

**ORIGINATOR: CHIEF CONSTABLE**

**PAPER NO: AP18/44**

**SUBMITTED TO: ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL –  
7 SEPTEMBER 2018**

**SUBJECT: PROTECTING VULNERABLE PEOPLE/COUNTY POLICING  
COMMAND - CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE UPDATE**

**SUMMARY:**

1. This report provides an update from County Policing Command and Protecting Vulnerable People Directorate in relation to the Constabulary's approach to Children and Young Persons, identifying key performance information and areas of significant organisational/ operational development or issues.
2. Increasing demand continues to place great strain upon policing resources engaged in the investigation of child abuse and safeguarding. The Joint Targeted Area Inspection Framework remains the means by which police and partner agencies are held to account for their partnership approach, ensuring that all agencies are contributing in line with their statutory responsibilities and securing positive inspection outcomes.
3. Legislative changes to the local arrangements for child safeguarding will take effect by mid-2019. This will involve the removal of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and the creation of new child safeguarding plans under the direction of the three statutorily responsible agencies (Police, Health and Local Authority). Plans are progressing to allow for proposals to relevant executive officers and there is a potential for financial implications as a result of changing funding arrangements for the new arrangements.
4. In response to the evolving threat presented to Children and Young Persons via Urban Street Gangs and County Lines, the Constabulary is working closely with key partners in developing a county wide strategic plan, and three Area Tactical Action Plans.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

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

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Child Safeguarding continues to be an area of focus for the public sector widely and attracts extensive scrutiny from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire Rescue Service (HMICFRS), Ofsted, Care Quality Commission (CQC) and other review bodies. The extent to which the scrutiny is co-ordinated is likely to gain greater clarity through the Joint Targeted Area Inspections framework that is due to further embed during 2018. Suffolk has yet to be inspected under this system and as such it is anticipated to happen within the next 12 months.
- 1.2 On a local basis the Constabulary continues to develop its approach in relation to children and young people through external engagement with other agencies via both the County Policing Command (CPC) and the Protecting Vulnerable People (PVP) Directorate. Under phase 3 of the Suffolk Local Policing Review, the centralised Community Safety Department's functions have now been aligned with the County Policing Command, with the creation of three Neighbourhoods and Partnerships Teams (NPTs). The re-structure also sees CYP tactical delivery falling under the leadership of the Western Area Superintendent, and one of the three new NPT Inspector posts will see CYP amongst their areas of responsibility.
- 1.3 Recent OFSTED and HMICFRS inspections of the Suffolk effectiveness regarding children and vulnerable people has led to favourable grading and comments from those involved in the inspections.

## **2. CHILD SAFEGUARDING PARTNERSHIPS**

### **The Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)**

- 2.1 The Suffolk Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) is a statutory body with a wide remit to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in Suffolk. There have been some minor changes to representation at the various board meetings. The Detective Superintendent Protecting Vulnerable People (PVP) represents the Constabulary at the full LSCB and at the Executive Committee Sub group, and chairs the Child Exploited Strategic Group. The Detective Chief Inspector PVP represents the Constabulary at the other sub-groups of the Board.
- 2.2 The current LSCB Sub groups comprise:
  - Executive Group
  - Serious Case Review Panel
  - Child Death Overview Panel
  - Child Exploitation Strategic Group
  - Learning & Improvement Group
  - Policy Planning & Engagement Group
- 2.3 Following legislative changes as a result of the 'Wood Review' the current Suffolk Safeguarding arrangements will cease to exist by April 2019. The new Working Together 2018 guidance is now final and was made available to all agencies on the 1 August 2018. Local Authorities, Health and the Police must devise and publish their plans for new local safeguarding arrangements by April 2019 and implement new arrangements no later than July 2019. An executive workshop was held at the beginning of January that led to the agreement of some initial guiding principles and the establishment of a working group to further develop the Suffolk response. There are likely to be significant changes to structures, membership and funding arrangements as a result of the re-shape and a detailed timeline of consultation is currently being devised for executive level review. The working group is currently

exploring three possible models for the new safeguarding arrangements. It has been agreed that the new arrangements should build on what currently works well and to not lose the existing good practice that is in place within Suffolk. There are no national government changes planned to the Safeguarding Adults Board guidance contained in the Care Act 2014.

- 2.4 The Exploited Children Sub-Group continues to make use of the regional child sexual exploitation (CSE) Strategic Assessment and national best practice to inform a revised two year action plan. This is now agreed by the partnership and is progressing under the following themes:
- Protecting, Supporting, Safeguarding Vulnerable Young People from Exploitation and Managing Risk
  - Information and Intelligence Gathering, Sharing and Analysis
  - Awareness Raising, Communications and Public Confidence
  - Learning and Development of Professionals

### **Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)**

- 2.5 Governance of the MASH continues through the MASH Strategic Board which meets on a quarterly basis. The MASH has been recognised as a model of best practice in a number of reviews, and is recognised nationally as good practice in its structure and process. The parallel tasking and coordinating process that sits alongside MASH processes focusses on children at risk of exploitation and has had a positive impact on the multi-agency management of these risks.
- 2.6 The process flow of Domestic Abuse information into the MASH where it relates to the presence of or close proximity of a child to an abusive relationship has been completed. Further work was completed in August 2017, supported by SafeLives, to enhance these processes and look at a 'single front door' model for Domestic Abuse. In April 2018, the 'single front door' pilot was evaluated and this has recognised the benefit of the one front door approach. An integrated domestic abuse pathway is now being developed within the MASH, led by Local Authority and Police. The objective is to deal with all child related domestic abuse within the MASH, using the one front door model, streamlining the process and working with the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC).
- 2.7 In the period January 18 to June 18 the MASH received 9,444 contacts in relation to concerns for children. This is comparable to the previous year (10,765) and shows some stability of the referral rate. Approximately 35% (3,296) of all referrals relating to children are generated by the police. Of the 9,444 contacts 223 cases resulted in Section 47 Children's Act procedures being commenced (where there is a concern for serious harm).
- 2.8 Out of the 223 Section 47 cases, 160 cases resulted in joint investigations between Police and Social Care or single agency Social Care. In the previous year 480 cases (227 cases in same 6 months) met this threshold. During 2017 there has been a steady decline in the number of S47 enquiries initiated by the MASH, the reduction of S47 enquires is approximately 16%, with rates now more closely comparable to the average for statistical neighbours. This reflects the ongoing work within the MASH to improve the application of S47 thresholds and to ensure decisions are reached which are child specific (rather than applied to whole sibling groups). This has had a positive impact on the number of S47s generated.

## **Gangs and Youth Violence Board**

- 2.9 The Governance of the response to research presented to the Suffolk partnership is provided by the Gangs and Youth Violence Board which includes a range of relevant partner agency representatives. The research led to the development of a detailed multi-agency strategy to tackle youth gang violence and 'County Lines' exploitation issues in Suffolk.
- 2.10 Multi-agency Gangs Panels are under development within the three geographical commands, East, West and South. The panels will sit monthly and co-ordinate appropriate intelligence led and evidence based multi-agency interventions with individuals who are involved in, at risk of, or directly affected by gang related offending. Lead agencies will be identified, with a focus on gaps in provision, safeguarding, reducing risk and achieving positive outcomes. Partner agencies will include Police, Integrated Offender Management, multi-agency public protection, Probation Service, Community Safety Partnership Chair, Health, Well-being & Children's Services, Social Care, Youth Offending, Education and Borough and District Council (not exhaustive).
- 2.11 A multi-agency Gangs Team is under development with a jointly funded co-ordination and management post created and recruited to. The team will consist of consultant social worker & support social worker, community engagement officer, YOS practitioners, restorative justice practitioner, detached youth work and psychologist amongst other positions, most of which are in post or recruited into with proposed start dates. The team will be a multi-agency tactical delivery team, with a focus on gaps in provision, safeguarding, reducing risk and achieving positive outcomes. The team will work on the objectives set under the Strategic Action Plan, as well as activity identified by the Multi-Agency Gangs Panels.
- 2.12 To supplement the County Strategic Plan, separate area based Tactical Action Plans have been developed in the East, West and the South commands. Multi-agency workshops have been held with partner agencies ensuring that tactical plans meet local needs. Governance over delivery of those tactical plans is being managed by area Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs). Activity identified for the Tactical plans has been categorised in the areas of – Urban Street Gangs and County Lines Networks; Young and Vulnerable; The Community; Drug Users; Response Partnerships. The tactical plans will provide long-term measures to mitigate the harm caused by County Lines and Urban Street Gangs within each area command.

## **Suffolk Youth Offending Service & Suffolk Constabulary Partnership**

- 2.13 Suffolk Youth Offending Service (SYOS) in partnership with Suffolk Constabulary have developed an award winning and academically evaluated Youth Diversion scheme. The Diversion Programme focuses on early assessment of young people aged between 10-17 who have, or are, at risk of offending and provides effective intervention to prevent criminalisation.
- 2.14 The model allows police officers the discretion to deliver a Community Resolution to a young person. After this if the young person comes to notice again and is eligible for an out of court disposal a referral is made to SYOS and an assessment completed. Contact is made with the young person and parents/carers within 48 hours of receiving the referral, and usually involves a home visit. A SYOS manager and seconded police officer will jointly make a decision on the most appropriate disposal based on the information gathered.
- 2.15 The assessment focusses on a whole family approach and allows the SYOS, with its seconded police officers, to engage quickly and effectively to understand the factors which are causing the young person's behaviour. The approach offers a greater

insight into that young person's associations, family dynamics and the individual's own views. It enables the partnership an opportunity to develop a personal programme targeted towards the individual.

- 2.16 The Diversion programme includes a preventative element with a referral pathway open to all services including parents/carers. This is for children and young people aged between 8–17 who are at risk of becoming involved in offending and anti-social behaviour, and includes referrals relating to concerns about harmful sexual behaviour or those at risk of gang involvement.
- 2.17 In conjunction with SYOS the Constabulary have commenced drafting a joint Protocol to reduce offending and criminalisation of children in care. The agreement once implemented will place further emphasis on early intervention, diversion and restorative justice for children in such settings in an attempt to break the offending cycle that is often seen to escalate. A first draft of the protocol has been completed in April 2018, and consultation with stakeholders will be conducted before finalisation and implementation.

### **3. OPERATIONAL DELIVERY & PREVENTATIVE INITIATIVES**

#### **Child Sexual Exploitation & Missing Children**

- 3.1 Suffolk Constabulary continues to work closely with the Regional CSE Coordinator and across a range of statutory and voluntary sector agencies. The Constabulary continues to identify opportunities to link with the Eastern Region Specialist Operations Unit (ERSOU) and has been involved in proactive operations targeting perpetrators of child sexual exploitation (CSE)/child sexual abuse (CSA).
- 3.2 Between January 2018 and June 2018 there were 1503 episodes of missing children. It is widely recognised by professionals and through review of high profile CSE cases that missing episodes increase the risk of sexual exploitation for the children involved. There has been a partnership wide investment in the completion of 'return to home interviews' which has seen much higher completion rates and analysis of the information has provided a richer understanding of the issues than has previously been achieved. Furthermore, the sharing of information between the police and CYPS is now much better and police are now able to see the content of a CYPS Return interview and vice versa.
- 3.3 The Constabulary continues to receive referrals from Operation Hydrant the national coordinating response to historic allegations of child sexual abuse linked to prominent individuals or institutions. There have also been referrals from the National Child Abuse Panel and the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA). The number of referrals seems to have plateaued but the panel is gaining widespread media coverage that could lead to a further increase in similar reports. We are also now being asked to write detailed reports to IICSA regarding previous investigations.
- 3.4 The Constabulary is currently developing a matrix to assist with early identification of children vulnerable to exploitation by gangs and groups. The tool is evidence-based, drawing on current knowledge of specific risk factors in order to highlight children who may be at elevated risk. Although currently only fed using police data, the matrix is being used to provide opportunities for further profiling and strategy discussion at multi-agency Tactical Tasking and Co-ordination Groups. There is work underway to explore the possibility of incorporating data from partners, covering a wider range of evidence-based risk factors.
- 3.5 A new 'disruption toolkit' has been launched to provide front line police officers a directory of useful tactical options for dealing with CSE. This includes advice and

guidance of several pieces of rarely used legislation to assist in tackling this criminality.

### **Child Sexual Abuse and Online Investigation**

- 3.6 It should be noted that the reporting of Child Sexual Abuse has more than doubled in Suffolk in the last 3 years with recent months showing further elevated levels of recording. This is largely down to societal changes and the influence of the media to encourage victims to come forward in addition to the multi-agency working that continues to allow effective engagement with children and young people.
- 3.7 The Constabulary continues to focus on those individuals making, possessing, sharing and distributing Indecent Images of Children (IIOC). The Constabulary makes effective use of technology to identify those using file sharing platforms. Between January 2018 and June 2018 the Online Investigation Team undertook enforcement action against 54 individuals linked to IIOC.
- 3.8 The indication from the National Crime Agency (NCA) is that the number of referrals to forces concerning IIOC is likely to increase. In response to this identified risk the NCA has significantly increased resources both at the national and regional level to support forces. Between January 2018 – June 2018 the Constabulary received 79 referrals from the NCA, compared with 61 in the same period the previous year. The Constabulary also saw a marked increase in the number of referrals from other forces as Constabularies nationwide have put more resources into the identification and investigation of those distributing IIOC's. The Constabulary has introduced a dedicated Detective Sergeant to oversee the Online Investigation Team (OLIT) increasing supervision and accountability. This role has now embedded and is providing greater resilience and scrutiny to the team performance.
- 3.9 The OLIT are supported by the Cyber & Serious Crime department when conducting proactive investigations to tackle online IIOC offending. This has resulted in 125 arrests in Suffolk. Across Norfolk and Suffolk this operation has resulted in 80+ children being safeguarded and 12 children being protected. From the 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2018 the realignment of staff saw the Cyber teams, a dedicated supervisor and 9 investigators, move from Investigations to Safeguarding to achieve greater knowledge in this area.

### **Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)**

- 3.10 The Child SARC benefits from advanced equipment and provides an effective service to young victims of serious sexual abuse and support to their family or carers.
- 3.11 In the period from January 2017 to January 2018, 41 children attended the SARC. Of which, 11 children were under the age of 13. This compares to a total of 43 children for the same reporting period the preceding year. From the 41 children attending SARC in the reference period, 2 were self-referrals, and 28 referrals were from police. Awareness raising has been ongoing regarding SARC with GPs and other professionals coupled with successful multi-agency partnership working. There is still work needed in the MASH as there has been a reduction in under 13's being seen at the SARC which is a concern. Work on an agreed pathway is in hand.

### **Police Community Support Officer School Liaison SPOC Roles and Community Safety Activities**

- 3.12 The Constabulary benefits from three School Liaison PCSO posts. PCSO Theresa England is assigned to the South, PCSO Norman Drew assigned to the East and PCSO John Wilkins assigned to the West. The work of the Schools Liaison Officers was previously coordinated through the Community Safety Department, but under the

re-structure arising from phase three of the Suffolk Local Policing Review will fall under the new Neighbourhood Partnership Team. The team will have a newly appointed Inspector, and governed by standard operating procedural and partnership guidance.

- 3.13 The introduction of the role has allowed the SPOCS to establish themselves within schools, through being known and accepted by the leadership and pastoral care teams. This has been widely accepted and when working effectively it has resulted in increased engagement, delivery of safety material and the gathering of intelligence. This has been augmented by attendance at partner multiagency meetings such as the monthly In Year Fair Access Panel (IYFAP) South-West-East meetings in which the Schools pastoral groups will discuss the most vulnerable students closest to permanent exclusion with other partner agencies such as YOS, CYPS, and SFF collectively looking for a managed moves or supporting programme for the young person. SPOCS will also attend the locality multiagency meetings where appropriate to assist in looking for ways to assist those most vulnerable within the school system.
- 3.14 The SYOS Diversion programme is embedded within schools and is regularly used by SPOC's to refer young people to. All SPOC's are now trained in the use of Restorative Justice and able to deliver suitable interventions within the school communities. This has proven to be an invaluable method of resolving crime related issues in schools in a proportionate manner.
- 3.15 The liaison posts are heavily involved in initiatives around youth and knife crime and have delivered presentations to 'Crucial Crew' schools and deployed operationally in support of the Constabulary Operation Sceptre.
- 3.16 The school liaison officers have also delivered specific inputs into schools where higher demand issues have arisen within the school around such as Hate Crime (racist bullying) and Cyber Safety (sexualised behaviour).

#### **Volunteer Police Cadet and Emergency Services Cadet Scheme**

- 3.17 The Volunteer Police Cadet and Emergency Services Cadet scheme continues to be a popular initiative that currently has 157 members across the county and a waiting list of 29 potential new recruits. There are currently 8 active Cadet Units throughout the county, made up of 5 Police Cadet Units and 3 Emergency Services Cadet Units.
- 3.18 The Cadet Coordinator post was created in 2011 within the Community Safety department and moved across to form part of the Specials, Volunteers and Cadets Team in June 2016 (Human Resources). Cadet Unit Leaders are made up of Police Officers, PCSOs, Police Staff, Special Constabulary and Police Support Volunteers.
- 3.19 There are currently 32 Police Officer/Staff Cadet Leaders who volunteer their time to support the Cadet Scheme, and 19 Specials/PSV Cadet Leaders, 11 of these being ex Cadets who have returned to the Scheme as Volunteers, wishing to give something back to a scheme which for themselves provided a safe and fun environment to develop as a young person. Our 3 Joint Emergency Services Units are also supported by 9 Fire Cadet Leaders in addition to the Police Cadet Leaders.
- 3.20 The group continues to engage in a wide range of initiatives and activities locally and countywide, and the scheme is increasingly being recognised both internally and externally. The Suffolk Cadets will continue to support local charity fund raising and community engagement events throughout 2018, and our representatives will assist the National Volunteer Police Cadet team in shaping the future of the Volunteer Police Cadet scheme. The National Volunteer Police Cadet digital platform has now been introduced within Suffolk at no cost to the organisation, and will be used by all

Suffolk Cadet Units to assist in developing consistency within all cadet units across the county and to reduce associated administration for Unit Leaders.

- 3.21 Enrolments are continuing onto the free qualification, BTEC Level 2 in Teamwork and Personal Development in the Community, available to all of our Cadets aged 16 and over, thus ensuring the educational value of the scheme. Suffolk has been one of the leading forces in rolling out two training programmes offered by the National VPC team, the first being accredited Social Action Training for Senior Cadets, which empowers cadets to lead social action and encourages them to identify local issues and lead others in planning and delivering a response to improve their local communities. The second is Adult Volunteer Training which has been designed to deliver relevant training on leadership principles and techniques to VPC adult leaders.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are potential financial implications regarding the restructure of local safeguarding arrangements as mandated by the Home Office. There have been initial proposals formulated by a working group formed across the relevant agencies and they have been presented to executive officers. Further development is required and a timeline of further presentation and implementation is established. There is likely to be an increase in Constabulary financial contribution to the new arrangements through consultation with partners and further updates will be provided as plans become agreed.

#### **5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

- 5.1 Demand relating to child protection and CSE continues to rise in keeping with national trends. It is anticipated this will continue to be the case as more hidden harm is identified and professionals become more experienced in the recognition of CSE/ CSA. The increase will provide ongoing challenges to the managers and practitioners charged with providing a service to this most vulnerable group of the community.

<b>ORIGINATOR CHECKLIST (MUST BE COMPLETED)</b>	<b>PLEASE STATE 'YES' OR 'NO'</b>
Has legal advice been sought on this submission?	No
Has the PCC's Chief Finance Officer been consulted?	No – as no financial implications noted
Have equality, diversity and human rights implications been considered including equality analysis, as appropriate?	No – there are no issues likely to impact on either diversity or human rights implications
Have human resource implications been considered?	Yes – no HR implications identified.
Is the recommendation consistent with the objectives in the Police and Crime Plan?	Yes – Objectives 2 and 3.
Has consultation been undertaken with people or agencies likely to be affected by the recommendation?	Yes – Both the MASH and SARC are subject to multi-agency governance arrangements.
Has communications advice been sought on areas of likely media interest and how they might be managed?	Yes
Have all relevant ethical factors been taken into consideration in developing this submission?	Yes