



ORIGINATOR: CHIEF CONSTABLE

PAPER NO: AP20/26

SUBMITTED TO: ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL –
3 JULY 2020

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. Public Confidence in policing and the satisfaction of victims of crime in relation to the service they receive from police is of huge importance.
- 1.2. Measures of public confidence and victim satisfaction are prominent within most police force performance frameworks and indeed both are prioritised within the Suffolk Police and Crime Plan 2017-2020. While the two are often discussed together it is important to emphasise the distinction between confidence and satisfaction.
- 1.3. 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 national survey which provides results from a statistically reliable sample¹ and a consistent method of asking questions ordinarily from face to face interviews. Following restrictions imposed due to COVID-19, the CSEW surveys have been conducted by telephone since 21 May 2020. 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 600 interviews taken from the county within the last 12 months. Not all of those sampled will necessarily have had contact with Suffolk Constabulary.
- 1.4. Victim satisfaction relates to measurements taken from victims of certain types of reported crime. Until March 2017, the Home Office required each 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 third-party research company is used to conduct telephone interviews (in line with PCC priorities) with victims of:
 - Hate Crime
 - Rural Crime
 - Online Crime
 - Business Crime
- 1.5. In terms of user satisfaction, it is made clear to all participants that the survey is in respect of recent service received from Suffolk Constabulary, which is repeated several times. Thereafter, Suffolk Constabulary is referred to as ‘the police’ for simplicity.
- 1.6. Measurements have been available each month, and usually refer to satisfaction rates over the prior 12 months to ensure sufficiently small margins of error.
- 1.7. Surveys are also undertaken with victims of Domestic Abuse (as part of the Home Office Mandated ADR 444 – mentioned in 1.3). These telephone surveys are undertaken by the in-house Victim Satisfaction Survey Co-ordinator.

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.

- 1.8. Within the Police and Crime Plan 2017-2020, the Police and Crime Commissioner has prioritised the measurement of the following areas:

Confidence Measures:

- % of respondents who agree police are doing a good job
- % of respondents who agree police deal with community priorities
- % of respondents who agree police would treat them fairly
- % of respondents who have confidence in the police overall

Satisfaction Measures:

(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

- 1.9. This paper outlines the current position 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 programmes of activity the Constabulary is operating to sustain and improve performance in these areas.

Public Confidence

- 1.10. ONS typically publishes CSEW confidence data three months in arrears. The most recent data was published in April 2020 and covers the period up to December 2019. Levels of confidence are displayed in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Suffolk Constabulary Confidence Data December 2016 to December 2019

Measure	Last 12 months	3 year average	Difference	National Average (Last 12 months)	National Ranking: as at Dec 2019 (/42)
% of public who agree police are doing a good job	50.0%	56.7%	-6.7p.p.	57.1%	35
% of public who agree police deal with community priorities	48.3%	53.7%	-5.4p.p.	54.4%	36
% of public who agree police would treat them fairly	65.9%	67.4%	-1.5 p.p.	67.5%	12
% of public who have confidence in the police overall	69.8%	74.3%	-4.5 p.p.	74.7%	33

- 1.11. The CSEW surveys are undertaken face to face by a researcher in the home of the participant. The surveys ask a large number of questions of participants covering a range of police and crime issues, including confidence in policing. As stated above 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 measuring perceptions of police, rather than experience.

- 1.12. 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.
- 1.13. As at December 2019 confidence in Suffolk Police sits below the three-year average in all four measures. In relation to the national average, Suffolk is below for all remaining measures.
- 1.14. Confidence levels had been in decline since early 2016. There is no definitive trigger or reason for this decline although the decline can be mapped against changes to operating models and reductions in officer and staff numbers as a result of cuts to police funding. In the last two quarters of 2019 there has been an increase in confidence across most measures.

Victim Satisfaction

- 1.15. In April 2017, the Home Office requirements for Victim Satisfaction surveys changed. All forces were given the opportunity to survey whichever victim groups they felt most appropriate, with the stipulation that all forces would survey victims of Domestic Abuse. Suffolk Constabulary decided that the groups of victims to be surveyed going forward would be:
 - Hate Crime
 - Rural Crime
 - Online Crime
 - Business Crime
 - Domestic Abuse (HO Mandated)
 - Sexual offences (Currently in development)
- 1.16. 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 and safeguarding considerations 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.

Domestic Abuse Surveys (ADR 444) and Sexual Offences

- 1.17. Suffolk Constabulary has a requirement to comply with ADR444 (Service Improvement Survey – Domestic Abuse). This is a mandatory collection requirement and was introduced for 2015/16 to meet recommendation 4 from the 2014 report by HMICFRS entitled 'Everyone's Business: Improving the police response to domestic abuse'.
- 1.18. The Home Office worked with forces and third sector organisations to develop a survey tool and methodology and to identify learning around how to collect victims' views effectively. A survey tool, guidance, principles and FAQs for this collection were sent to forces in June 2016 and remain unchanged.

- 1.19. Locally, we reviewed multiple options for undertaking the survey, with a core strategy that we must put the victim's safety as the priority, not speed of delivery. Options including outsourcing to the private sector, to other forces or to undertake the work in-house. Due to the risks involved and the criticality of the information used prior to a call being the most up to date possible, it was decided to deliver the service in-house.

Current Position

- 1.20. A new Victim Satisfaction Survey (VSS) Co-ordinator has been recruited to respond to the Home Office mandated requirement to carry out satisfaction surveys with victims of Domestic Abuse (ADR444).
- 1.21. The VSS Co-ordinator (VSC) will be trained, in terms of knowledge and understanding of domestic abuse and training on the required systems, to facilitate the pre-call safety checks.
- 1.22. The Data Insight Team within Strategic Business and Operational Services (SBOS) has developed an in-house system to facilitate the surveys, from the point of extracting the sample data out of Athena, to populating it in the system for the VSS co-ordinator to use as the basis for survey work. The system also has the ability to capture the responses of participants from the survey, and allow for extraction of those responses for analysis.
- 1.23. The VSC role sits within the Crime, Safeguarding & Incident Management (CSIM) Directorate under the supervision of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Detective Inspector. The surveying process is owned and managed by CSIM, with support from SBOS in terms of the system used to facilitate the surveying, and the reporting on survey results.
- 1.24. During the time in which the Suffolk VSS co-ordinator has been in post:
- 549 victims were identified as suitable to call for survey purposes;
 - Of those 549, 117 victims were successfully surveyed;
 - For the 117 victims who were surveyed, 95 (82.9%) expressed satisfaction with the whole experience. Whilst this appear positive the sample size to date is too small to be able to draw any strong conclusions.
- 1.25. In the future, although not a Home Office requirement, it is envisaged that this role will incorporate satisfaction surveys for victims of Serious Sexual Offences. This is currently in discussion with senior officers and researching the surveys with other Constabularies.

Hate Crime, Online Crime, Rural Crime and Business Crime

- 1.26. For hate crime, online crime, rural crime and business crime the Constabulary awarded a contract to the research company SMSR in June 2017. SMSR previously conducted victim satisfaction surveys for Suffolk over several years and began reporting findings for the new topics in August 2018.
- 1.27. Since that time, surveys have been conducted on a monthly basis, and it is now possible to report on the findings to date, having more than twelve months' worth of data. Data for the twelve-month rolling period to April 2020 is displayed in Table 2, below.

Table 2: Suffolk Constabulary User Satisfaction April 2020

Suffolk		% satisfied		
		12 months ending		Diff. PP
		Apr-20	Apr-19	
Business Crime	First contact	87.8%	79.8%	+8.0pp
	Action taken	62.5%	65.5%	-3.0pp
	Kept informed	63.5%	68.9%	-5.4pp
	Treatment	87.5%	93.9%	-6.4pp
	Whole experience	68.8%	70.9%	-2.2pp
<i>Number of respondents</i>		96	148	
Hate Crime	First contact	75.0%	63.1%	+11.9pp
	Action taken	64.8%	52.7%	+12.1pp
	Kept informed	69.5%	61.3%	+8.2pp
	Treatment	87.6%	80.6%	+7.0pp
	Whole experience	72.4%	65.6%	+6.8pp
<i>Number of respondents</i>		105	93	
Online Crime	First contact	72.4%	75.3%	-2.9pp
	Action taken	81.4%	70.8%	+10.6pp
	Kept informed	82.6%	71.9%	+10.6pp
	Treatment	88.4%	85.4%	+3.0pp
	Whole experience	83.7%	77.5%	+6.2pp
<i>Number of respondents</i>		86	89	
Rural Crime	First contact	63.8%	81.2%	-17.4pp
	Action taken	60.9%	62.8%	-1.9pp
	Kept informed	70.3%	60.3%	+10.1pp
	Treatment	84.4%	89.7%	-5.4pp
	Whole experience	73.4%	75.6%	-2.2pp
<i>Number of respondents</i>		64	78	
Total	First contact	75.3%	74.9%	+0.5pp
	Action taken	67.5%	63.2%	+4.3pp
	Kept informed	71.2%	66.2%	+5.0pp
	Treatment	87.2%	88.2%	-1.0pp
	Whole experience	74.4%	72.1%	+2.3pp
<i>Number of respondents</i>		351	408	

- 1.28. It is no longer possible to compare performance in this area with other police forces – as each will be surveying different victim types, in different ways. It is now possible to make year on year comparisons. Comparisons indicate reductions in satisfaction rates across the majority of the data sets for rural crime and business crime. Satisfaction with first contact among rural crime and online crime victims has dropped by 17.4 and 2.9 percentage points respectively in the last year. Satisfaction with treatment by police for victims of rural and business crime fell by 6.4 and 5.4 percentage points respectively in the last year. However, there have been increases in satisfaction rates across the majority of the data sets for hate crime and online crime. There are a number of improvements overall including how police are keeping victims informed (an improvement of 5.0 percentage points compared with the 12 months ending April 2019) and action taken (an improvement of 4.3 percentage points). Satisfaction with the whole experience for all victims has increased by 2.3 percentage points when compared to the same period last year. While these first year on year comparisons are a positive step forward, more data is still needed before long-term analysis of trends can be carried out.
- 1.29. Caution should be applied when reviewing the individual indicators (i.e. total for just online crime or rural crime etc.) as the sample sizes for these, taken on their own, are relatively small. As more data becomes available additional cumulative information will be provided against each individual crime area.

2. PUBLIC CONFIDENCE BOARD

- 2.1. As was reported within the last APP paper the Constabulary has implemented a Public Confidence Board, led by the Assistant Chief Constable for Local Policing. This Board meets monthly in order to progress activity and work-streams intended to bring about improved public confidence.
- 2.2. A small dedicated team was set up to provide enhanced focus on delivery of the Public Confidence action plan. This team reported into the ACC Local Policing and into the Public Confidence Board. There has been a short suspension of this work in light of the current operating environment under Covid-19.
- 2.3. The focus has been on the following five areas:
- Increasing our external marketing of capability and good work
 - Increasing the internal confidence of staff and raising awareness of organisational priorities, direction and good work
 - Increasing ‘customer service’ focus
 - Increasing engagement
 - Reviewing our structures, processes believed to be impacting on public confidence
- 2.4. Dissatisfaction with the 101 system has been identified as a potential impact on both confidence and satisfaction levels. This will form part of the work to be undertaken in the wider review of the force CCR.
- 2.5. The new process for managing the reporting and investigation of reported volume crime has now been implemented and will be subject of evaluation to understand the impact this will have on public confidence.

2.6. The upskilling of our front-line officers and staff to improve and enhance the investigation of crime has commenced though currently suspended under the current social distancing restrictions in place. This will be re-established at the first opportunity.

2.7. Plans to undertake a wider, more in depth public perception survey across the county has been pended in light of the covid-19 response and the need to ensure that any measure of public confidence reflects a business as usual environment as close as is possible.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1. There are no financial implications relating to this report.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

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