



**ORIGINATOR: CHIEF CONSTABLE**

**PAPER NO: AP21/33**

**SUBMITTED TO: ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL – 2 JULY 2021**

**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 as they are a key indicator of how well a force is delivering its core functionality 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 the views of the general public regardless of whether they have had contact with the police. Like most forces, Suffolk Constabulary has used the Office of National Statistics Crime Survey of England and Wales (CSEW) to track the confidence of the Suffolk public. The CSEW is an independent national survey which provides results from a statistically reliable sample<sup>1</sup> using a consistent method of asking questions ordinarily from face to face interviews. It is not only used to track confidence within the county but can be used to compare to other police Constabulary areas and the country as a whole. Prior to May 2020, survey results were published every quarter with each measure referring to results from at least 600 interviews taken from the county within the previous 12 months. As a result of restrictions imposed due to Covid-19 the CSEW surveys have been conducted by telephone since late May 2020, and due to reduced operating periods this has produced a lower sample size than would ordinarily be captured. The change in method for survey collection may also impact on comparability of the results with historical data. Consequently, there has been no CSEW confidence data published since the period ending March 2020, with no indication of when this will resume.
- 1.4. Victim satisfaction relates to the views and experiences of victims of certain types of crime reported to Suffolk Constabulary. Prior to 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 third-party research company is used to conduct telephone interviews (in line with the Police and Crime Plan priorities) with victims of:
  - Hate Crime
  - Rural Crime
  - Online Crime
  - Business Crime
- 1.5. It is made clear to all survey participants that the questions are being asked in respect of a specific recent service received from Suffolk Constabulary (thereafter referred to as 'the police' for simplicity).

---

<sup>1</sup> 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.

- 1.6. Survey results have been available each month and are usually reported as rolling satisfaction rates over the prior 12 months to ensure sufficiently small margins of error.
- 1.7. Surveys of a similar nature are also undertaken with victims of Domestic Abuse (as part of the Home Office Mandated ADR 444), however these are undertaken by the in-house Domestic Abuse Victim Satisfaction Survey Co-ordinator due to the sensitivities of the crime and with victim safeguarding as the primary consideration.
- 1.8. Within the Police and Crime Plan 2017-2020, the Police and Crime Commissioner 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, Hate Crime, Online Crime, Rural Crime and Business Crime)<sup>2</sup>

- % 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, as well as detailing several of the key programmes of activity the Constabulary is operating to sustain and improve performance in these areas.

### **Public Confidence**

- 1.10. As a result of the changes to CSEW surveying during the Covid-19 pandemic, data is only available up to March 2020, which has been reported alongside associated commentary, in previous APP reports and so has not been included on this occasion. Public confidence is often linked to the quality of service delivered during interactions with the public. With the recent increase in user satisfaction it is anticipated that when confidence data does become available it will reflect the positive increase recorded in service delivery.

### **Victim Satisfaction**

- 1.11. Since April 2017 forces have been able to choose which victim groups they survey based on what they felt were most appropriate, with the stipulation that all forces would survey victims of Domestic Abuse. Since then, Suffolk Constabulary have surveyed the following victim groups:

- Hate Crime
- Rural Crime

---

<sup>2</sup> Plans to conduct similar surveys for victims of Serious Sexual Offences have been paused whilst the Constabulary considers the processes and output of the Domestic Abuse surveys.

- Online Crime
- Business Crime
- Domestic Abuse (Home Office Mandated)

1.12. Results for surveys conducted with victims of hate crime, rural, crime, online crime and business crime have been available since June 2017. For domestic abuse victim surveying, a process was developed to ensure the necessary scrutiny around safeguarding considerations are applied prior to contacting victims, meaning results only became available in November 2018.

### Hate Crime, Online Crime, Rural Crime and Business Crime

1.13. For hate crime, online crime, rural crime and business crime the Constabulary awarded a contract to the research company SMSR in June 2017, which has recently been renewed for another operating term (at least two years). SMSR previously conducted victim satisfaction surveys for Suffolk over several years and began reporting findings for the new topics in August 2018. Data for the twelve-month rolling period to April 2021 is displayed in Table 1 below, alongside comparable data from the previous report which covered the period up to October 2020 (table 2).

Table 1: Victim satisfaction up to April 2021

Suffolk		% satisfied		
		12 months ending		Diff. PP
		Apr-21	Apr-20	
Business Crime	First contact	80.9%	87.8%	-7.0%
	Action taken	79.5%	62.5%	17.0%
	Kept informed	80.3%	63.5%	16.8%
	Treatment	90.6%	87.5%	3.1%
	<b>Whole experience</b>	<b>82.7%</b>	<b>68.8%</b>	<b>13.9%</b>
<i>Number of respondents</i>		127	96	
Hate Crime	First contact	63.3%	75.0%	-11.7%
	Action taken	67.2%	64.8%	2.4%
	Kept informed	71.2%	69.5%	1.7%
	Treatment	84.0%	87.6%	-3.6%
	<b>Whole experience</b>	<b>68.8%</b>	<b>72.4%</b>	<b>-3.6%</b>
<i>Number of respondents</i>		125	105	
Online Crime	First contact	73.5%	72.4%	1.2%
	Action taken	76.6%	81.4%	-4.8%
	Kept informed	77.1%	82.6%	-5.5%
	Treatment	92.2%	88.4%	3.8%
	<b>Whole experience</b>	<b>78.6%</b>	<b>83.7%</b>	<b>-5.1%</b>
<i>Number of respondents</i>		192	86	
Rural Crime	First contact	76.6%	63.8%	12.8%
	Action taken	71.5%	60.9%	10.6%
	Kept informed	70.0%	70.3%	-0.3%
	Treatment	91.5%	84.4%	7.2%
	<b>Whole experience</b>	<b>78.5%</b>	<b>73.4%</b>	<b>5.0%</b>
<i>Number of respondents</i>		130	64	
Total	First contact	73.6%	75.3%	-1.8%
	Action taken	74.0%	67.5%	6.5%
	Kept informed	74.9%	71.2%	3.7%
	Treatment	89.9%	87.2%	2.7%
	<b>Whole experience</b>	<b>77.4%</b>	<b>74.4%</b>	<b>3.0%</b>
<i>Number of respondents</i>		574	351	

Table 2: Victim satisfaction up to October 2020

Suffolk		% satisfied		
		12 months ending		Diff. PP
		Oct-20	Oct-19	
Business Crime	First contact	88.9%	79.4%	9.5%
	Action taken	72.1%	61.4%	10.7%
	Kept informed	72.1%	62.1%	10.0%
	Treatment	92.8%	88.6%	4.2%
	<b>Whole experience</b>	<b>78.4%</b>	<b>68.9%</b>	<b>9.4%</b>
<i>Number of respondents</i>		111	132	
Hate Crime	First contact	69.3%	71.4%	-2.1%
	Action taken	69.9%	58.0%	11.9%
	Kept informed	70.7%	70.4%	0.4%
	Treatment	87.0%	85.2%	1.8%
	<b>Whole experience</b>	<b>72.4%</b>	<b>65.4%</b>	<b>6.9%</b>
<i>Number of respondents</i>		123	81	
Online Crime	First contact	70.9%	75.7%	-4.8%
	Action taken	76.3%	71.4%	4.9%
	Kept informed	78.6%	75.3%	3.3%
	Treatment	90.1%	87.0%	3.1%
	<b>Whole experience</b>	<b>78.6%</b>	<b>76.6%</b>	<b>2.0%</b>
<i>Number of respondents</i>		131	77	
Rural Crime	First contact	71.0%	78.8%	-7.8%
	Action taken	68.8%	57.8%	10.9%
	Kept informed	68.8%	62.5%	6.3%
	Treatment	90.2%	90.6%	-0.4%
	<b>Whole experience</b>	<b>78.6%</b>	<b>73.4%</b>	<b>5.1%</b>
<i>Number of respondents</i>		112	64	
Total	First contact	74.2%	76.5%	-2.3%
	Action taken	71.9%	62.1%	9.8%
	Kept informed	72.7%	66.9%	5.8%
	Treatment	89.9%	87.9%	2.1%
	<b>Whole experience</b>	<b>76.9%</b>	<b>70.6%</b>	<b>6.3%</b>
<i>Number of respondents</i>		477	354	

1.14. It is no longer possible to compare levels of satisfaction with other police forces as each force will be surveying different victim types, in different ways. However, with the ability to make year on year comparisons with local data we can now track progress internally, which is helped by the rising number of surveys completed in a twelve-month period.

- 1.15. Comparisons for the period up to April 2021 indicate increases in satisfaction rates across several measures for all crime types, in particular for business crime and rural where all but one measure in each crime group has improved against the figure for last year. Not only have the figures improved against the last year for these crime types but they have also improved in places against the last report, which focused on the 12 months up to October 2020. There is greater variation for hate crime and online crime, with some measures declining against last year and against the last reporting period, for instance for action taken and being kept informed.
- 1.16. Satisfaction with the whole experience for the four survey groups combined remains higher than the previous year however has dropped for hate crime and online crime separately.
- 1.17. Satisfaction with first contact has dropped in two crime areas (business crime and hate crime) when compared to the last reporting period as well as the previous 12 months. However, for business crime, the level of satisfaction remains at approximately 80% so despite the drop would still indicate a good level of satisfaction. Satisfaction across all other measures for business crime show marked improvement. For hate crime however, the figure has dropped below 65% (from over 70% in the previous 12 months and in the last report itself), meaning that levels of satisfaction in this area are lower than we would like or expect them to be.
- 1.18. To better understand the driving factors behind satisfaction levels, the Confidence, Satisfaction and Engagement Board commissioned SBOS to analyse the satisfaction survey results in each individual crime area. Reports for business crime, rural crime, online crime and hate crime have all been presented to and discussed by the board. The findings and discussion provide valuable insight into what is contributing to higher levels of satisfaction as well as to dissatisfaction, meaning work can be undertaken to improve where necessary.
- 1.19. Analysis of victim feedback for each crime type over a period of 12 months indicates that the most impactful factors on levels of satisfaction are perceptions about how well the investigation progressed, how often the victim was updated, and the length of time to complete the investigation. Variation across the crime types shows that some factors are more impactful for certain victims than others, for instance:
- Victims of rural crime who were aged 55 or over or have a disability, commented on those factors more frequently in a negative context.
  - Victims of business crime who were male and aged between 25 and 34 reported more concerns over those impacting factors than other business crime victims, as did victims of online crime who were female and aged over 45.
  - For all crime categories, the most common impacting factor on levels of satisfaction with first contact was the length of time taken to answer their call.
  - Across all crime types, the level of satisfaction with the treatment received by victims is consistently higher than levels of satisfaction with other measures.
  - The most frequently reported impacting factors on levels of satisfaction with treatment are perceptions of fairness, politeness and respect by police.
- 1.20. In addition to those factors, and specifically for victims of hate crime, a sense of being taken seriously was identified as one of the most common impacting factors on levels of satisfaction, with male victims over the age of 45 accounting for a large proportion of those who were less satisfied overall with first contact and treatment. Female victims of hate crime largely represented those who were less satisfied with their overall experience.

- 1.21. Victims of online crime most frequently reported that being kept informed, knowing that action was being taken, and that they were reassured by this, were key impacting factors on their levels of satisfaction. Female victims of online crime were the predominant group who were less satisfied with those factors.
- 1.22. Victims of business crime most frequently reported that the level of investigation and officer updates were key impacting factors on their levels of satisfaction, with female victims feeling less satisfied in those areas than the overall cohort.
- 1.23. Victims of rural crime reported that the level of investigation and sense of reassurance from police were key impacting factors on their levels of satisfaction, with victims aged over 45 feeling less satisfied with the whole experience than the overall cohort.
- 1.24. A further breakdown across all crime types indicates that female victims aged 18 to 24 years old report levels of satisfaction which are in line with or higher than the overall cohort.
- 1.25. Noting the specific factors impacting each different crime type, the general trends over time show fluctuation across the five satisfaction measures (see charts 1-5 below).

Figures 1-5: Satisfaction levels in 2019, 2020 and 2021 (to date) for the four crime types combined.



- 1.26. Points to note from the above charts are:
- Current levels of satisfaction with first contact with police are lower than at the same time in the previous two years and is driven by the reduction in this area for hate crime.
  - The level of satisfaction for both the actions taken and how the victim was kept informed are higher than at the same time in the previous two years.
  - Satisfaction with treatment by police remains in line with levels seen in the previous two years and remains at a high level.
  - Overall satisfaction with the whole experience is currently higher than at the same time in the previous two years.

(Note that the charts show data for each month as an individual value as opposed to the rolling 12-month values which are presented in tables 1 and 2).

### **Domestic Abuse Surveys (ADR 444) and Sexual Offences**

- 1.27. Suffolk Constabulary has a requirement to comply with ADR444 (Service Improvement Survey – Domestic Abuse). This is a mandatory collection requirement and was introduced in 2015/16 to meet recommendation 4 from the 2014 report by HMICFRS entitled ‘Everyone’s Business: Improving the police response to domestic abuse’.
- 1.28. 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.
- 1.29. Locally, a number of options were considered to meet that requirement including outsourcing to external providers or to other forces undertaking the work, however the risks involved and the criticality of having local information on each victim prior to calling meant that an in house solution was deemed most appropriate.

### Current Position

- 1.30. In Suffolk, a Victim Satisfaction Survey (VSS) Co-ordinator delivers the Home Office mandated requirement to carry out satisfaction surveys with victims of Domestic Abuse (ADR444).
- 1.31. The VSS Co-ordinator (VSC) is trained to hold comprehensive understanding of domestic abuse and to be able to access the necessary information to conduct a risk assessment prior to contacting a victim. Applying this knowledge and background checks means that victims are sometimes excluded from our survey cohort based on identified risks that could cause harm if we were to make contact.
- 1.32. Data from the Domestic Abuse surveys is recorded and stored on an in-house database which allows analysts from the Strategic, Business and Operational Services (SBOS) department to access the results and review for a variety of purposes including to inform the Domestic Abuse delivery board.
- 1.33. 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 reporting on

survey results. Since the Suffolk VSS co-ordinator has been in post (November 2018), and up to the end of April 2021 168 victims have been successfully surveyed, of which:

- 81% expressed satisfaction with the first contact they had with police.
- 90% expressed satisfaction with the initial service they received from the attending officer.
- 77% expressed satisfaction with the way they were kept informed.
- 93% expressed satisfaction with the treatment they received.
- 86% expressed satisfaction with their overall experience.

- 1.34. The Constabulary is still awaiting comprehensive data for a full two-year period in order to draw year on year comparisons (early monthly results were too low in volume to compare). However, for the next APP paper it will be possible to draw comparisons on six-monthly datasets.

## **2. PUBLIC CONFIDENCE, SATISFACTION AND ENGAGEMENT BOARD**

- 2.1. The Constabulary's Public Confidence, Satisfaction and Engagement Board is led by the Assistant Chief Constable for Local Policing. This Board meets monthly and explores the main themes in greater depth each month. This work has continued through the Covid epidemic.
- 2.2. The main challenge for victim satisfaction is in initial contact, especially the timeliness of answering the phone for 101 enquiries. Calls are prioritised by risk, including hate crime reports. We are also trialling live chat, which has been reported at the previous Accountability and Performance Panel meeting.
- 2.3. Public Confidence data has significant lag, and currently there is no recent data available beyond March 2020, however neither of these points deter the board in finding ways to improve and it has strong representation from across the Constabulary. For example, it has recently conducted a survey of police buildings from a public perspective and is currently implementing improvements across Suffolk and this aims to be complete by the end of the year. The terms of reference for the board have expanded its remit to include confidence, satisfaction and engagement together so it can better co-ordinate and align the Constabulary effort to provide the best possible service to reassure and protect the public. We have also developed an engagement strategy, including digital and social media contact.

## **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.