



SUFFOLK CONSTABULARY

ORIGINATOR: CHIEF CONSTABLE

PAPER NO: AP26/30

**SUBMITTED TO: ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL –
10 JULY 2026**

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

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Police and Crime Plan prioritises victims and the service they receive. Under Theme 3 (public engagement), the PCC is committed to reviewing performance on victim satisfaction and public confidence through the Accountability and Performance Panel.
- 1.2 Suffolk Constabulary uses the Office for National Statistics (ONS) Crime Survey of England and Wales (CSEW) to assess public confidence, alongside targeted victim satisfaction surveys, including those mandated under ADR444 for domestic abuse.
- 1.3 These measures provide complementary insight into both public perception and lived experience of policing.

Confidence Measures:

- % of respondents who agree police are doing a good/excellent job
- % of respondents who agree police deal with community priorities
- % of respondent who agree police can be relied upon to be there when needed
- % of respondents who agree police would treat them fairly
- % of respondents who agree police would treat them with respect
- % of respondent who trust police (new measure)
- % of respondents who have confidence in the police overall

2. VICTIM CONFIDENCE DATA

- 2.1 The most recent CSEW data was published in March 2026 and covers the period up to December 2025. Levels of confidence are displayed in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Suffolk Constabulary Confidence Data for 12M ending Dec 2025

Measure	Last 12 M	3 year average	Difference	National Average (Last 12M)	National Ranking: as at Dec 2025 (/42)	MSG Comparison at Dec 2025
% of public who agree police are doing a good job	51.2 %	51.6%	-0.4pp	48.9%	17 th	6 th
% of public who agree police deal with community priorities	42.0 %	46.8%	-4.8pp	47.7%	36 th	7 th
% of public who agree police can be relied upon when needed	46.5 %	51.5%	-5.0pp	52.3%	35 th	6 th
% of public who agree police would treat them fairly	56.8 %	62.3%	-5.5pp	59.9%	29 th	7 th
% of public who agree police would treat them with respect	81.1 %	84.8%	-3.7pp	82.6%	28 th	6 th
% of public who agree police can be trusted	69.4 %	N/A	N/A	71.6%	31 st	8 th
% of public who have confidence in the police overall	67.6 %	71.6%	-4.0pp	71.7%	23 rd	7 th

- 2.2 The research is carried out by a third-party research company on behalf of the Office for National Statistics (ONS). When questions are asked in the CSEW, they are asked in the context

of ‘the police in your area’, rather than Suffolk Constabulary specifically. It should be borne in mind that members of the public participating in the survey may never have been a victim of or reported a crime to police or have had any other experience of police. Therefore, responses in relation to confidence in police should be considered to measure perceptions of police, rather than experience.

- 2.3 Confidence in Suffolk remains below the national average in six of seven measures. The largest gaps relate to perceptions of reliability, fairness, and the extent to which policing reflects community priorities.
- 2.4 This indicates a disconnect between operational performance and public perception. While service delivery in areas such as emergency response and engagement activity remains strong, this is not yet consistently reflected in levels of public confidence. Addressing this gap remains a key priority.

Domestic Abuse Surveys (ADR 444)

- 2.5 Suffolk Constabulary has a requirement to comply with ADR444 (Service Improvement Survey – Domestic Abuse). 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. Data from the Domestic Abuse surveys is recorded and stored on an in-house database which allows analysts from the Analytics & Insight (A&I) Department to access the results and review for a variety of purposes including to inform the Domestic Abuse Delivery Group.

Table 2 Domestic Abuse Victim Satisfaction – Whole Experience (Year-on-Year Comparison to March 2026)

Measure	Most Recent 12M (to 30 th March 2026)	Previous 12M (to 30 th March 2025)	Difference Against Previous 12 Months
Satisfaction Amongst Victims of Domestic Abuse – Whole Experience	88%	90%	-2.0pp

- 2.6 Table 2 presents domestic abuse victim satisfaction over a two-year period to March 2026. Satisfaction levels represent respondents who reported being fairly satisfied, very satisfied, or completely satisfied with the overall service. Performance for the 12 months to 31 March 2026 is compared with the preceding 12-month period to provide a year-on-year assessment.
- 2.7 Satisfaction has decreased slightly from 90% to 88% (-2.0 percentage points), indicating that while overall satisfaction remains high, there is a marginal decline that warrants continued focus on service quality and victim experience.

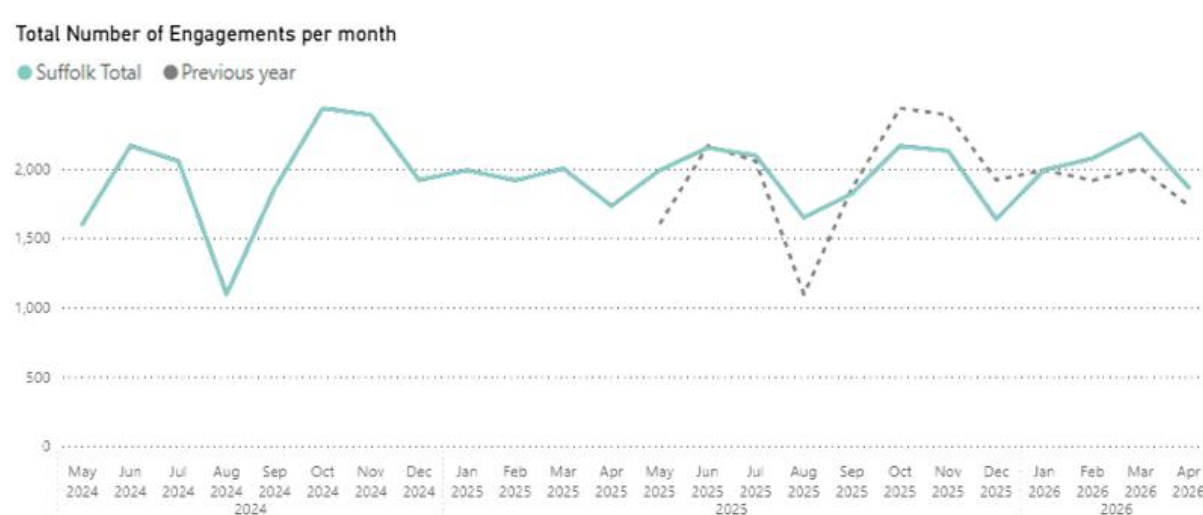
3. PUBLIC CONFIDENCE, SATISFACTION AND ENGAGEMENT PORTFOLIO

- 3.1. The following provides a summary and context of the key activities that are being overseen by the Public Confidence, Satisfaction and Engagement Portfolio's. Governance is provided by the Local Policing Board chaired by the Assistant Chief Constable.

Community Engagement Activity

- 3.2 Community Policing Teams remain protected from abstraction to maintain a consistent focus on engagement and problem-solving within local communities. Between November 2025 and April 2026, 11,951 engagement activities were recorded.
- 3.3 While activity levels remain consistently high (as demonstrated in Figure 1): 1,600–2,200 engagements per month, the focus has shifted toward ensuring engagement is targeted, evidence-led, and aligned to priority locations and issues, with greater emphasis on demonstrating impact on public confidence rather than volume alone.

Figure 1: Monthly Community Engagement Activity (November 2025 – April 2026)



- 3.4 Engagement activity continues to demonstrate balance between delivering preventative advice and guidance and ensuring that activities are focused on targeted issues. Work is ongoing to better evidence the impact of engagement activity on public confidence, ensuring that delivery is outcome-focused.

Operation Spotlight – Antisocial Behaviour (ASB) Hotspot activity

- 3.5 Operation Spotlight in Year 1 contributed to a 45% reduction in recorded ASB incidents, alongside increased visibility and problem-solving activity in targeted locations. This activity has been targeted at locations with the highest demand and risk. Building on year 1, Suffolk Constabulary secured a further £1m to support an additional 12 months of delivery (April 2025 – March 2026), with a renewed focus on knife crime, serious violence and anti-social behaviour.
- 3.6 Analytical work, aligned to local priorities including Clear, Hold, Build areas, identified 26 hotspots across eight towns for targeted patrol and problem-solving activity. Delivery processes were refined to improve the quality of patrol activity, reduce administrative burden on officers, and strengthen data capture.
- 3.7 Between 2 June 2025 and 31 March 2026, activity included 10,206 hours of patrol, resulting in 250 arrests, 294 stop searches (104 positive and 190 negative), and 27 weapons seized, including 18 knives or sharp instruments. Positive feedback has been received from the public, both directly to officers and via the Operation Spotlight inbox. Crime data indicates that knife crime, violence, and ASB-related offences reduced from 3,400 in FY25/26 to 3,048

(approximately 10%). While a range of factors will have influenced this reduction, targeted patrol activity and problem-solving are assessed to have contributed.

- 3.8 Home Office funding for Operation Spotlight has not been renewed for 2026/27. However, through Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee (NPG) uplift two new Town Centre Teams have been established, with deployments commencing on 16 February and 30 March. These teams will focus on high-visibility patrols in identified hotspot locations. Targeted hotspot policing will remain a core delivery requirement for Community Policing Teams, supported by new performance measures to ensure consistent officer presence in these areas.

Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee (NPG)

- 3.9 Within Year 1 of NPG, Suffolk Constabulary grew its Neighbourhood Policing provision by 26 full-time equivalent (FTE) and was provided with 1.8m to support this. 14 of these officers have been deployed across our Community Policing teams. The remaining 12 officers were deployed to two Town Centre Teams, which provide a visible, reassuring presence, tackling the problems that matter most to those who live, work, and visit our town centres and work in partnership to deliver lasting solutions.
- 3.10 Year 1 NPG set out nine NPG commitments to the public which Suffolk Constabulary delivered within year 1:
- Achieve 72 Hours response times to neighbourhood queries from communities and businesses;
 - Carry out regular local beat meeting;
 - Publish Neighbourhood policing teams local priorities;
 - Have a force ASB lead;
 - Increase patrols in town centres and other hotspots.
 - Uplift of officers, PCSO's and Special Constables in line with agreed 2025/26 targets
 - Be starting to deliver the new College of Policing Neighbourhood Policing Pathway
 - Increase visible patrols and engage with local communities and businesses
- 3.11 All 9 guarantees continued to be monitored around compliance.
- 3.12 Within Year 2 of NPG Suffolk Constabulary are required to uplift 16 full time equivalent (FTE) into its Neighbourhood commitment. This varies from year 1 NPG as there is no dedicated funding for this and forms part of Suffolk Constabulary overall funding formula.
- 3.13 Year 2 NPG plans have been submitted to the Home Office and work is ongoing and managed through governance to ensure delivery by March 2027.
- 3.14 Ongoing activity is now progressing against a series of activities focused on achieving effectively against the five pillars of delivery outlines within the Governments Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee.

Contact and Control Room (CCR) - Call Handling

- 3.15. During the twelve months to April 2026, the Suffolk Contact and Control Room has maintained consistent performance against the national 999 standard. Performance is just below the Service Level Agreement of 90%, at 89.8% of calls answered within 10 seconds, with an average answer time of 9.8 seconds. This places Suffolk among the strongest performing

forces nationally, with one of the lowest average answer times across all forces and the lowest within its Most Similar Group, demonstrating a consistently efficient and responsive emergency service.

- 3.16. Over the past 12 months, 101 performance has remained stable despite sustained demand, with the force consistently able to answer calls effectively and maintain service to the public. We have seen a clear improvement in accessibility, with the abandonment rate reducing to an average of 10.8%, which is a 1.6% improvement on the previous year. Demand continues to fluctuate, with over 22,000 calls received in April 2026 alone, but we have maintained a consistent level of performance across this period, answering around 71.6% of calls over the last 12 months.

Domestic Abuse Video Response (DAVR)

- 3.17. Performance continues to develop as the model matures. In April 2026, the team serviced 12% of total domestic abuse demand, with a notable increase in the proportion of lower-risk incidents managed, including 26% of Grade B2 and C demand, demonstrating improved targeting of appropriate cases.
- 3.18. In April 2026, the team made 212 appointment slots available, with 173 successfully filled, representing an 82% booking rate. On average, the team completed 6.37 appointments per day and recorded 181 investigations, representing a significant increase in activity and the highest level of performance to date.
- 3.19. Victim satisfaction remains positive overall, and while virtual engagement is increasingly embedded, there is ongoing work to better understand victim preferences and ensure the model remains responsive to individual needs.
- 3.20. The DAVR Team continues to evolve, now supporting the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS). These developments reflect a growing recognition of the DAVR model as a scalable, efficient, and victim-centred approach to managing DA demand while maintain strong safeguarding outcomes.

4. PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

- 4.1. Public complaints provide a key indicator of public confidence and satisfaction, reflecting how individuals perceive their interactions with Suffolk Constabulary. Complaints are recorded under Schedule 3 of the Police Reform Act 2002 where criteria are met, with additional expressions of dissatisfaction handled outside of Schedule 3 to support a more customer-focused approach.
- 4.2. Suffolk Constabulary recorded 512 complaint cases between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026, a 58% increase on the previous year. This increase is primarily attributable to changes in recording practices, bringing Suffolk in line with national standards.
- 4.3. However, complaint themes continue to highlight issues relating to communication, timeliness, and perceived quality of investigation, which remain key drivers of public dissatisfaction and require ongoing focus. Actions are in place to improve initial contact times and strengthen supervisory oversight to address this decline.
- 4.4. These 512 complaints generated 1,289 allegations, equating to an average of 2.5 allegations per complaint. The most frequently recorded category continues to be “police action

following contact”, with 47% of allegations relating to the broader theme of service delivery, including decision-making, communication, and the quality of investigations.

- 4.5 Analysis of complaint themes identifies investigation-related concerns as the most common national factor. These include perceived delays, dissatisfaction with outcomes, and concerns regarding communication and evidence handling. This reinforces that the quality and clarity of service delivery remain central to public confidence.
- 4.6 In terms of geographic distribution, complaints were proportionately aligned across the county, with 45.5% relating to the South, 29.3% to the West, and 22.3% to the East. Outcome analysis shows some variation across areas, highlighting opportunities to ensure consistency in service delivery and complaint handling.
- 4.7 The timeliness of complaint handling remains a key determinant of satisfaction. While 85.5% of complaints were recorded within two working days, initial contact performance has declined significantly to 44.5% (from 86.3%). This reflects increased demand and capacity pressures and remains an area for improvement.
- 4.8 Overall contact levels with PSD remain high, with 2,712 interactions recorded, an increase on the previous year. This demonstrates growing public engagement but also places additional demand on resources, contributing to delays in initial contact and case progression.
- 4.9 A total of 958 Schedule 3 allegations were finalised, with outcomes remaining consistent with previous years. 64% were determined as service acceptable, while approximately 11% were determined as not acceptable, resulting in actions such as apologies, explanations, and reflective learning. These figures indicate stability in decision-making and reinforce a balanced approach between accountability and fairness.
- 4.10 For allegations handled outside of Schedule 3, 203 cases were recorded, with 87.7% resolved, although this represents a slight decrease from previous years. These cases continue to provide an important mechanism for early resolution, allowing concerns to be addressed quickly without the need for formal investigation, which supports improved complainant experience.
- 4.11 Schedule 3 complaints took an average of 108 working days to conclude, continuing a gradual increase over recent years. This reflects the complexity of investigations and the reliance on operational managers to progress cases alongside their core responsibilities. In contrast, cases handled outside Schedule 3 averaged 31 working days, demonstrating improved efficiency through early resolution approaches.
- 4.12 Where complainants remain dissatisfied, they have the right to request a review. During the reporting period, the IOPC received 45 review requests, upholding 16, while the Local Policing Body received 37 requests, upholding one. This level of external scrutiny provides assurance that complaint outcomes are subject to independent oversight and reinforces transparency.
- 4.13 Demographic data shows that 526 individual complainants were recorded, with ethnicity data captured in 79.3% of cases. Of those, 7.2% identified as being from ethnic minority backgrounds, representing a decrease from the previous year. Monitoring of this data remains important to identify and address any potential disproportionality in complaint handling or service experiences.
- 4.14 A total of 41 allegations (3.2%) related to discrimination, a reduction compared to previous years. Race remains the most cited characteristic, followed by disability. Findings highlight the

importance of ensuring officers and staff consider individual needs, with particular emphasis on reasonable adjustments, communication, and empathy in interactions with the public.

- 4.15 Internal conduct data also contributes to public confidence. During the reporting period, 76 conduct cases were recorded involving 98 breaches of professional standards, with discreditable conduct the most common breach type (29.6%). Misconduct hearings and meetings resulted in a range of outcomes, including dismissals and written warnings. The Constabulary continues to publish outcomes publicly, reinforcing transparency and demonstrating that misconduct is addressed robustly and proportionately.

Organisational learning

- 4.16 Learning is identified through complaints, misconduct investigations, and internal review processes, and is addressed through structured organisational communication, supervisory oversight, and targeted interventions.
- 4.17 During the reporting period, three themes were identified for focus. Firstly, Supporting employees with technology use and data security with guidance on information security risks to safeguard operational integrity and public trust being shared.
- 4.18 Secondly, compliance with Voluntary Attender (VA) procedures was identified following an investigation. This highlighted a gap in consistent completion of risk assessments. Targeted communication and supervisory direction have reinforced pre- and post-interview risk assessments, with a focus on safeguarding, accurate recording, and appropriate oversight.
- 4.19 Thirdly, complaint data continues to highlight that dissatisfaction is frequently driven by communication and engagement, rather than investigative outcomes. In response, internal messaging has reinforced expectations in relation to the Victims' Code, with a focus on timely updates, clear explanations of decisions, and maintaining victim engagement throughout investigations.
- 4.20 These actions are intended to address the underlying drivers of dissatisfaction, improve consistency in service delivery, and strengthen public confidence through better-quality interactions.

Organisational Learning Development

- 4.21 The Constabulary continues to strengthen its approach to organisational learning through enhanced data and governance. The Engagement and Analytical Hub is in the final stages of implementing a joint-force data correlation tool, enabling the integration of HR and PSD data to identify patterns, emerging risks, and potential disproportionality in complaint handling and misconduct.
- 4.22 In parallel, a full review of PSD training products has been completed, resulting in the rollout of a revised and more targeted training programme for officers and staff. Two Prevention and Engagement Officer roles have also been introduced to improve how learning is communicated and embedded across the organisation.
- 4.23 Oversight of Reflective Practice activity has been centralised under the Service Improvement Inspector, enabling greater consistency, improved identification of themes, and more effective translation of learning from misconduct and complaint investigations into organisational improvement.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no financial implications relating to this report.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

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

7. CHIEF OFFICER CONCLUSION

- 7.1 Suffolk Constabulary continues to prioritise improvements in public confidence and victim satisfaction; however, current performance reflects a mixed position. Confidence levels remain below the national average in six of the seven measures and have declined against historical trends. The most significant gaps relate to perceptions of reliability, fairness, and alignment with community priorities, indicating that public perception is not yet fully aligned with service delivery.
- 7.2 Overall confidence stands at 67.6%, with trust at 69.4% and perceptions of respectful treatment at 81.1%. The Constabulary remains above the national average for the proportion of the public who believe the police are doing a good or excellent job. Victim satisfaction, particularly in domestic abuse cases (88%), remains comparatively strong, although there has been a slight year-on-year reduction.
- 7.3 The Constabulary continues to deliver high levels of operational activity, including 11,951 engagement events over a six-month period and targeted initiatives such as Operation Spotlight, which has contributed to reductions in anti-social behaviour and violence. However, current evidence indicates that high levels of activity are not consistently translating into improved public confidence, reinforcing the need to focus on the quality, targeting, and impact of delivery.
- 7.4 Performance in accessibility and responsiveness remains strong, including emergency call handling (89.8% of 999 calls answered within 10 seconds) and expanded digital contact channels. Complaints data continues to highlight challenges in relation to communication, timeliness, and investigative quality, which remain key drivers of public dissatisfaction and ongoing areas of focus.
- 7.5 Priority activity will focus on closing the gap between service delivery and public experience, improving perceptions of reliability and fairness, strengthening communication with victims, and ensuring that engagement and operational activity are aligned to demonstrable improvements in public confidence.