serious Violence and includes various meetings that report into the Safer Stranger Communities Board:

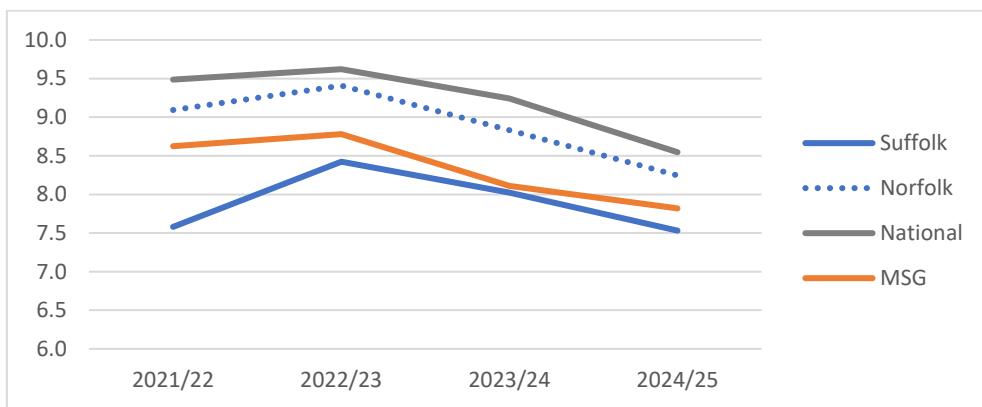
- 2.2 Criminal Exploitation Steering Group: This meeting directs and monitors the partnership response to Criminal Exploitation, this includes those who are in victim of both criminal and sexual exploitation, this includes those who engage in County Lines.
- 2.3 Violence Against Women and Girls Steering Group: Partnership response to violence against women and girls across the county, this is supported by the Violence against Women and Girls + strategy and has a systems wide action plan, including engaging with communities, diversion and intervention activities and ensuring that the system is co-ordinating responses. This reports into the Safer Stronger Communities Board.
- 2.4 Combatting Drugs: Combines partners within Suffolk working to an action plan aligned to National requirements. A current strand of work seeks to improve reach and access to class A users at greater risk of synthetic opioids which are seeing increased deaths across the UK in 2024.
- 2.5 Serious Violence Duty Meeting: Steers activity and ensure all requirements of the duty are undertaken, making decisions on behalf of the Suffolk system, with a focus on proven interventions. The police continue to chair this meeting.
- 2.6 The Constabulary is a vital part of these partnership meetings, and the meeting ensures a co-ordinated partnership response to some of the key drivers of violence that have been identified in the Strategic Needs Assessment. In addition to traditional policing methods there is a focus on primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention to both individuals and communities.
- 2.7 There is also a significant amount of activity at both strategic and tactical level within the Constabulary that focus' on serious violence. These have a range of governance structures that include the following:
- 2.8 Bi-monthly Force Performance Meeting: This meeting reviews force performance, how Suffolk is performing in a national context, as well as reviewing the most similar group forces.
- 2.9 Local Policing Board: This meeting reviews force, command and area performance and monitors crime trends and solved rates. This meeting provides oversight of both internal and partnership working to improve performance.
- 2.10 Domestic Abuse Delivery Group: This directs the force response to Domestic Abuse, which makes up a significant proportion of the overall violent crime.
- 2.11 Violence against Women and Girls Internal Governance: This supports a robust response across the Constabulary, both organisationally and operationally, embedding learning taken from published reports.
- 2.12 Drugs Board: Focuses on the Constabulary response to drugs, directing and monitoring both prevention activity and targeted response to drugs and associated crime across the county.
- 2.13 Tactical Tasking and Co-ordination Groups: Monthly meetings held on area and at force level that monitors violence and directs activity and targets resource to address violence hotspots using temporal and geographical analysis. The meeting also uses Vulnerable Victim, Offender and Location data to ensure that protective measures are put around victims and that offenders are targets. The Force Tactical Tasking and Co-ordination Group meeting monitors the progress of Clear Hold Build for the Constabulary.
- 2.14 Clear Hold Build Strategic Group: Monthly meeting of internal and external stakeholders co-chaired by local Policing Chief Superintendents that provides strategic governance.

3. PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

3.1 Performance in Suffolk around Serious Violence is consistent and better than the national and 'Most Similar Group' average. Performance is monitored through the Force Performance meeting that are held bi-monthly and aspects, such as Domestic Abuse and Violence against Women and Girls are reported through the Local Policing Board. Monitoring crime trends inform the Area Tactical Tasking and Co-ordination Group (TTCG), who look holistically to identify key locations, repeat victims and priority offenders and review intelligence to identify the causation of any identified changes to trends. This allows for targeted activity where there are increases in crime reporting and impact of interventions are monitored by local commanders.

3.2 The table below demonstrates Suffolk's violence with injury per 1000 per population performance. This is measured against the National average, our most similar group of forces (Norfolk, Warwickshire, North Yorkshire, Wiltshire and Devon and Cornwall) and neighbouring force Norfolk. Suffolk has less offences recorded consistently against Norfolk and the National average although the trend noted from 2022 was a reduced difference against the Most Similar Groups, however this difference has begun to increase.

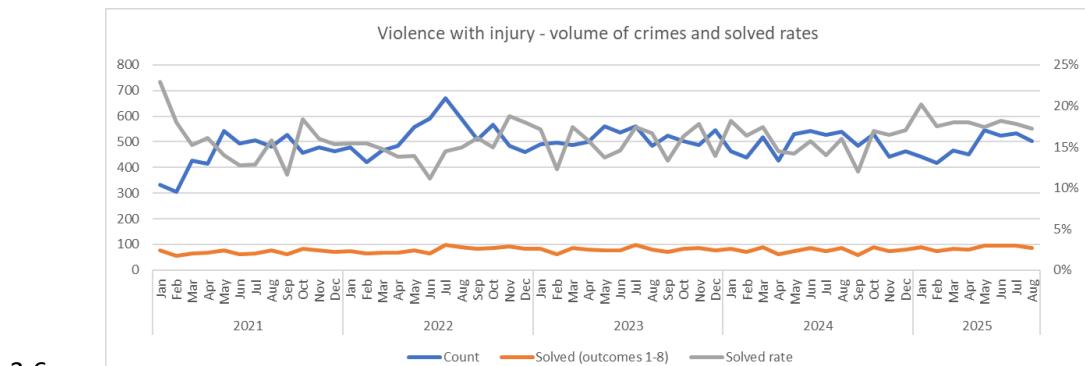
3.3



a) Office of National Statistics ((ONS) figures showing number of violence with injury crimes per 1,000 population for the 12 months to the end of March 2025 compared with 12 months to the end of March 2024, March 2023, and March 2022. Comparison is of Suffolk against neighbouring force Norfolk, Suffolk's Most Similar Group, and National rates.

3.4 The chart below shows violence with injury offences and the solved rates at county level. From a peak of reported incidents in the Summer 2022, there has been an overall decrease in violence with injury. The usual summer trend demonstrates an increase from May to August before decreasing from September onwards. This aligns to peak demand periods. This is reflected to a lesser degree in May to July 2025 with a slight reduction in August. However, the overall crime rates continue a year-on-year reduction. The last 12 months comparative to the previous 12 months show a reduction of 4%. This reduction is a continuing trend with a 4.7% reduction as a long terms average.

3.5 The solved rate has increased against the previous 12 months from 15.7% to 17.5% an increase of 1.7%. This is a positive trend that is continually monitored through internal governance structures. There have been improvements made to the investigative response, focus on out of court resolutions and victim engagement. These have had a positive impact.

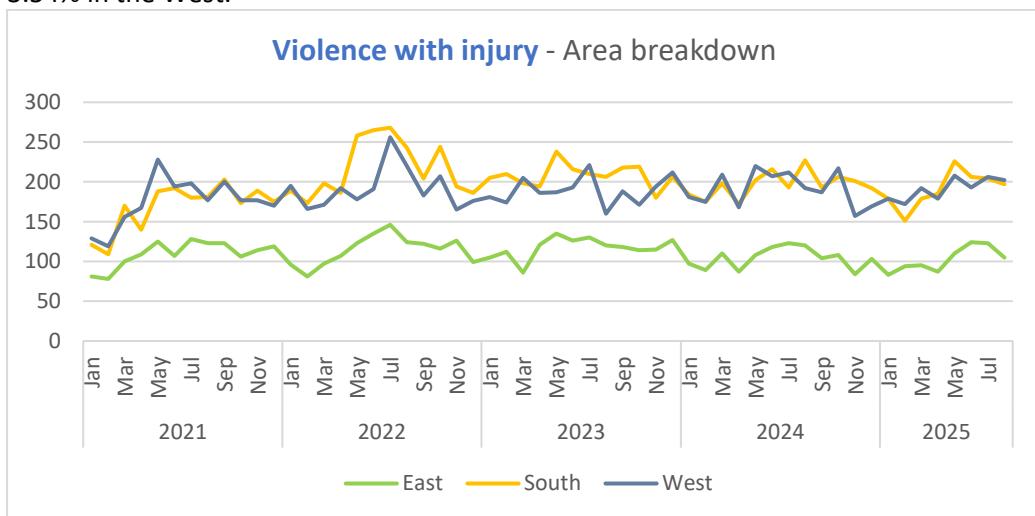


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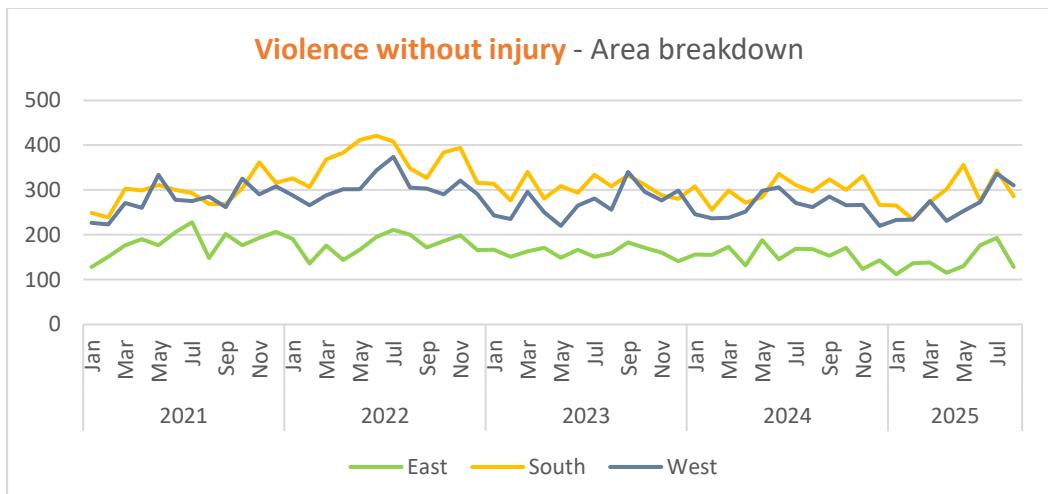
b) Monthly figures for Violence with Injury crimes and solved rates across Suffolk, 01/01/2021 to 31/08/2025

3.7 The following chart at c), shows the longer-term trend of violence with injury broken down into the three geographical command areas over the last 4 and a half years. There has been a steady reduction of violence with injury offences across the three areas over the past three years, with a reduction of 7.4% in the East, 6.0% in the South and 1.8% in the West.

3.8 The chart at d) below shows the levels of violence without injury from 2021 to 2025 across the three geographical command areas. As demonstrated in the previous slides the levels of violence without injury peaked in 2022 following reduced levels during the pandemic. Levels of violence without injury have fallen consistently since. Looking against the long-term average Violence without Injury has reduced by 11.3% in the East, 7.8% in the South and by 3.54% in the West.



c) Monthly volumes of Violence with Injury by geographical command area of Suffolk. Data from 01/01/2021 to 31/07/2025



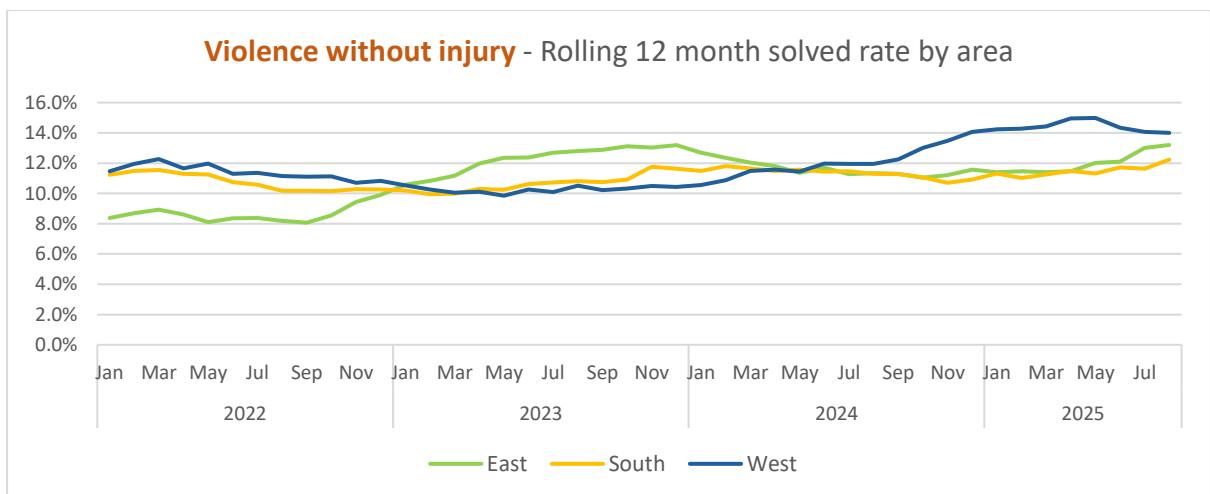
d) Monthly volumes of Violence without Injury by geographical command area of Suffolk. Data from 01/01/2021 to 31/07/2025.

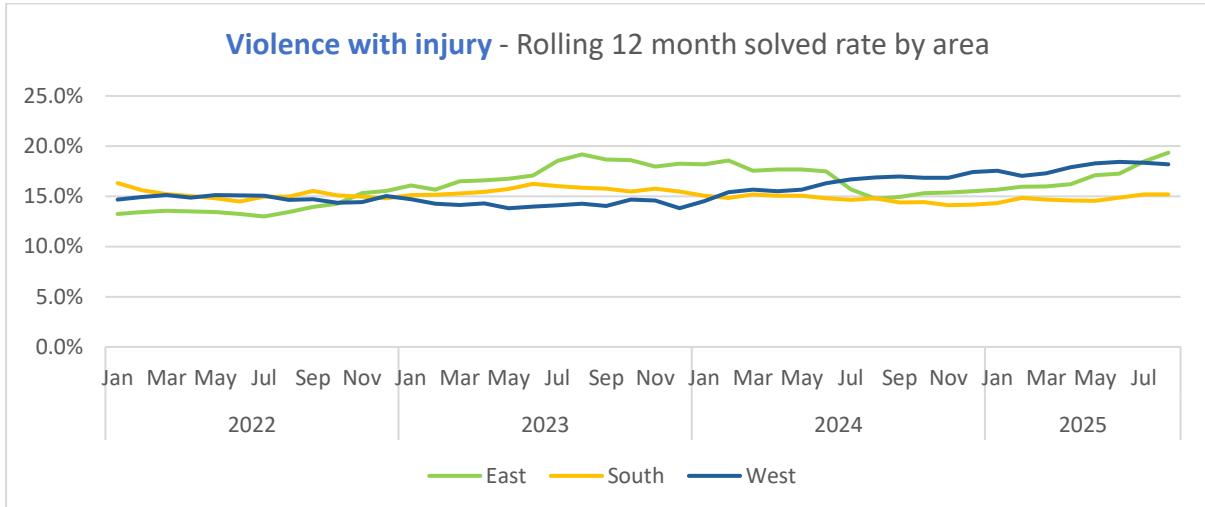
3.9 The below chart e) shows the levels of violence with and without injury comparing the last 12 months, 01/09/2024 to 31/08/2025, to the previous 12 months 01/09/23 to 31/08/24 over the three geographical command areas. All violence has reduced across Suffolk by 623 offences over the last 12 months. There have been reductions in violence with injury across all three areas, with the East seeing the largest reductions.

		L12M	P12M	Percent difference
Violence with injury	East	1220	1326	-8.0%
	South	2319	2390	-3.0%
	West	2261	2329	-2.9%
Violence without injury	East	1721	1941	-11.3%
	South	3556	3576	-0.6%
	West	3184	3322	-4.2%

e) Tabular form showing violence with and without injury by geographical command area for the last 12 months (01/09/2024 – 31/08/2025) and previous 12 months (01/09/2023 – 31/08/2024), and the percentage difference.

3.10 The table and graph below at f) and g) show the solved rates of violence with injury across the three geographical command areas over the last three years and the overall numbers of positive outcomes across Suffolk. The solved crime rate across the three geographical areas has increased to 17.2%. A minor variance from the figure reported in section 3.5 is attributable to 0.1% of crimes not being allocated to a specific command area. The Constabulary continues to demonstrate sustained improvement in solved outcomes across all crime types. The enhancement of investigative standards is strategically overseen by the Investigative Standards Board, chaired by the Suffolk Assistant Chief Constable, and supported by dedicated sub-groups. These sub-groups are tasked with driving continuous improvement in investigative practices to support the delivery of positive outcomes.





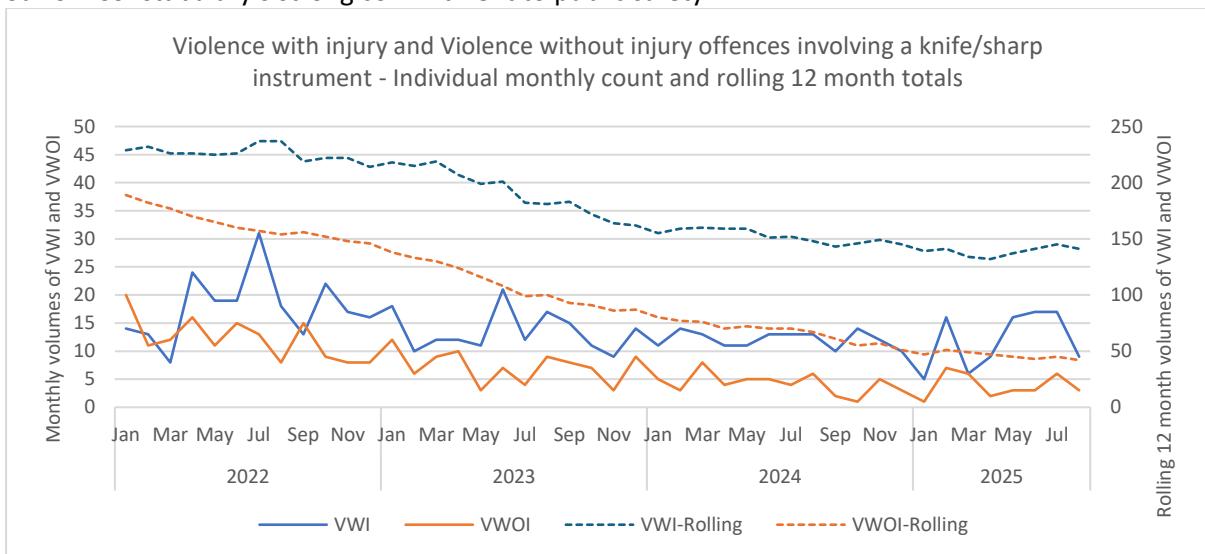
f) Violence with injury rolling solved rates by geographical command area. Solved rates are calculated for rolling 12-month periods.

Solved rate		L12M	P12M	Percent difference
Violence with injury	Created count	5800	6045	-4.1%
	Type 1-8 count	999	943	5.9%
	Solved Rate	17.2%	15.6%	1.6pp

Tabular form showing violence with injury volumes and solved rate for the last 12 months (01/09/2024 – 31/08/2025) and previous 12 months (01/09/2023 – 31/08/2024), and the percentage difference.

4. KNIFE CRIME

4.1 Suffolk continues to stand out as one of the safest places in the country when it comes to knife crime. With a rate of just **0.374 offences per 1,000 population**, placing it firmly among the lowest in England and Wales. This figure is significantly below the national average and well beneath the rates seen in metropolitan areas. Such a low incidence of knife-related offences is a testament to the proactive work of the Constabulary, the strength of community partnerships, and the effectiveness of local prevention and intervention strategies. It reflects Suffolk Constabulary's strong commitment to public safety.



g) Knife related VWI and VWOI. Monthly volumes are shown in solid lines and correspond to the left axis. Rolling 12-month totals are shown in dashed lines and correspond to the right axis.

4.2 The chart clearly illustrates a sustained and significant reduction in knife-related violence over the past three years. The dotted lines, representing rolling 12-month totals, show a consistent downward trend for both Violence with Injury (VWI) and Violence without Injury (VWOI).

offences involving a knife or sharp instrument. While there is a minor uptick in early 2025, overall volumes remain far below 2022 levels, evidencing the long-term impact of targeted prevention and enforcement strategies.

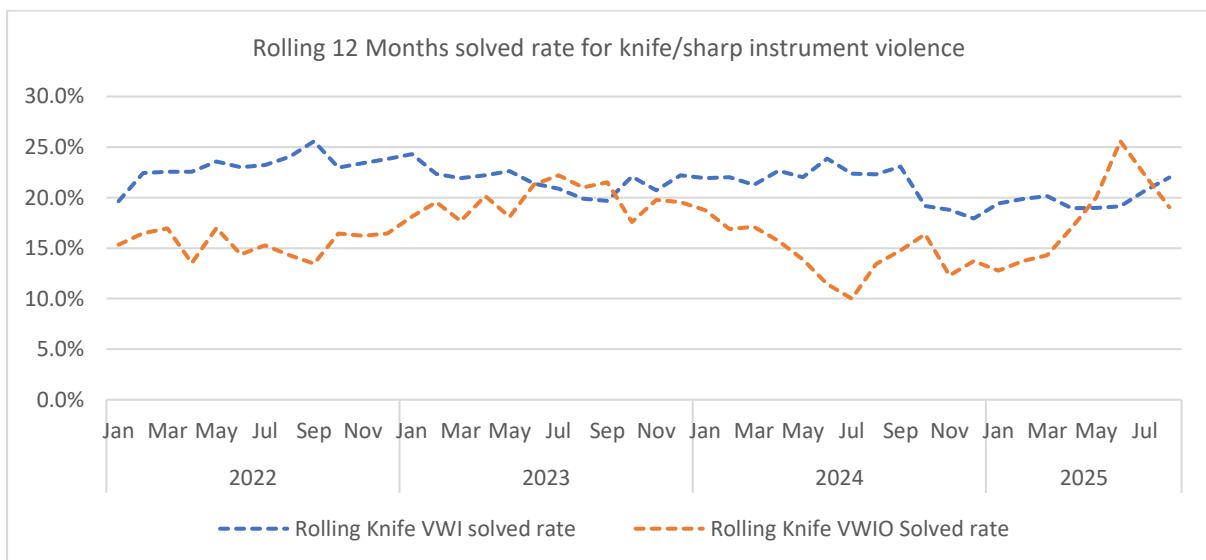
4.3 The solid lines at the bottom reflect monthly fluctuations, which are expected in this type of offence. Notably, the seasonal peaks seen in summer 2022 and 2023 are far less pronounced in 2024, this may be due to the enhanced policing presence following the national disorder. There has been a return in 2025 to the usual summer peak. However, this is still a reduction from levels in 2022 and 2023 demonstrating that Suffolk has achieved a substantial and sustained reduction in knife-enabled violence, reinforcing its position as one of the safest areas nationally.

		L12M	P12M	Percent difference
Violence with injury	County	141	148	-4.7%
	East	23	26	-11.5%
	South	63	55	14.5%
	West	55	67	-17.9%
Violence without injury	County	42	67	-37.3%
	East	8	16	-50.0%
	South	17	29	-41.4%
	West	17	22	-22.7%

Table showing knife-related violence with injury and violence without injury volumes for the last 12 months (01/03/2024 – 28/02/2025) and previous 12 months (01/03/2023 – 28/02/2024) by geographical command area, and the percentage differences.

4.4 The table above shows violent offences involving a knife and sharp object data crime data from the last 12 months compared to the previous 12 months. There has been an overall reduction across the county, with an increase in knife related violence with injury in the South Area, although the numbers are small and there remains a significant decrease over the last 3 years. The South area is the site of the Clear, Hold, Build site and knife crime will continue to be monitored as part of the outcomes as it moves through the hold and build phases.

4.5



h) The rolling 12 month solved rates for knife/sharp instrument violence with and violence without injury.

4.6 The chart h) shows the rolling 12-month solved rates for knife-enabled violence, split between Violence with Injury (VWI) and Violence without Injury (VWOI). While solved rates fluctuate, they generally remain within the 15–25% range for VWI and slightly lower for VWOI, with a notable improvement in VWOI during early 2025. It is important to note that these percentages are based on very small absolute numbers of offences in Suffolk, meaning that even minor changes in case outcomes can create visible shifts in the trend lines. Despite this inherent volatility, the overall picture is positive: VWI solved rates have remained stable over time, and VWOI has shown a significant recent uplift, suggesting that operational changes and investigative focus are delivering results. This reinforces Suffolk's strong performance in tackling knife-enabled violence and achieving positive outcomes for victims.

Operation Sceptre

This will be reported on in the next Accountability and Performance Panel

Clear, Hold, Build (CHB)

4.7 Clear, Hold, Build (CHB) is an entire system approach delivered operationally to improve the local response to tackling Serious and Organised Crime (SOC) threats. CHB is a preventative partnership approach with requires engagement and active participation including from statutory, third and private sector partners. The Home Office initiative is designed to deliver impact by reducing SOC threats and create change from within communities to build sustainable safety and increase community resilience.

4.8 CHB Felixstowe: Following successful Clear and Hold Activity, oversight of CHB Felixstowe was transferred to partners and oversight now sits within the local Community Safety Partnership. The police continue to be a key partner in supporting ongoing build activity and the site will continue to be monitored.

4.9 CHB Ipswich: The Strategic Delivery Group (SDG) was implemented in December 2024 with Ipswich Borough Council and Suffolk County Council, and in February 2025 the CHB Ipswich site was identified comprising of areas within the Gipping and Westgate Wards. In this reporting period the Tactical Delivery Group (TDG) was implemented, and coordination of a Partnership Launch Event began in earnest alongside extensive Clear activity. During the next reporting period the Operational Delivery Groups (ODGs) will be established with partners to build on the successes of the continuing Clear phase and support Hold and Build Activity.

4.10 During this reporting period 136 recorded Organised Crime Disruptions have been moderated and accepted, demonstrating significant activity across the site under the Pursue, Protect, Prevent and Prepare work strands. These do not include the significant activity undertaken in linked operations targeting Drugs and Other Organised Crime in the Area. In total over 350 recorded activities or disruptions have been logged.

4.11 Since the launch of Clear, Hold, Build in Ipswich in March, enforcement and partnership efforts have led to 90 arrests (18 charged), eight warrants executed, and 31 stop searches. Significant seizures include £200,000 worth of cocaine, two cannabis factories, weapons (crossbows and knives), and the closure of three brothels with safeguarding for victims. Officers have conducted 36 premises visits, 18 cuckooing checks, and seized 16 vehicles. Community engagement initiatives and multi-agency collaboration have supported long-term resilience, with Ipswich Borough Council securing £43,500 of Serious Violence Duty funding to support the programme, alongside improved information sharing and joint interventions. These

actions aim to deliver sustained change by reducing serious crime and strengthening community cohesion.

4.12 CHB Newmarket: Following a successful Clear and Hold phase, the Build phase is now firmly underway, led by West Suffolk Council through a dedicated Governance Group chaired by the Director of Housing. This phase prioritises long-term resilience and community regeneration, with a flagship three-year project to redevelop Icewell Hill—an area previously associated with high levels of anti-social behaviour and vulnerability. Plans include the demolition of outdated high-rise flats and the construction of modern housing, creating a safer and more sustainable environment. Alongside physical regeneration, the Build phase integrates CHB outcomes into locality and youth committees, ensuring that improvements become embedded in business-as-usual operations. Continued community engagement and partnership working remain central, with a focus on sustaining progress, addressing root causes of harm, and preventing the re-emergence of serious organised crime which is monitored through the Area Tactical Tasking Coordination Group (ATTG).

County Lines Intensification Week

4.13 County Lines Intensification week took place between the 23rd and 29th June 2025. A strong operational response was delivered under the 4P framework. Pursue activity resulted in at least 16 arrests, the execution of multiple section 23 warrants, and significant seizures of Class A and Class B drugs and several thousand pounds in cash. Eight active drugs lines were disrupted, including one long-standing line operating in Ipswich. Multiple weapons were also removed from the streets.

4.14 Prevent and Protect work focused on safeguarding and awareness, with 17 school visits, 13 hotel visits under Operation Makesafe which targets Child Exploitation, and engagement events across Ipswich, Lowestoft, Stowmarket, Bury St Edmunds, and Newmarket.

4.15 Prepare activity involved multi-agency coordination, including joint meetings with educational institutions and security teams, and proactive collaboration with the Eastern Region Special Operations Unit (ERSOU). This combined approach demonstrates Suffolk's commitment to tackling county lines through enforcement, prevention, and partnership, delivering both immediate disruption and longer-term resilience.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no financial implications at this stage.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

6.1 There are no risks identified at the present time. This will be kept under review.

7. CHIEF OFFICER CONCLUSION

7.1 Suffolk Constabulary remains firmly committed to tackling serious violence as a strategic priority, aligned with both the Police and Crime Plan and the Chief Constable's Force Strategic Plan. This report evidences sustained progress in reducing serious violent crime across the county, with violence with injury offences falling by 4% over the past year and solved rates improving. Knife crime remains among the lowest in England and Wales, reflecting the strength of our prevention and enforcement strategies.

7.2 Our partnership-led approach under the Serious Violence Duty continues to deliver impact, supported by targeted initiatives such as Clear, Hold, Build and County Lines Intensification

Week. These operations have led to significant arrests, drug seizures, and safeguarding interventions, demonstrating our commitment to both enforcement and community resilience.

- 7.3 Suffolk's performance remains consistently better than national and peer averages, and we continue to invest in improving investigative standards and victim engagement. Through robust governance, data-driven tasking, and strong collaboration, we are delivering safer communities and reducing harm.