



ORIGINATOR: CHIEF CONSTABLE

PAPER NO: AP17/30

**SUBMITTED TO: ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL –
16 JUNE 2017**

SUBJECT: VICTIM SATISFACTION AND CONFIDENCE

SUMMARY:

1. This report illustrates Constabulary activity and performance in respect of public confidence in policing and the satisfaction of victims.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. The Accountability and Performance Panel is asked to note the contents of this report.

DETAIL OF THE SUBMISSION

1. KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

- 1.1. Measures of public confidence and victim satisfaction are prominent within most police forces performance frameworks and indeed both are prioritised within the Suffolk Police and Crime Plan 2017-2021. While the two are often discussed together it is important to emphasise the distinction between confidence and satisfaction.
- 1.2. Public confidence relates to measurements taken from the general public regardless of whether they have had contact with the police. Like most forces, Suffolk Constabulary uses the Office of National Statistics Crime Survey of England and Wales (CSEW) to track the confidence of the Suffolk public. The CSEW is a robust national survey which provides results from a statistically reliable sample¹ and a consistent method of asking questions primarily from face to face interviews. It is not only used to track confidence within the county, but to compare to other police Constabulary areas. Measurements are published every quarter and since 2012 each measure refers to results from at least 650 interviews taken from the county within the last 12 months.
- 1.3. Victim satisfaction relates to measurements taken from victims of certain forms of reported crime. Until March 2017, the Home Office required each police Constabulary to submit statutory returns on satisfaction in relation to burglary dwelling, violent crime (excluding domestic violence), vehicle crime and hate crime. This requirement was discontinued in April 2017 and replaced with a new requirement relating only to domestic abuse although the Home Office set out clear non-prescriptive expectations that each Constabulary would continue to seek feedback from victims of other forms of crime. In Suffolk, a private research company has been used to conduct telephone interviews with victims. Measurements have been available each month and usually refer to satisfaction rates over the prior 12 months to ensure sufficiently small margins of error.
- 1.4. Within the Police and Crime Plan 2017-2021, the Police and Crime Commissioner has prioritised the measurement of the following areas of confidence and satisfaction:
Confidence Measures:
 - % of people who agree police are doing a good job
 - % of people who agree police deal with community priorities
 - % of public who agree police would treat them fairly regardless of who they are
 - % of public who have confidence in the police overall

Satisfaction Measures in respect of Domestic Abuse, Serious Sexual Offences, Hate Crime, Online Crime, Rural Crime and Business Crime

- % of victims satisfied with overall service
- % of victims satisfied with accessibility
- % of victims satisfied with actions taken
- % of victims satisfied with treatment
- % of victims satisfied with how well they were kept informed

¹ The sample is representative of the general population of the county and we can have strong confidence the results are accurate within a small margin of error.

- 1.5. This paper outlines progress in respect of each of these indicators, either with regard to actual performance or arrangements to capture the required information. It also details several of the key programs of activity the Constabulary is operating to sustain and improve performance in these areas.

Public Confidence

- 1.6. ONS typically publishes CSEW confidence data three months in arrears. Due to the general election, the publication due most recently was postponed so the most recent data available relates to the period October 2015 to September 2016. At that time Suffolk Constabulary was measured as follows:

- % of people who agree police are doing a good job: **65.5%**
- % of people who agree police deal with community priorities: **59.7%**
- % of public who agree police would treat them fairly regardless of who they are: **71.5%**
- % of public who have confidence in the police overall: **80.9%**

- 1.7. At September 2016 confidence in Suffolk Police was broadly stable and in line with national trends. Suffolk was above the national average in terms of 'doing a good job', 'confidence overall' and 'fair treatment' and slightly below for 'community priorities'. On this latter indicator, public agreement has been declining since September 2015 following two years of rises. The Constabulary's Performance Steering Group has commissioned work to be done to identify remedial actions and in the meantime the Constabulary continues its commitments to neighbourhood policing and engagement with local communities. Investments have been made in specialist community resources such as the Rural Crime Team and the Confidence & Satisfaction Board maintains scrutiny of this area overall.

- 1.8. One challenge in responding to changes in CSEW measures is that the Office of National Statistics does not provide a breakdown of surveys at a geographic level lower than county. This means the Constabulary is not able to identify specific local issues which may be affecting confidence. To this end, the Constabulary is working with the University of Suffolk to commission a local online survey which will report results in the autumn.

Victim Satisfaction

- 1.9. Of the victim satisfaction measures specified in the police and crime plan, the Constabulary only had arrangements previously in place for Hate Crime. This area therefore required new survey and sampling designs and a new procurement exercise to be undertaken to identify a supplier to undertake victim surveys. However, both domestic abuse and serious sexual offence require additional levels of scrutiny prior to surveys being conducted and, to this end, the Constabulary has adopted different approaches to surveying victims of these crimes than for victims of hate crime, online crime, rural crime and business crime.

- 1.10. For domestic abuse surveys the Constabulary must submit a statutory return to the Home Office in March 2018 for more than 500 victims of domestic abuse of all risk levels, dating from April 2017. The Constabulary is only required to submit the number of victims surveyed to the home office so the questions relating to the police and crime plan are not reported elsewhere and will not be comparable with other forces (with the exception of Norfolk Constabulary). The Home Office has, however,

supplied extensive 'technical guidance' which the Constabulary must consider. This stipulates that victim safety is paramount to the process and safeguards must be in place accordingly before any survey is conducted. These safeguards include the level of 'due diligence' that must be performed before selecting a victim to be included in the sample and the level of training that the interviewer must have.

- 1.11. As Norfolk Constabulary is working toward the same question set for its own Police and Crime Plan, Chief Officers determined that a joint approach should be established to ensure efficiency. The Constabulary's Performance and Analysis Department has been working with domestic abuse professional leads from both counties since the beginning of 2017 to design a process that will meet all the requirements set out by the Home Office 'technical guidance' and deliver the surveys required to report for police and crime plans. At the time of writing this process is still being finalised. It is likely that there will be cost implications and these have to be factored in to service and financial planning. It is therefore likely that the Constabulary will not be able to report on this until the winter of 2017 at the earliest.
- 1.12. Surveying serious sexual offence victims is not subject to statutory guidance from the Home Office but given the serious nature of these crimes the Constabulary is adopting the same principles as set out for domestic abuse. A separate program of work exploring options for these surveys is underway. Sample sizes are likely to be low but gathering feedback from victims of these crimes will be an important factor in future service planning.
- 1.13. For hate crime, online crime, rural crime and business crime the Constabulary has awarded a contract to the research company SMSR commencing from April 2017. SMSR previously conducted victim satisfaction surveys for Suffolk over several years and will begin reporting findings from June. The Constabulary's Performance and Analysis Department will collate these over several months in order to report on robust figures and minimise variations. While reliable samples will not be achieved until April 2018, it is envisioned that reporting will begin in late summer 2017.
- 1.14. The absence of current performance information on victim satisfaction will not affect the Constabulary's activities to ensure that victims are given an excellent service. The Confidence and Satisfaction Board chaired by Assistant Chief Constable Rachel Kearton oversees a wide programme of activity which includes monitoring of adherence to the victim's code of practice, 'service recovery' activities managed by the Professional Standards Department and ensuring that training for officers and staff is fit for purpose with respect to customer service principles. The Constabulary and PCC have embedded victim satisfaction within their shared vision, mission and values statements and many current investment programmes including body worn video cameras and internet protocol telephony are founded on the principles of improving service to victims.

2. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

3. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

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

ORIGINATOR CHECKLIST (MUST BE COMPLETED)	PLEASE STATE 'YES' OR 'NO'
Has legal advice been sought on this submission?	No
Has the PCC's Chief Finance Officer been consulted?	Yes
Have equality, diversity and human rights implications been considered including equality analysis, as appropriate?	No
Have human resource implications been considered?	Yes
Is the recommendation consistent with the objectives in the Police and Crime Plan?	Yes
Has consultation been undertaken with people or agencies likely to be affected by the recommendation?	No
Has communications advice been sought on areas of likely media interest and how they might be managed?	No
Have all relevant ethical factors been taken into consideration in developing this submission?	Yes