



SUFFOLK CONSTABULARY

ORIGINATOR: CHIEF CONSTABLE

PAPER NO: AP26/43

**SUBMITTED TO: ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL –
4 SEPTEMBER 2026**

SUBJECT: WORKFORCE EFFICIENCY AND STRUCTURE

SUMMARY:

1. This report aims to enable the PCC to monitor and ensure effective scrutiny of decision-making regarding the workforce, and people-related strategies to improve productivity.

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 focusses on current people strategies and their impact on productivity, efficiencies and effectiveness within Suffolk Constabulary aligned to organisational goals. It will primarily focus on the following area:
- Workforce planning, structures and change & the development of the Strategic Workforce Plan and Retention Strategy **(Section 2)**
- 1.2 The report will consider whether there are any emerging themes, areas of risk and any financial consequences alongside any areas of focus for His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS).
- 1.3 Additional data and information are also provided in respect of current workforce makeup, recruitment and retention programmes, learning & development initiatives and wellbeing programmes, specifically around the following areas:
- Workforce & Diversity Data **(Section 3)**
 - Current Wellbeing Initiatives **(Section 4)**
 - Volunteers & Special Constables **(Section 5)**
 - PDR's **(Section 6)**
 - Employee Engagement **(Section 7)**
 - Learning & Development **(Section 8)**

2. WORKFORCE PLANNING, STRUCTURES, CHANGE & RETENTION

- 2.1 The People Directorate is currently undertaking a review of its People Strategy. The purpose of this strategy is to ensure that we can build a professional, inclusive, resilient and future-ready workforce that is trusted by communities, confident in its standards and supported to deliver high quality policing, whilst creating a positive employee experience where people feel valued, supported and recognised and see policing as a rewarding career.
- 2.2 Our revised People Strategy centres around five pillars, namely Leadership Excellence, Fairness & Inclusivity, Attraction & Growth, Support & Sustain and Enable & Improve. These support the Chief Constable's Delivery Plan and whilst the strategy is owned by the People Directorate, delivery and accountability is organisationally shared at all levels of the Constabulary.
- 2.3 Workforce planning and a focus on organisational capacity form a key part of this strategy. Suffolk has developed a policing model designed to ensure that we have the right workforce mix to serve the county effectively. The model is predominantly staffed by the Resource Management Unit (RMU) in Suffolk. The model is monitored and reviewed through both the Suffolk Workforce Planning Board which considers resourcing capabilities and the Futures Board which considers whether the workforce mix remains appropriate to meet policing demand.
- 2.4 Amendments may be made to the model in response to local changes in demand, including variations in volume and/or crime type, as well as national developments such as the introduction of the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee.
- 2.5 Informing this work is the Strategic Workforce Plan which is currently under review following the removal of the police officer uplift target.

- 2.6 A current important part of workforce planning is understanding the composition and capability of our workforce. We are currently transitioning from several manual recording processes to more automated data management systems, particularly in relation to our restricted and limited duties officers. Once this process is complete it will provide a more robust evidence base, enabling improved analysis and more informed decision-making in relation to workforce deployment.
- 2.7 In support of this work, Norfolk Constabulary has created a Performance Improvement Unit (PIU) which is undertaking a review of the joint Limited Duties Policy to assess how restricted and limited duties are managed with the aim to provide a holistic understanding of current practice, identify opportunities for improvement and support a more consistent approach to workforce management. This work will support activities already being undertaken by Suffolk Constabulary, with the aim of standardising processes and ensuring a consistent, fair and effective approach to the management of limited duties across both forces.
- 2.8 Within Suffolk we continue to monitor and actively manage our limited duties cases in conjunction with local senior manager teams to support individuals to return to full duties wherever possible, or where this is not achievable, ensuring they can continue to make a meaningful contribution to the organisation. Where appropriate, formal processes are considered.
- 2.9 A further element of Workforce Planning is the Change Plan, which delivers the workforce programmes and organisational restructures to support efficiency improvements. This may be realised through financial savings, enhanced performance, or increased productivity. Benefits realisation is monitored by Strategic Business and Operational Services (SBOS) and reported at the Transformational Change Board.
- 2.10 During the reporting period, Suffolk Constabulary has continued to maintain a proactive approach to attraction, recruitment and retention. During the final quarter of 2025/26, the Constabulary delivered a targeted recruitment campaign focused on both new entrants and transferee officers. The campaign has generated a suite of recruitment assets, which has included handouts, billboards, event backdrops, booklets, banners and posters that remain available to support future attraction activity.
- 2.11 The Constabulary has retained the Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship (PCDA) entry route. The PCDA continues to attract significant interest from younger applicants, particularly those under the age of 25, and remains an important route into policing. Maintaining a range of entry pathways supports workforce sustainability, broadens access to policing careers and helps develop future talent pipelines for the organisation.
- 2.12 The Constabulary has been particularly successful in attracting transferee officers from other forces which has been helped by the introduction of dedicated transferee webinars. Since 1st April, six transferee officers have joined Suffolk Constabulary, with a further eight due to commence service in July and September and an additional 20 candidates progressing through pre-employment processes. This provides a positive pipeline of experienced officers and supports workforce resilience across the organisation.
- 2.13 In terms of retention, we continue to monitor and analyse the factors influencing employee turnover and identify opportunities for improvement. In addition to monitoring exit interview data, the Constabulary offers Stay and Say interviews with officers and staff who are considering leaving the organisation. Insights from these conversations and analysis of exit interview data, helps inform retention activity and support the development of initiatives

aimed at improving employee experience, engagement and long-term workforce sustainability.

- 2.14 Suffolk has a retention strategy, supported by an associated action plan and performance metrics. Progress against the strategy is monitored through the revised People, Culture and Learning Board (previously People Board).
- 2.15 Through the Joint Transformation Programme, Suffolk Constabulary continues to explore how technology can improve value for money, support innovation, and contribute to more sustainable ways of working. This includes identifying opportunities to introduce Robotic Process Automation (RPA) to streamline high-volume, rules-based processes, enabling our workforce to operate more efficiently while maintaining service quality and accuracy.
- 2.16 Several business processes have already been successfully automated. For example, automation of the annual leave carry-over process has reduced administrative demand on the Resource Management Unit (RMU) and provides employees with faster access to accurate leave information. Similarly, the automation of sickness form processing has improved the timeliness and availability of information which improves productivity and enables accurate and more timely reporting of information to inform workforce planning.
- 2.17 Alongside automation, the Joint Transformation Programme is exploring emerging technologies, including Artificial Intelligence (AI), to identify opportunities to enhance service delivery and operational effectiveness. Current work includes evaluating how AI-enabled solutions could assist in the preparation of documentation for ancillary orders and protection notices, improving efficiency and timeliness whilst maintaining appropriate governance, assurance and oversight.
- 2.18 Collaboration remains central to Suffolk Constabulary's approach to innovation and continuous improvement. Through the Joint Transformation Programme, we work closely with technology providers, policing partners, and other public sector organisations to identify opportunities that improve services, share learning and maximise the value of public investment.
- 2.19 Suffolk Constabulary collaborates with Lancashire Constabulary and other police forces across the Seven Force (7F) region to share learning, best practice, and innovation relating to Robotic Process Automation and wider digital transformation initiatives. These partnerships help accelerate the adoption of proven solutions, reduce duplication of effort, and ensure that investment in technology delivers the greatest possible benefit for policing and the public.

3. WORKFORCE & DIVERSITY DATA

- 3.1 Suffolk Constabulary's workforce comprises of the following:
- Police Officers: 1,409 headcount (1,383.3 FTE)
 - Police Staff: 1,036 headcount (918.3 FTE)
 - PCSOs: 25 headcount (22.9 FTE)
- 3.2 Suffolk Constabulary remains committed to increasing representation across its workforce and ensuring that policing reflects the diverse communities it serves. Our current workforce mix is as follows:

Police Officer Diversity Profile:

- Gender: Female 511 (36.3%) Male 898 (63.7%)
- Ethnicity: White 1,343 (95.32%)
Mixed Ethnicity 30 (2.13%)
Asian 12 (0.85%)
Black 3 (0.22%)
Other 1 (0.07%)
Prefer Not to Say 1 (0.07%)
**Not Known 19 (1.35%)

This is where individuals have not responded to this question

- Disability: 48 officers (3.4%) have declared a disability
- Sexual Orientation:
Heterosexual 1,071 (76.01%)
Gay or Lesbian 52 (3.69%)
Prefer Not to Say 52 (3.69%)
Bisexual 21 (1.49%)
- Age Profile: 21 or under 41 (2.91%)
21-25 179 (12.71%)
26-35 455 (32.29%)
36-45 377 (26.76%)
46-55 331 (23.49%)
56 and over 26 (1.85%)

Police Staff Diversity Profile:

- Gender: Female 674 (65.1%) Male 362 (34.9%)
- Ethnicity: White 964 (93.05%)
**Not Known 39 (3.76%)
Mixed Ethnicity 13 (1.25%)
Asian 9 (0.87%)
Black 5 (0.48%)
Other 3 (0.29%)
Prefer Not to Say 3 (0.29%)

This is where individuals have not responded to this question

- Disability: 63 staff members (6.1%) have declared a disability
- Sexual Orientation:
Heterosexual 813 (78.47%)
Prefer Not to Say 33 (3.19%)
Gay or Lesbian 32 (3.09%)
Bisexual 12 (1.16%)
- Age Profile: 21 or under 1 (0.10%)
21-25 36 (3.47%)
26-35 188 (18.14%)

36-45 225 (21.72%)
46-55 281 (27.12%)
56 and over 305 (29.44%)

- 3.3 To strengthen organisational understanding of workforce representation and support evidence-based decision making, the Constabulary has developed a Power BI dashboard that provides enhanced reporting and oversight of diversity and representation data. This enables the organisation to monitor workforce demographics, identify trends and areas of underrepresentation, and target interventions where further action may be required to support a more representative and inclusive workforce.
- 3.4 As we continue to work towards a workforce that better reflects the communities it serves, we have undertaken several recruitment activities designed to improve understanding of policing careers, reduce potential barriers to entry and encourage applications from individuals with a wide range of backgrounds, experiences and perspectives. This has included working with community groups, faith organisations, refugee support groups, women's organisations and ethnically diverse communities across Suffolk.
- 3.5 We have also developed partnership working with schools, colleges and other educational establishments to provide opportunities for young people to learn more about policing careers and consider policing as a future profession. During the reporting period, the Constabulary delivered a Policing Level 3 Taster Week, for local students providing them with practical insight into policing through operational inputs, career pathway discussions, mock interviews and learning activities focused on equality, diversity and inclusion. The programme supports early engagement with young people and helps promote policing as an accessible and rewarding career choice.
- 3.6 Targeted recruitment support is also provided to applicants from underrepresented groups throughout the recruitment process and the Constabulary's Positive Action team continues to play a key role in supporting applicants from underrepresented groups. They have undertaken activities including virtual engagement events, community outreach, bespoke support for candidates throughout the recruitment process and guidance on reasonable adjustments to ensure recruitment processes are accessible and inclusive. They have also offered guidance and encouragement aimed at improving confidence and thus enhancing candidate experience and supporting successful progression through recruitment and selection processes.
- 3.7 Community Policing Officers have also received positive action awareness inputs to support attraction and engagement activity within local communities.
- 3.8 To strengthen oversight and support evidence-based intervention, a dedicated Power BI dashboard has been developed to monitor diversity throughout the recruitment pipeline, enabling the Constabulary to identify barriers, track representation and target support where required. We will be monitoring and responding to the data as this develops.
- 3.9 Together, these activities support the Constabulary's ambition to attract, develop and retain a diverse workforce, while fostering an inclusive culture where individuals from all backgrounds are supported to achieve their full potential.

4. CURRENT WELLBEING INITIATIVES

- 4.1 Supporting workforce wellbeing remains a key priority for Suffolk Constabulary. To strengthen wellbeing provision and promote early intervention, a dedicated psychotherapist has been embedded within the organisation, providing specialist support to officers and staff. This

investment supports psychological wellbeing, helps build resilience and provides colleagues with timely access to professional support when required.

- 4.2 The Constabulary continues to take a proactive approach to wellbeing and prevention, recognising the importance of supporting colleagues to remain healthy, engaged and effective in their roles. As part of this commitment, planning is underway for Wellbeing Week in September, informed by feedback gathered through a series of Wellbeing Roadshows conducted across the organisation throughout the summer period.
- 4.3 The Wellbeing Week will focus on a range of wellbeing themes that have been identified as important to the workforce, including:
- Psychological safety
 - Burnout prevention
 - Sleep and fatigue management
 - Financial wellbeing
 - Neurodiversity awareness
 - Menopause awareness
 - Physical fitness and health
 - Nutrition
 - Suicide prevention
- 4.4 These initiatives form part of the Constabulary's wider wellbeing strategy and support its objectives of improving workforce health and wellbeing, reducing sickness absence, building resilience and ensuring colleagues remain fit, healthy and able to perform at their best.

5. VOLUNTEERS & SPECIAL CONSTABLES

- 5.1 Suffolk Constabulary recognises the significant value that volunteers bring to policing and adopts a strategic approach to their deployment, ensuring they complement and enhance service delivery, strengthen community engagement, support prevention activity and increase public confidence. Volunteers provide additional capacity and capability across the organisation while enabling officers and staff to remain focused on core operational responsibilities.
- 5.2 Special Constables play a vital role in frontline policing as warranted officers who volunteer their time to support local policing priorities. They undertake patrols alongside regular Response and RAPT (Roads and Armed Policing Team) officers as well as independently, support Community Policing Teams, engage with local communities, and contribute to major events and operational policing activity, including the Suffolk Show, football matches and Level 2 Public Order deployments. Their contribution enhances organisational resilience while bringing valuable skills, experience and perspectives from outside policing.
- 5.3 Police Support Volunteers are utilised across a wide range of functions where their expertise, local knowledge and commitment add value to policing services. Volunteers support community engagement through initiatives such as mounted horseback patrols and crime prevention events, assist with officer training through role playing exercises, and provide support to specialist departments including Transport Services and Data Protection. This broad deployment model ensures volunteer skills are used effectively to strengthen service delivery and community connections.
- 5.4 The Volunteer Police Cadet Scheme forms a key element of Suffolk Constabulary's youth engagement and prevention activity. The programme provides young people with opportunities to develop leadership, teamwork and citizenship skills, while building positive

relationships with policing and gaining a greater understanding of community safety. Cadets contribute positively to their communities through volunteering and engagement activities and have supported events and operations including the Suffolk Show, the Ipswich v Norwich football match, and Operation Gram (Lakenheath disorder). They have also provided valuable youth perspectives by undertaking crime reduction assessments in areas of concern, helping the Constabulary better understand how young people experience and perceive local environments.

- 5.5 As part of Suffolk Constabulary's wider commitment to engaging children and young people, the Cadet programme sits within a broader Youth Engagement Plan designed to increase participation, build trust and confidence, and ensure young people have meaningful opportunities to influence policing services. A key development within this work is the establishment of a Youth Forum, which will provide young people with a direct voice in shaping policing services, informing decision-making processes and providing feedback on issues that matter most to them.
- 5.6 Over the last year, the Constabulary has also delivered Policing Powers Scrutiny meetings in schools and colleges across Suffolk. These sessions provide opportunities for young people to engage directly with police officers and staff, discuss local concerns, explore perceptions of policing and help the organisation better understand the experiences, expectations and priorities of young people across different communities. Insights gained through these engagements support the ongoing development of policing services and strengthen relationships between young people and the police.
- 5.7 Collectively, the Constabulary's approach to volunteers, cadets and youth engagement strengthens organisational capacity, enhances community partnerships, supports prevention focused policing and ensures that the voices of young people and local communities are actively considered in the design and delivery of policing services across Suffolk.

6. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS (PDRS)

- 6.1 PDR's is a strong focus for HMICFRS and Suffolk Constabulary continues to develop and strengthen its approach to Professional Development Reviews (PDRs), with a focus on promoting regular and meaningful development conversations that support continuing professional development (CPD), career progression and personal growth. The approach is designed to support individuals in their current role while also enabling both lateral and vertical career development opportunities across the organisation.
- 6.2 To improve the quality, consistency and fairness of the PDR process, a formal PDR Appeals Process has been introduced alongside a programme of quarterly dip sampling of completed reviews. This provides additional assurance regarding the quality of objectives, development plans and performance discussions across the organisation.
- 6.3 Engagement activity is also underway through a PDR Roadshow, delivered across the Constabulary to promote the value and purpose of PDRs, increase understanding of the process and reinforce the importance of regular development conversations between managers and staff.
- 6.4 The Constabulary has also improved the visibility of PDR performance data and management information, enabling leaders to monitor completion rates and to drive meaningful conversations regarding workforce development across commands and departments.
- 6.5 Looking ahead, further work will focus on strengthening the relationship between talent development and the PDR process, beginning with senior leaders and supporting a more

structured approach to talent management, succession planning and future workforce capability.

7. EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

- 7.1 Suffolk participated in the National Oscar Kilo Wellbeing Survey, which launched on 1st June. This replaced the internal Spring People Opinion Survey (POS) and will enable us to benchmark our progress in this area nationally.
- 7.2 Whilst the Survey was actively promoted within the Constabulary, we are aware that participation levels were not as high as previously seen for our internal POS. We attribute this primarily to the absence of live, team level participation data which we can provide to managers during our internal POS process to encourage engagement. Our own POS is also now an established employee engagement tool within the Constabulary, which our people are comfortable with and trust. We have also received feedback to indicate that the national survey was less user friendly than our POS.
- 7.3 We are now awaiting the full data set from the national survey in order to analyse workforce sentiment and to enable us to draw comparisons with previous surveys. Work will be undertaken in response to the results and will be compared to the data returns when we have completed our Autumn 2026 POS.

8. LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

- 8.1 Leadership capabilities is a strong focus for HMICFRS and leadership development remains a key priority for the Constabulary. Programmes such as Leading with CARE are designed to strengthen leadership capability and promote consistent leadership behaviours across the organisation.
- 8.2 Development opportunities are further supported through coaching, mentoring and workplace learning, enabling individuals to build capability through a blend of formal training, practical experience and professional support.
- 8.3 Officers and staff have access to a broad range of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities designed to maintain and enhance professional competence throughout their careers. Specialist departments coordinate local development activity, supported by mandatory e-learning delivered through the Learning Management System (LMS). Completion of mandatory training is monitored monthly through the Suffolk Workforce Planning Board to ensure compliance.
- 8.4 The Learning Management System (LMS) also provides access to a wide range of learning resources, self-development materials and wellbeing support, enabling individuals to access development opportunities flexibly and at the point of need. These resources, aligned to national best practice, are available to the workforce on a 24/7 basis and help individuals to take ownership of their professional growth and capability.
- 8.5 Alongside established programmes, Suffolk continues to explore and pilot initiatives that support talent management, workforce capability and organisational resilience, helping to identify and develop future leaders while ensuring the organisation has the skills required to meet future challenges.
- 8.6 The Constabulary provides refresher and specialist training to ensure the workforce remains competent, compliant and responsive to changing operational, legislative and organisational requirements and we have seen the introduction of several new national programmes and

initiatives, including the one-day Personal Safety Training (PPST) Programme, the Neighbourhood Policing Career Pathway Training Programmes, the PIP1 Supervisors Course, the National Talent and Development Strategy, and all are training is provided in line with the Training Delivery and Assessment Standards.

- 8.7 The PIP1 Supervisors Course has replaced our previous 'Stripes' programme. The new programme has received positive feedback from participants, particularly with the introduction as part of the programme of a 1-day People Manager training input. This focuses on developing 'people management skills' to ensure that managers can appropriately, confidently and effectively support and manage their teams.
- 8.8 Additional development support has been provided for colleagues from underrepresented groups to help remove barriers to progression and promote a more inclusive approach to talent development. The Constabulary has developed a new programme, 'Elevate,' designed to help create more equitable opportunities for growth and progression within policing for underrepresented groups. The course focusses on building practical skills, strengthening confidence, and boosting self-belief. Elevate also shines a light on the structural and cultural barriers that can impact career development.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

- 9.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

10. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS:

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

11. CHIEF OFFICER CONCLUSION

- 11.1 This report provides an overview of the Constabulary's current approach to workforce planning, organisational development and the initiatives being delivered to support an effective, efficient and sustainable workforce. It highlights the breadth of activity underway to attract, develop, support and retain our people, whilst ensuring that workforce structures, capability and capacity remain aligned to current and future policing demand.
- 11.2 The Constabulary continues to invest in workforce planning, leadership development, wellbeing, inclusion and technology enabled improvement to enhance organisational effectiveness and productivity. This work is supported by ongoing governance and oversight arrangements, including the continued development of the Strategic Workforce Plan, retention activity, workforce performance data and organisational change programmes.
- 11.3 As this reporting framework develops, the Constabulary will continue to strengthen the evidence base supporting workforce efficiency and effectiveness, including the use of improved data, benefits realisation measures and outcome-focused reporting. This will provide greater insight into the impact of workforce-related activity and support continued transparency, learning and improvement.