

Report to PCC's re Norfolk & Suffolk Out of Court Scrutiny Panel

Friday 23rd January 2015

About the Panel

Norfolk and Suffolk Constabulary Out of Court Disposals Scrutiny Panel has been set up to independently scrutinise the use of Out of Court Disposals in response to national recommendations following concerns about their appropriate use. The role of the Panel is to ensure that the use of Out of Court Disposals is appropriate and proportionate, consistent with national and local policy, and consider the victims' wishes where appropriate. The Panel aim to bring transparency to the use of Out of Court Disposals in order to increase understanding and confidence in their use. Findings of the Panel, together with responses to recommendations made, are to be reported publicly to support this aim.

How the Panel Operates

The Panel review and discuss case files as a group and conclude one of three categories:

- Appropriate and consistent with national and local guidelines;
- Appropriate with observations from the Panel;
- Inappropriate use of out of court disposal.

Decisions reached by the Panel on each case file are recorded, together with observations and recommendations to inform changes in policy or practice. The Panel also consider performance information regarding levels and use of Out of Court Disposals, and changes to legislation, policy and practice to support them in their role.

Report

The Panel met for the fifth time on 23rd January. Ten Panel members were present, with three apologies.

Panel Business

- The Panel agreed the Decisions Log from the October 2014 meeting.

Scrutiny of Case Files

Rationale and file selection

A total of 12 files were made available for scrutiny, selected as follows:

- All adult and youth out of court disposals recorded in the last quarter, in relation to Serious Sexual Offences and Serious Violence Against the Person cases selected at random from a list provided in advance.

Panel findings

Of the 12 cases drawn, 2 were scrutinised. One was considered to be appropriate and consistent with national and local guidance, the second was deemed to contain insufficient information for the panel to reach a decision.

Serious Violence

- The Officer in the Case was sent a complimentary letter from the relevant County Policing Command representative.

Sexual Offence

- The Panel considered the use of an Adult Caution in this case, following deliberation over the local documentation presented; they were unable to reach a considered conclusion.

Next meeting

Tuesday 14th April 2015.