

**ORIGINATOR: CHIEF CONSTABLE**

**PAPER NO: AP23/23**

**SUBMITTED TO: ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL – 12 MAY 2023**

**SUBJECT: SUPPORTING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

**SUMMARY:**

1. This paper supports the related commitment in the Police and Crime Plan, that the Constabulary will ensure the way it works with young people supports effective engagement, safeguards young people, prevents unnecessary criminalisation and reduces reoffending (including its triage work with Suffolk Youth Justice Service).

**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) is asked to consider the progress made by the Constabulary, and raise issues with Chief Constable as appropriate to the PCC's role in holding the Chief Constable to account.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

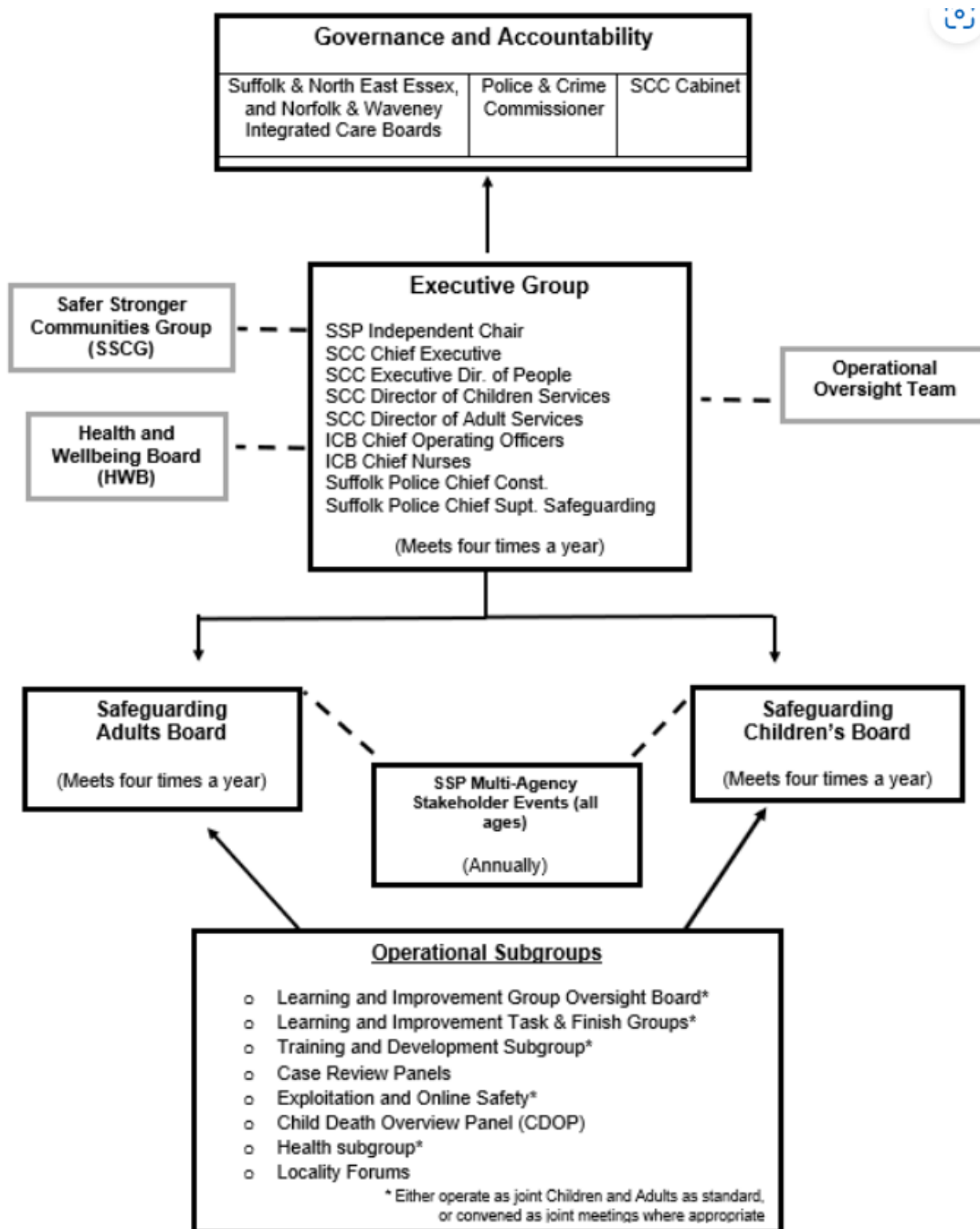
- 1.1 This report covers the period July 2022 to December 2022 and provides an update to the areas reported on in a previous paper to the Panel.
- 1.2 Strategic oversight of Children and Young Persons (CYP) is shared across County Policing Command and Crime, Safeguarding and Incident Management and Joint Justice Services. The portfolio holders are as follows: Superintendent (South Area) responsible for Children and Young People against the National Child Centred Policing Framework, Detective Superintendent responsible for the Safeguarding Partnership, Detective Superintendent for Child Abuse Investigations and a Chief Inspector responsible for Children in Custody. The Strategic Governance is held by the Assistant Chief Constable providing leadership and oversight. There are delivery boards for both CYP (incorporating custody) and for Child Protection.
- 1.3 This paper supports the related commitment in the Police and Crime Plan, that the Constabulary will ensure the way it works with young people supports effective engagement, safeguards young people, prevents unnecessary criminalisation and reduces reoffending (including its triage work with Suffolk Youth Justice Service).

## **2. KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

### **2.1 The Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership (SSP)**

- 2.1.1 The Children's Social Work Act 2017 and Care Act 2014 provide the legal basis for the creation of the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership. The current arrangements came into effect in September 2019 bringing all ages safeguarding under one governance structure while complying with the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements arising from Working Together 2018. The Police are one of three statutory organisations that form the partnership, along with the Local Authority and Integrated Care Board (Health).
- 2.1.2 Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 set in legislation the local safeguarding arrangements and requires that the three statutory safeguarding partners; the Local Authority; the Police; and the Integrated Care Board co-ordinate and ensure the effectiveness of work to protect and promote the welfare of children, including making arrangements to identify and support children at risk of harm. This legislation led to the creation of local Safeguarding Partnerships in 2019 and replaced the legislation for Local Authorities to have Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs).
- 2.1.3 The Children Acts of 1989 and 2004 set out specific duties; Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 puts a duty on the Local Authority to provide services to children in need in their area and Section 47 of the same act requires local authorities to undertake enquiries if they believe a child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm. The Children Act 2004, as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017, places duties on key agencies. The Police, the Integrated Care Board and the Local Authority are under a duty to make arrangements to work together and with other partners locally, to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in their area.
- 2.1.4 The principles of the Children Acts 1989 and 2004 state that the welfare of children is paramount. A child centred approach is fundamental to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child.

- 2.1.5 The Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership (SSP) is led by an Independent Chair who scrutinises the Partnership to ensure that all agencies are doing all they can to keep children safe.
- 2.1.6 The Safeguarding Children’s Board provides the strategic oversight on behalf of the Executive Group. Senior officers attend from the broader safeguarding network including, but not limited to the police, ambulance trust, Department for Work & Pensions, housing/care homes, probation, and education leaders. The Board meet quarterly.
- 2.1.7 Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership Governance Structure:



2.1.8 There are eight (8) Operational Sub-groups. Of note are the following Sub-groups:

- Children’s Case Review Panel

The Children’s Case Review Panel is responsible for commissioning the undertaking of Local Children’s Safeguarding Practice Reviews (LCSPR), on behalf of the Partnership as and when required under No Secrets (2000) and the Working together to Safeguard Children (2018).

The group undertakes reviews of cases where there is serious cause for concern as to the way in which the Partnership and other relevant persons have worked together to safeguard the child; and to advise on lessons that can be learnt. The group will also identify and manage Partnership Reviews of cases which do not meet the statutory Serious Case Review criteria but can provide valuable information about how organisations are working together and identify improvements. This group will oversee all action plans resulting from these case reviews.

- Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP)

Any child death, regardless of circumstance is reviewed at the Child Death Overview Panel, excluding those babies who are stillborn and planned terminations of pregnancy carried out within the law. Information is collected on each child, allowing the panel to determine whether the death was deemed preventable, had modifiable factors that may have contributed to the death and makes recommendations to the Partnership, or other relevant bodies, promptly so that action can be taken to prevent future such deaths where possible. Where relevant, cases are referred to the Case Review Panel for further learning to be identified.

- Exploitation and Online Safety Subgroup

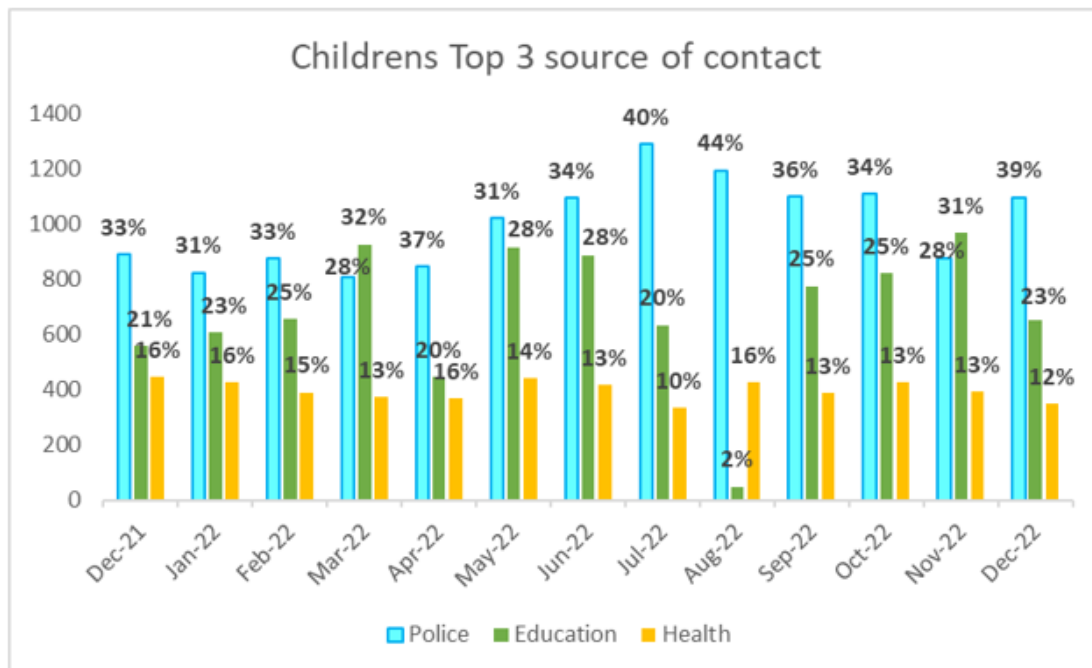
This group has had an all-age approach incorporating adults as well as children which promotes co-ordinated thinking and delivery of services to safeguard children, young people, adults and their families/carers. This group will soon be modified to become the “*Online Safety & Exploitation Subgroup*” and will afford greater focus in relation to online issues rather than wider exploitation (which is addressed across other groups).

The overarching purpose will be, “*A partners meeting to capture strategic issues surrounding online safety and exploitation affecting both adults and children and provide direction and support for organisations across Suffolk under the 4P’s; Prevent & Prepare, Pursue and Protect.*”

## 2.2 Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

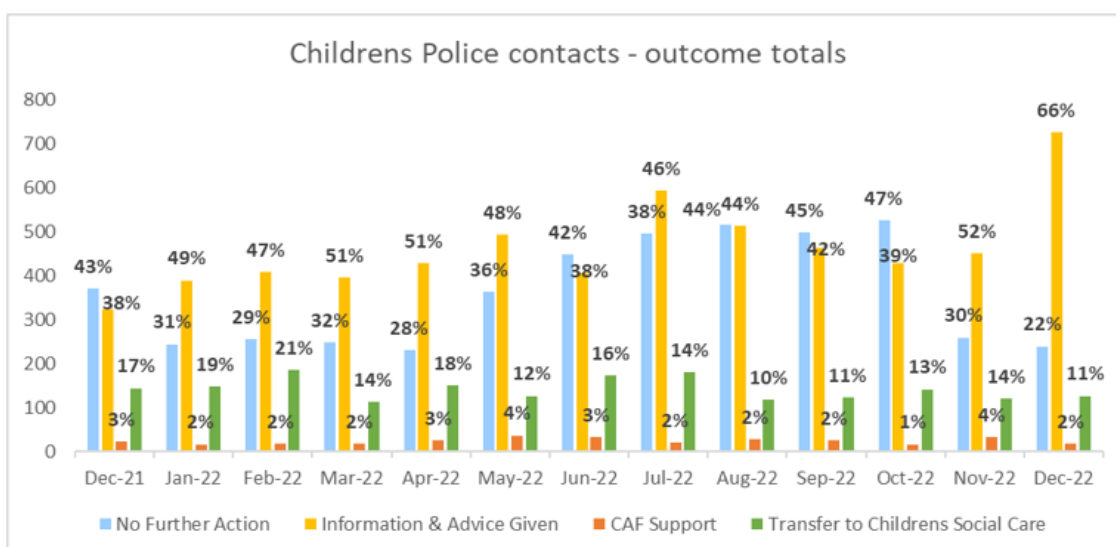
2.2.1 Suffolk Constabulary has a continued daily presence in MASH, with significant numbers of staff working in the office throughout the second half of 2022 and have welcomed back partner agency colleagues allowing face-to-face interaction, robust discussion of safeguarding concerns and enriching decision making.

2.2.2 MASH Police continues to experience high demand which has remained largely consistent with 6759 child referrals between January - June 2022 and 6698 referrals between July - December 2022. The top referrers remain as police, education, and health respectively, with predictable seasonal variation when schools are closed, which is illustrated in the below graph;



2.2.3 In accordance with Section 47 Children’s Act 1989, the Local Authority has a statutory duty to carry out an investigation when they have 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child who lives, or is found, in their area is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. This investigation includes an objective assessment of the child’s needs, including the risk of abuse and need for protection as well as examining the family’s ability to meet these needs. To agree that the threshold for this level of intervention is met, a multiagency strategy threshold discussion is held in MASH. If the threshold for a S.47 investigation is met, this can be conducted by Children and Young Peoples Services (CYPS) as a single agency, or jointly with Police if it is necessary and proportionate, or a criminal investigation is required. Acknowledging the critical decision making in S.47 cases, these are held face to face in MASH with partners.

2.2.4 The table below shows the outcome of police referrals made to Children’s Social Care;



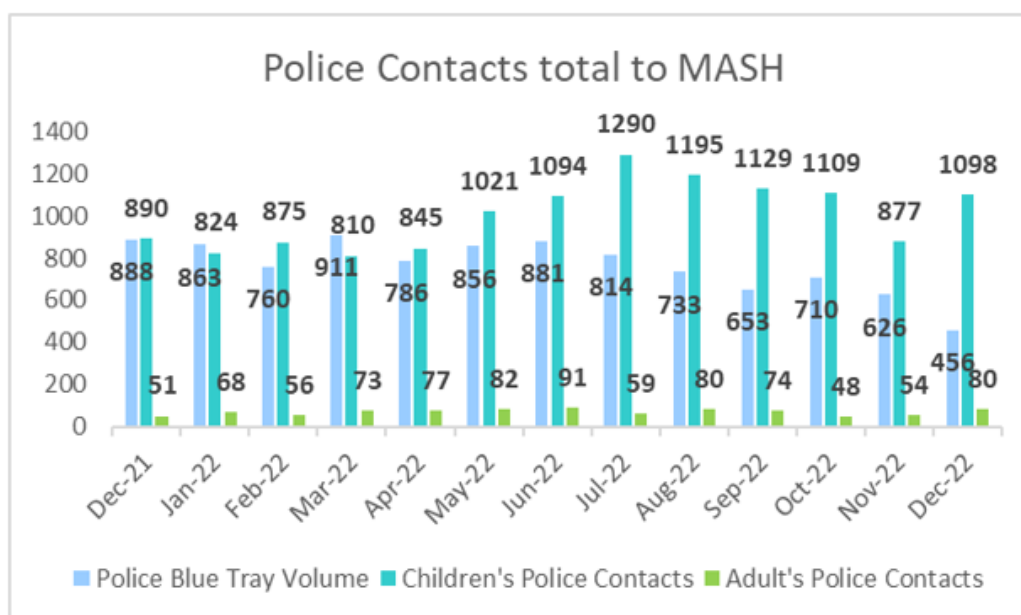
2.2.5 In excess of 98% of contacts that arrive in the MASH are resolved without the requirement for police investigation. Effective triage by skilled and experienced practitioners across all agencies allows the appropriate level of intervention to be identified. This ensures the most concerning cases requiring scrutiny through joint working of the Police and the Local Authority

are promptly passed to specialist Safeguarding Investigation Units. The demand on police officers is therefore made manageable due to the low conversion rate of referrals to Joint Agency S.47 investigations.

2.2.6 Suffolk Constabulary remains the largest referring agency for child safeguarding concerns to the MASH, accounting for over a third of referrals entering the MASH process. This is a reasonably static figure and is expected as police are frequently the first agency in attendance at the point of crisis. Skilled and experienced MASH police decision makers review each record to decide whether it is a safeguarding concern appropriate to share with CYPS. This initial screening determines around 50% of records sent for review do not meet the threshold for CYPS intervention. This triage process creates capacity for the most concerning cases to be identified and addressed expeditiously.

2.2.7 MASH police decision maker training was conducted in November 2022, with some enhancements to guidance agreed with CYPS. This included a refresh of guidelines pertaining to standard risk Domestic Abuse (DA) which involved children and Child Exploitation. Previously standard risk Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honour based violence (DASH) DA was shared with NHS Child Health (NHSCH) only and not CYPS. The refreshed guidance mandates that all DA with children will be shared not only with NHSCH, but also CYPS where there are other concerning factors including: child under 5 years old, presence of the trio of vulnerabilities (DA, substance misuse, poor MH) and previous medium or high-risk DASH in the preceding 12 months. This will enhance our safeguarding response to the most vulnerable children.

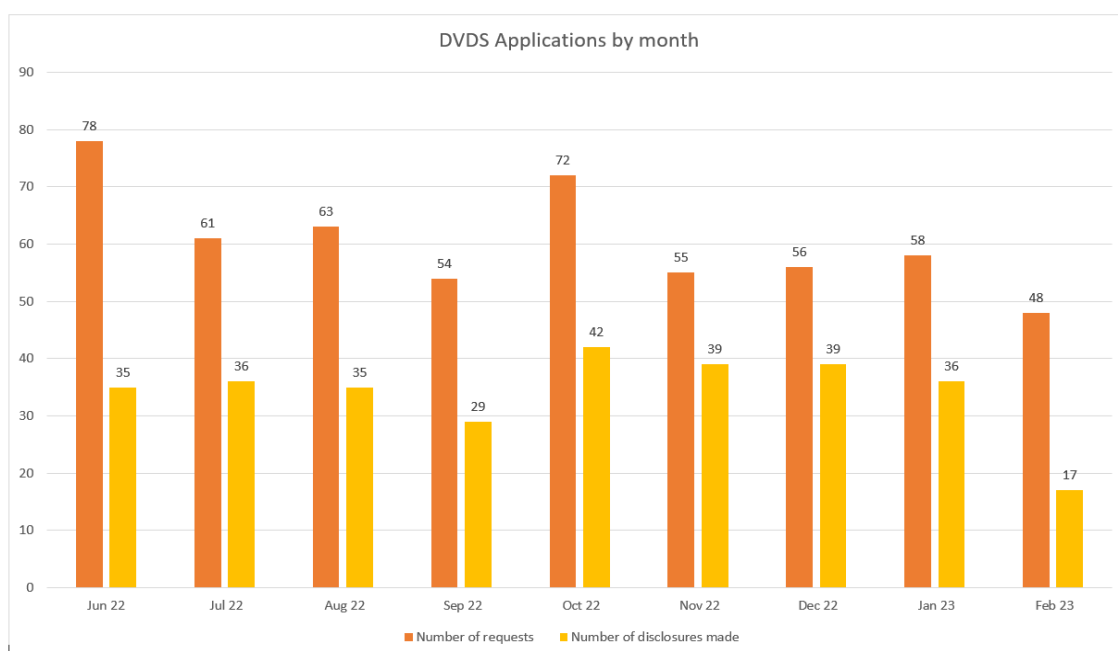
2.2.8 The graph below illustrates the number of police referrals into the MASH shared with CYPS and those retained by police. The 'Police Blue Tray Volume' demonstrates the number of police records sent to MASH police to review which do not meet the threshold for sharing with CYPS as there was no safeguarding concern meeting their criteria for intervention. The 'Children's Police Contacts' demonstrates the number of police records sent to MASH police to review which met the threshold and were shared with CYPS as a safeguarding concern. Similarly, the 'Adults Police Contacts' demonstrates the number of police records sent to MASH police to review which met the threshold and were shared with Adult and Community Services (ACS) as a safeguarding concern. As some young people remain open to CYPS services after the age of 18, it is relevant to include this figure.



2.2.9 Clare’s Law (Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme, DVDS) allows police information about a potential source of risk to be shared with a person potentially at risk. This empowers people to protect and safeguard themselves and their children by making an informed choice about their relationships.

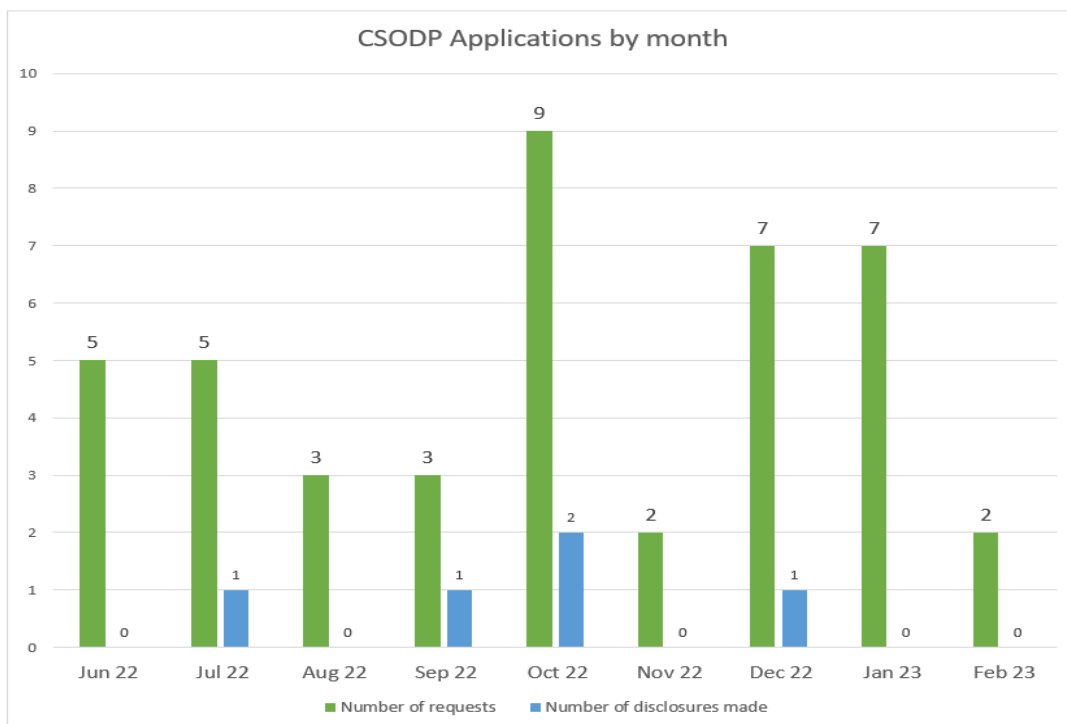
2.2.10 Clear guidance about how to make a ‘Right to Ask’ application is available on the Constabulary website, and we have seen an increase in these self-generated requests from members of the public. ‘Right to Know’ applications made by professional including police officers and staff have remained static. The MASH Detective Inspector is beginning work with the Neighbourhood & Partnerships Team (NPT) Diverse Communities Coordinator to explore additional methods to raise awareness of the scheme with harder to reach communities.

2.2.11 The graph below shows the number of DVDS applications that have been received and processed by MASH police. Not all applications result in a disclosure being made to a person potentially at risk, although safety planning advice is offered by the Domestic Abuse Coordinators in all cases where engagement is possible.



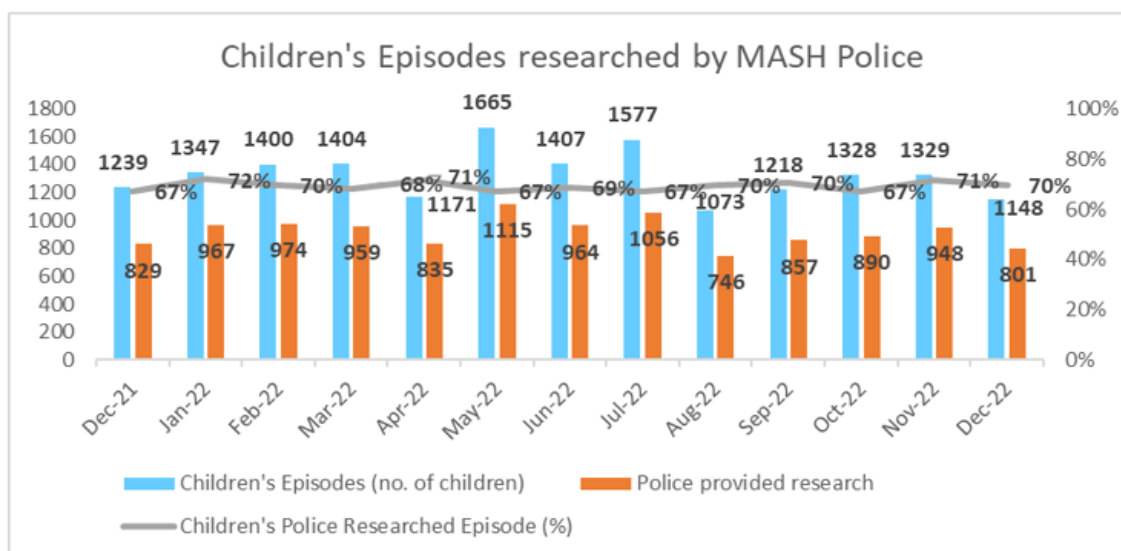
2.2.12 Sarah’s Law (Child Sex Offender Disclosure Scheme, CSODS) allows police information about a potential source of risk to be shared with a person whose children could be in contact with a potential source of risk. This empowers parents and care givers to protect and safeguard children by making an informed choice about contact and relationships.

2.2.13 The graph below shows the number of CSODP applications that have been received and processed by MASH police.



2.2.14 Where an application does not fit the necessary disclosure test for either DVDS or CSODS but information held by police is pertinent, disclosure using Common Law is considered ensuring parents and care givers are given every opportunity to make informed decisions about contact children may have with a potential source of risk.

2.2.15 The graph below shows the number of research packages completed by the MASH police research team. This research is requested by MASH partner agencies to aid decision making and can include information retrieved from all police data bases, relevant to the safeguarding concern. Following His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Child Protection inspection, the MASH police research team now conduct a Police National Database (PND) check in every case, which has increased the time it takes to produce the research package.



2.2.16 The county's Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs) continue to be attended by CYPS to address child safeguarding concerns within cases discussed. All MARAC referrals are processed through the MASH in order that any crimes being disclosed to both statutory



partners and third sector agencies are identified and recorded. There are 2 MARAC meetings per month held in South and West Areas and 1 Meeting in the East Area. MARAC meetings are held on Teams for efficiency.

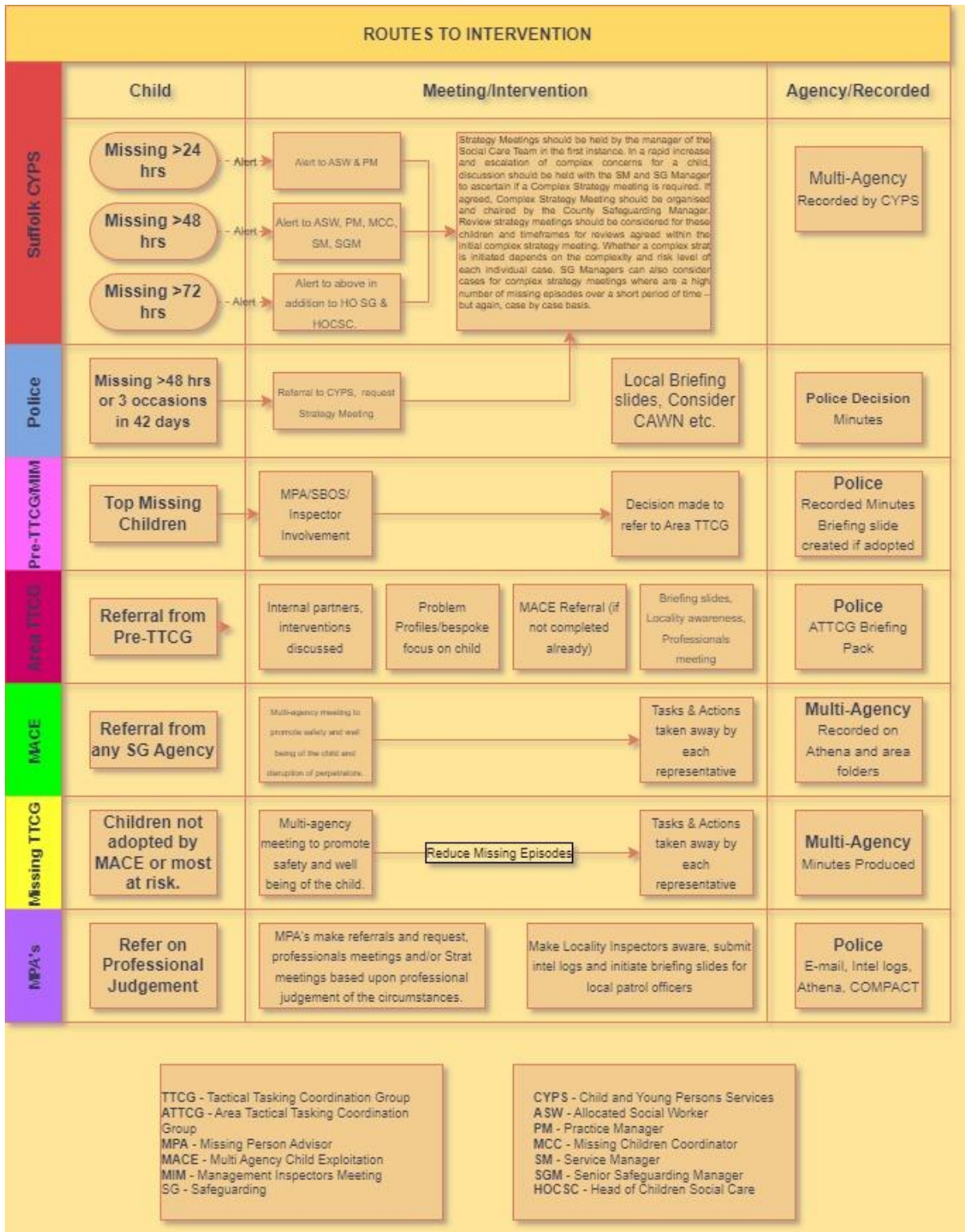
- 2.2.17 Suffolk MARAC is subject of review by the Improvement Sub-group, reporting to the MARAC Steering Group. Information gathering from other forces who have made changes to their MARAC is currently underway.

*Suffolk MARAC Cases involving Children July 2022- December 2022:*

	No. of MARAC cases heard	No. of cases heard with children linked	Total no. of children linked to heard MARAC cases
<b>Southern</b>	269	159	337
<b>Western</b>	233	132	279
<b>Northern</b>	124	67	145
<b>Total</b>	636	358	761

### 2.3 Missing Children

- 2.3.1 Missing Children continue to place a significant demand on Suffolk Constabulary, particularly those children who reside within a care home setting and/or are vulnerable to exploitation. The monthly Missing Tactical and Tasking Co-Ordination Group (TCG), is jointly chaired by a Children Young Persons Service (CYPS) manager and a Detective Chief Inspector, it meets to ensure a partnership response to those children who are frequently missing. If a child is identified at risk of exploitation, they are referred into the Multi-Agency Criminal Exploitation (MACE) Panel.
- 2.3.2 The three missing persons advisors based on each area have built key relationships in Children’s Care Home settings and with Children and Young Persons Services. The advisors perform a key role in identifying those children at greatest risk and feeding them into the Multi-Agency Missing Children’s TCG.
- 2.3.3 To aid the contextual safeguarding of missing children Suffolk Constabulary have developed the Routes to Intervention document to permit a bespoke approach to providing multi-agency intervention: -



2.3.4 Between July 2022 and December 2022, 429 children (under 18) accounted for 1431 individual missing reports. The Southern Area Command has the greatest number of repeated missing children, and highest number of children reported missing from care.

Total number of child missing reports during this period:

- South Area – 852 of which 483 related to children in care
- West Area – 351 of which 141 related to children in care
- East Area – 227 of which 98 related to children in care

- 2.3.5 The Philomena Protocol continues to be championed with partner agencies and the Crime, Safeguarding & Incident Management Chief Superintendent has contacted senior leads within partner agencies to re-invigorate the concept and this has been further complimented by the missing person advisors providing training to residential settings providers.
- 2.3.6 Monthly Return Home Interview (RHIs) figures are now submitted to CYPS with a full breakdown of outstanding interviews, including the names of each child and the number of missing episodes. This enhanced level of data scrutiny has seen a steady decrease in the number of outstanding RHIs.
- 2.3.7 Consultation is currently underway between Suffolk and Norfolk Constabularies to form a joint scrutiny panel to provide independent reviews for each force's missing child investigations. This will be in addition to the daily missing case reviews undertaken by the Missing Person Advisors.

## 2.4 Child Exploitation

- 2.4.1 Suffolk Constabulary have now implemented a composite Child Exploitation policy to ensure that Children who have been identified as victims of either Sexual and Criminal Exploitation are effectively safeguarded and those who perpetrate these offences are held to account. This policy replaces the previous Child Sexual Exploitation (only) Policy. A key element of our new policy is the requirement for Criminal Investigation Department (CID) ownership and/or oversight of child criminal exploitation cases and Safeguarding Investigation Unit ownership and/or oversight of Child Sexual Exploitation cases.
- 2.4.2 The Constabulary continues to operate a child exploitation sub-group meeting to oversee further improvements in our response to exploitation. This sub-group is chaired by the Detective Superintendent lead for safeguarding and progress is monitored via the force child protection delivery board. A priority action currently being developed by this sub-group is to work with partners to develop bespoke training which can be delivered to operational officers both in response and investigative functions. This training will seek to enhance our capability to identify and respond effectively to children at risk of and/or subject to exploitation.
- 2.4.3 On 20<sup>th</sup> April 2023, the Constabulary hosted a HMICFRS facilitated child protection learning event for officers and safeguarding partnership leads. A key focus of this day was areas identified as requiring improvement from our National Child Protection Inspection of July 2022, not least our response to children at risk of or subject to exploitation.
- 2.4.4 A review is underway of key partnership-based risk management meetings inclusive of the Multi Agency Criminal Exploitation (MACE) Panel meeting, missing tactical co-ordination group meeting and Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference process. This review aims to ensure that these meetings are all fit for purpose, inclusive of ensuring opportunities to safeguard children at risk are maximised.

## 2.5 Multi-Agency Criminal Exploitation Panel (MACE)

- 2.5.1 MACE Panels are held in each Policing Command Area and attendees include Local Policing Inspectors, Children Young Peoples Services (CYPS), Health, Education, representatives from the Community Safety Partnerships, Youth Justice Services and local Housing providers. Referrals into MACE can be made by police and partners, for young people between the ages of 10 - 24 years old who have been identified as being involved in, or at risk of exploitation. Information and intelligence from all meeting attendees is discussed and is scored against a Vulnerability Assessment Tracker. The information and the VAT score support decision making to determine whether the child is adopted by the Panel. Once a child is adopted at MACE a

non-crime exploitation investigation is recorded and allocated to local policing teams in the East and West of the County and to the Child exploitation and Gangs Team in the South.

2.5.2 Following on from the recent HMICFRS Child Protection Inspection, the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the MACE panels is being reviewed by CYPS, supported by Police. This new ToR will ensure consistency across all of the panels, enable effective decision making and ensure tasking utilising the home office child exploitation disruption toolkit.

2.5.3 Local Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) have allocated a small budget to MACE to support disruption / diversion adopting a 'Places, Spaces, Faces' approach. The fund enables Borough & District partners to play an active part in MACE and support work to address issues in specific areas or for individual interventions as discussed at MACE Panels.

2.5.4 The MACE Panel has had the following referrals from July 2022 December 2022

 MONTH	NEW MACE referrals	Referrals adopted to MACE	Referrals not adopted to MACE
<b>July</b>	10	6	5
	South - 6 East - 2 West - 3	South - 4 East - 0 West - 2	South - 2 East - 2 West - 1
<b>August</b>	11	9	2
	South - 4 East - 4 West - 3	South - 3 East - 4 West - 2	South - 1 East - 0 West - 1
<b>September</b>	16	7	9
	South - 8 East - 5 West - 3	South - 2 East - 3 West - 2	South - 6 East - 2 West - 1
<b>October</b>	9	6	3
	South - 6 East - 0 West - 3	South - 3 East - 0 West - 3	South - 3 East - 0 West - 0
<b>November</b>	14	9	5
	South - 6 East - 4 West - 4	South - 4 East - 3 West - 2	South - 2 East - 1 West - 2
<b>December</b>	9	4	5
	South - 3 East - 1 West - 5	South - 2 East - 1 West - 1	South - 1 East - 0 West - 4

2.5.5 Multi- Agency Criminal Exploitation (MACE) Example;

Child A is a 16-year-old male who was detained by Police for a routine stop search. A large quantity of cash (approx. £1000), wraps of Class A and B drugs (cocaine and cannabis) and two mobile phones were located. He was subsequently arrested for possession with intent to supply and money laundering and a search of his home address yielded further drugs.

The arrest was promptly identified by the Criminal Exploitation (CE) Partnership Officer, and partners were made aware so that relevant safeguarding could be put in place due to risks from the loss of commodity and the potential debt bondage the child was now in. A parallel Modern Slavery investigation was also created. The CE Partnership Officer had a meeting with the Youth Justice Service (YJS) and suggested a non-crime diversion referral was considered and also recommended the child's Social Worker referred him to MACE. A joint S.47 meeting with police and social care was conducted. During the S47, Child A disclosed that he owed approx. £1000 in addition to the commodity seized by Police, this was 'owed' to the male who got him involved in drug supply. He was not willing to identify his exploiter and the phone

analysis did not identify an individual, suggesting the exploitation may have been by someone in person or more likely via a social media platform.

Child A was adopted by MACE and as a result there was positive continual and consistent multi-agency working which assisted with contextual safeguarding and support for Child A, including a dedicated 'Make A Change' worker offering support to Child A and his mother through social care. MACE actions ensured that mental health support was made available for Child A and they were reintegrated to college and given assistance to secure a part time job. They were referred to Turning Point to assist with his cannabis addiction.

## 2.6 Child Exploitation & Gangs Team (CEGT)

2.6.1 Throughout this reporting period the Criminal Exploitation & Gangs Team have continued to work closely with partners from YJS, Social Care, Education and the third sector to build closer relationships between policing and young people. The team have been involved in targeted multi agency engagements, seeking to identify, support and divert young people at risk of exploitation.

2.6.2 The CEGT work with partners through the MACE framework, conducting investigations to identify perpetrators of exploitation and ensure victims are appropriately safeguarding.

2.6.3 The team are now working at full establishment demonstrating a high level of productivity having recorded 145 investigations connected directly to exploitation concerns and children during this reporting period. They also have responsibility for the ongoing investigations linked to adopted MACE referrals in the Southern area, of which there were 18 during this reporting period.

### 2.6.4 Child Exploitation & Gangs Team (CEGT) Example A;

A 15-year-old female living with her parents came to police attention due to concerns that she was in contact with older males and was taking and sending indecent images of herself. There were also concerns she was leaving her family home in the middle of the night in order to engage in sexual activity, her location during these missing episodes was unknown.

As a result of the investigation into the images she was sharing police seized Child A's mobile device, which enabled officers to search for evidence of those possibly exploiting her. Parents confirmed that they were not reporting her missing to police and that they were not in contact with Social Services or seeking support, Child A's attendance at school was declining, along with her behaviour when she did attend.

A plan was agreed by CEGT officers which encouraged parents to report Child A missing via 999 if required due to the serious concerns in relation to possible child sexual exploitation. This facilitated the completion of fast time actions to try and locate Child A and those who may be with her. This included the team completing urgent referrals to partner agencies and direct contact was made with Social Services in order to fast track our concerns and secure an allocated Social Worker.

Parents began to report Child A missing, which meant specific, dedicated and targeted patrols and enquires could be completed. A Social Worker was allocated along with a worker from the Make a Change Team. Regular professional meetings began to take place which included representatives from Police CEGT, Social Services, Make a Change, School, Health etc. Child A was referred and adopted to the MACE (Multi Agency Criminal Exploitation) Panel, and as a result further support was offered to the parents and Child A from a significant number of

partners. CEGT ensured regular briefing of local teams to ensure information and intelligence was shared effectively and gathered throughout missing episodes.

All of these actions and enquiries culminated in information about a possible car being used to pick Child A up in the early hours. Research was completed and a confirmed vehicle index was discovered, which provided registered owner details. This older male was targeted by CEGT officers and it was discovered that he did not hold valid insurance for the vehicle. The vehicle was stopped by CEGT officers whilst being driven on the road by the older male. His vehicle was seized under police powers. He was also issued with a Child Abduction Warning Notice after Child A's mother had provided a police statement.

The professionals meetings continued and Social Services began to attend Child A's address in the morning to ensure attendance at school. Over the next few months, missing episodes decreased, attendance at school increased, engagement with partner agencies increased and contact between Child A and the older male appeared to cease completely. Phone enquiries from the initial Take, Make, Distribute offence revealed details of a separate older male having paid Child A for indecent images. A full investigative package was developed and handed over to another police force for him to be dealt with.

#### 2.6.5 Child Exploitation & Gangs Team (CEGT) Example B;

A 16-year-old female living in care was being reported missing by care home staff almost daily, there were 184 separate missing episodes between January and August 2022. Initially, Child B would return to the address during the early hours of the morning, but the circumstances suddenly changed and she would not return until the following afternoon at times. It was not known where she was going or who she was spending her time with. Police would attend following her return to conduct return safe and well checks but she would persistently refuse to engage with officers. She refused to share her phone number with police or care staff at the home. This was a barrier in being able to help safeguard Child B as officers and staff were unable to call her during missing episodes and further checks and enquiries could not be conducted by police.

CEGT officers attended the address and made attempts to engage with Child B, but again, although polite, she would refuse to say where she was going or who she was spending time with. CEGT officers would then make regular contact with staff at the care home as well as holding regular information sharing meetings with other professionals including Child B's Social Worker, Make a Change worker and support staff. During one of these meetings, information was passed to CEGT which enabled officers to identify a contact of Child B's who was previously unknown. This in turn led to enquiries with this contact who willingly provided Child B's phone number. Further directly and targeted enquiries and patrols by CEGT officers identified a possible boyfriend who was suspected to be dealing drugs.

Information briefing slides were produced by CEGT and disseminated amongst patrols officers, requesting they assist to build intelligence. Owing to these briefing slides, patrol officers were able to use the recent information to consider their powers under stop and search legislation. This resulted in officers conducting two stop searches of Child B where an amount of Cannabis, phones and cash were located.

Information sharing channels between police and partner agencies that had been developed by CEGT, were instrumental in the care home support staff advising police that they had seen Child B on the in-house CCTV counting an amount of bank notes and hiding a bag of drugs on the outside of a window sill. Police attended and Child B was processed for a third time in relation to drugs offences. Although it appears as if she was being targeted as a possible

suspect, Child B was clearly a victim of exploitation, but unfortunately no definitive evidence of confirmed exploitation or who the exploiter was, could be found.

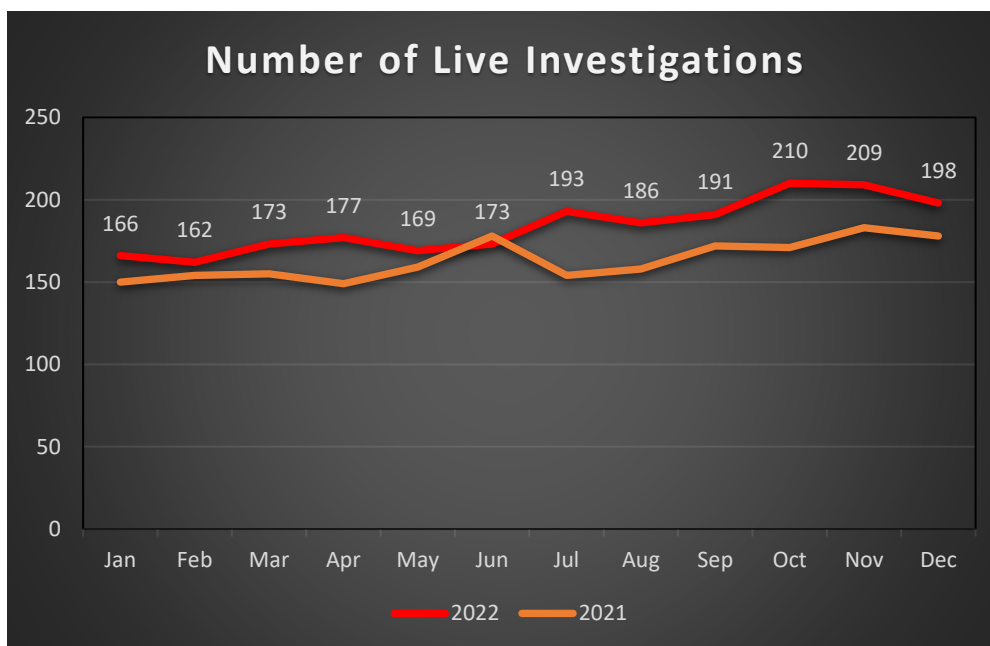
At this point, CEGT Sergeant requested an urgent professionals meeting and shared concerns that Child B had now had approximately £3000 worth of drugs, phones and cash seized from her and that the concern was that she would now owe this money to someone else as part of a drugs debt and that her safety was now possibly at serious risk. Despite some initial challenges, police and partners were able to agree that it was in the best interest for Child B be moved out of Suffolk in order to keep her safe from those who were clearly exploiting her.

Child B was moved to another county and fully supported within her home to focus on her future and education. After a few months, Child B was slowly integrated back into the Ipswich area by her support staff. She was supervised whilst visiting Ipswich and appropriate friends whilst still living out of Suffolk. She is currently now living back in Ipswich at a different care home and been successful in securing an apprenticeship in hairdressing, earning her own money. She has not been reported missing once since moving back to Ipswich.

## 2.7 Child Sexual Abuse and Online Investigation

2.7.1 Demand continued to rise in Suffolk in 2022 which is in line with a national increase in online offending, demand rose by 11.3% in 2022. On average, each Officer has a workload of around 40 live investigations. Despite the unrelenting rise in online offending there has been an increase of 29.7% in the number of cases referred to CPS for a charging decision, which has resulted in some dangerous individuals being successfully convicted.

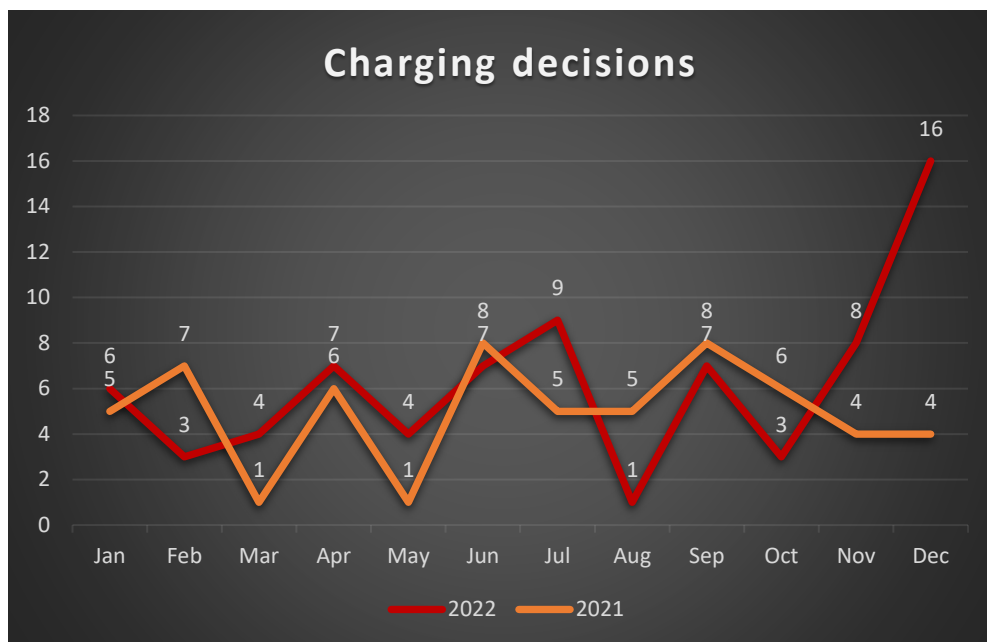
2.7.2 Volume of investigations during this reporting period:



	2022	2021
Jul	193	154
Aug	186	158
Sept	191	172
Oct	210	171
Nov	209	183
Dec	198	178

2.7.3 Despite the sharp increase in live investigations Suffolk Constabulary, in comparison to our most similar Force groups is in a very strong position with only a small number of investigations where the risk is unknown. The Internet Child Abuse Investigation Team (ICAIT) have a very robust triage system where an initial risk assessment is completed by the Detective Sergeant. If early checks indicate the suspect has immediate access to children, a MASH referral is completed and information from partners is obtained. Processes have been improved within the MASH to ensure health also provide information which may assist with determining whether children are present. The team are reactive to unknown risk by executing timely enforcement which is evident in the consistent number of suspects arrested, interviewed, and charged.

2.7.4 CPS charging decisions during this period;



	2022	2021
Jul	9	5
Aug	1	5
Sept	7	8
Oct	3	6
Nov	8	4
Dec	16	4

2.7.5 ICAIT was subject of a full review in 2021 with a recommended uplift of 4 additional members of staff to be implemented to assist with the increase in demand. Staff have now been selected to fill these roles and are currently undergoing pre-employment and vetting checks. The additional staff will provide capacity to engulf the grading demands of all Indecent Images of Children (IIOC) investigations in the County, which will prevent untrained Officers from viewing IIOC and the subsequent welfare issues this can cause, as well as being more efficient. The uplift will also ensure consistency in the evidential packages produced as the new model would include a standalone intelligence development function, so as not to be reliant on the Intelligence Development Units, which have competing demands.

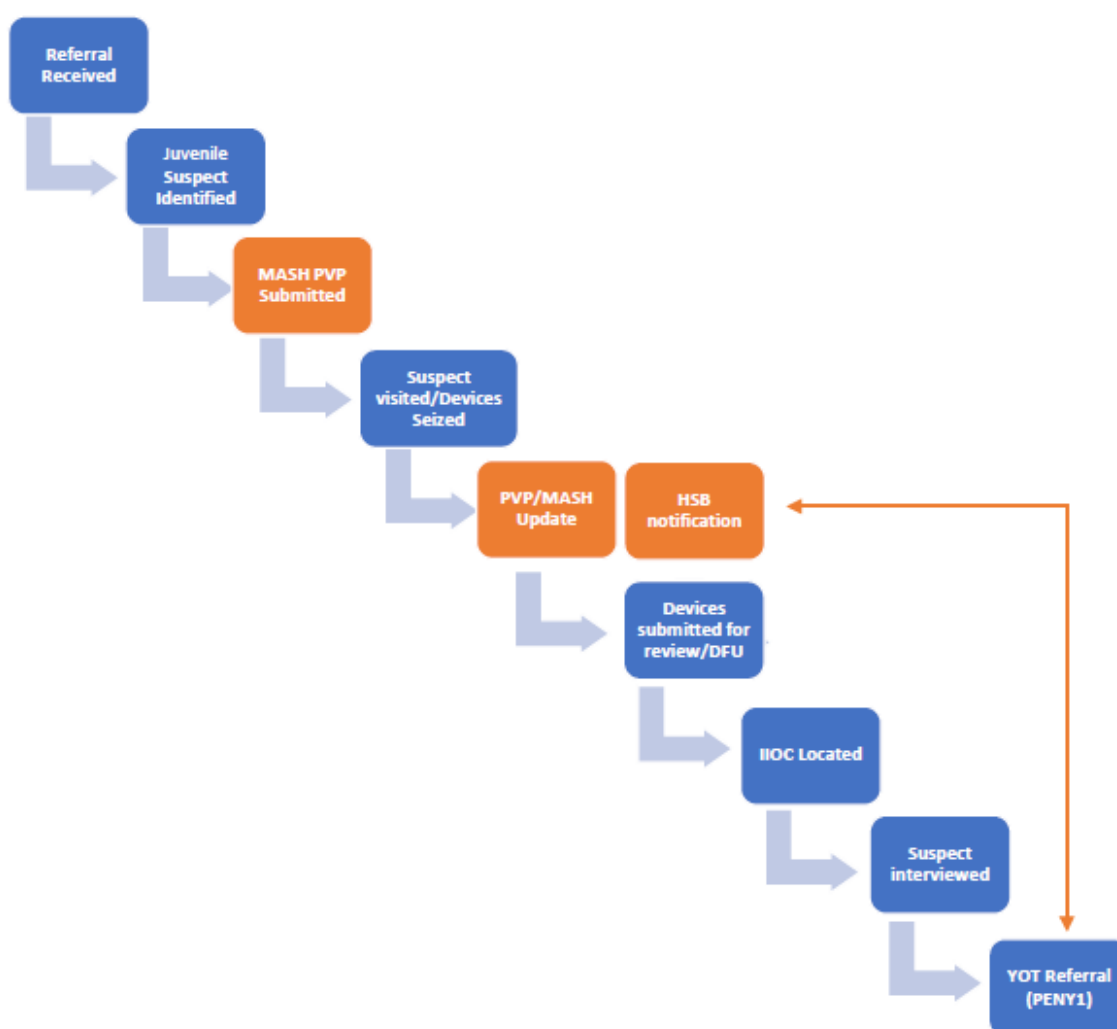
2.7.6 In recent months, Suffolk ICAIT have developed closer working practices with the Suffolk Public Protection Unit (PPU), which has resulted in a new, more co-ordinated approach to charging and remanding Registered Sex Offenders (RSOs) who are in breach of their Sexual



Harm Prevention Orders (SHPOs). This has included streamlining the grading procedure and expediting their journey through the criminal justice process and has resulted in five high risk RSOs being charged and remanded for Indecent Images of Children (IIOC) and causing/inciting offences since January 2023.

2.7.7 Along with the increased demand, increasingly ICAIT are dealing with referrals identifying juveniles as suspects. To tackle this trend, ICAIT have recently forged a closer working relationship with the Suffolk County Council Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB) Team and implemented a new early referral mechanism which requires Police to notify HSB Team when a young person (U18) is identified as potential perpetrator/suspect of an IIOC offence. A request is submitted at the point of the first MASH referral, allowing the HSB team to work with CYPS from the outset to ensure the appropriate response is forthcoming; early intervention seeks to circumnavigate the criminal justice system, and to prevent the unnecessary criminalisation of children, through education and diversion.

### Suffolk ICAIT Juvenile Referral Flowchart (HSB route)



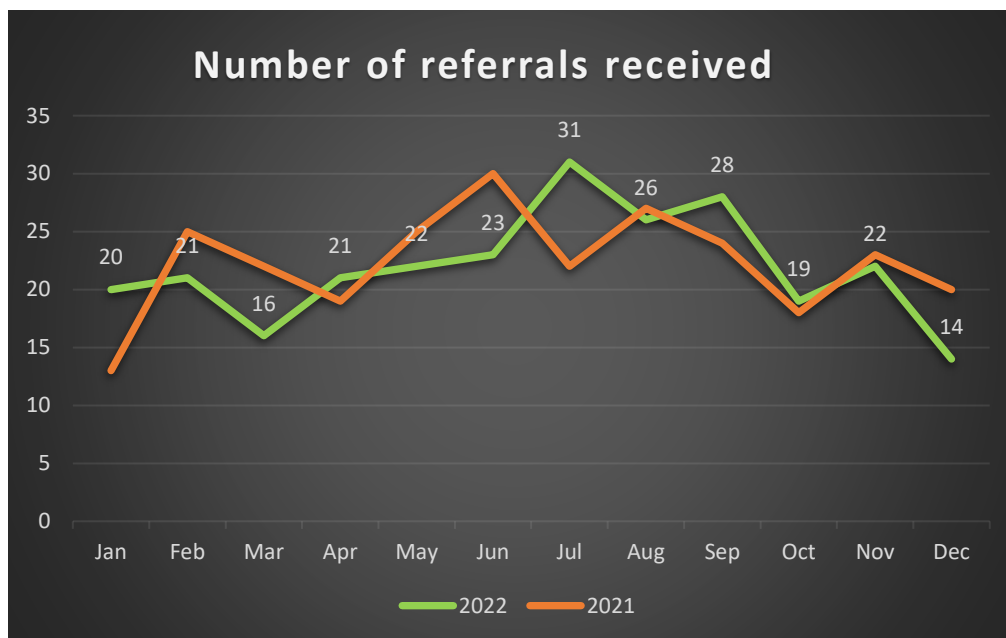
2.7.8 In the six months from July to December 2022, ICAIT received 140 referrals from the National Crime Agency (NCA) and the National Centre for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC). ICAIT executed enforcement against 93 suspects in the same period, safeguarding 97 children, and seizing 287 devices suspected to contain IIOC, utilising a range of powers including S18, S19

and S32 of the Police and Criminal Evidence (PACE) Act, and submitted 43 cases to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) in that time, all of which have been charged and have either been convicted or await trial.

2.7.9 ICAIT work closely with proactive teams in Suffolk, and often utilise the expertise of the Scorpion teams to assist with arrest, search, and seizure, and allows them to work within KIRAT 3 risk management guidelines, enforcing more than 90% of investigations in the below timescales.

- Very high risk – 48hrs
- High risk – 7 days
- Medium – 14 days
- Low risk – 30 days

2.7.10 Volume of referrals received:



	2022	2021
Jul	31	22
Aug	26	27
Sept	28	24
Oct	19	18
Nov	22	23
Dec	14	20

## 2.8 Schools Liaison and CYP engagement

2.8.1 During this reporting period Schools Liaison Officers (SLO) and Children and Young Persons (CYP) Officers have continued to deliver inputs in educational settings. They have been pivotal in building trust and relationships with Children and Young People and have supported frontline policing and safeguarding teams with intelligence building, securing evidence and safeguarding young people. They have also contributed to local and national police operations

such Hate Crime Awareness Week, Prevent awareness, County Lines Intensification Week, Safer Internet Day, Sexual Abuse, Op Sceptre (Knife Crime) and Crucial Crew.

2.8.2 The CYP officers have been developing relationships with wider educational provisions including 16+ accommodation providers to support the education provision for young people Not in education, employment or training (NEET), as well as Universities, Colleges, Unaccompanied Asylum seekers and young parent units.

2.8.3 All of the educational packages delivered by the School Liaison Officers and CYP Officers are developed by the school's team in conjunction with Suffolk County Council to ensure they align to PHSE/RSHE syllabus.

2.8.4 Education Delivery in this period:

Core theme/OCS	Primary School	
	Inputs	No. of Young People
County Lines	11	344
Exploitation	12	500
Healthy Relationships	19	1162
Knife Crime	8	611
Internet Safely	39	1673
Other input	43	3071
<b>Totals</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>7361</b>

Core theme/OCS	Secondary School	
	Inputs	No. of Young People
County Lines	8	984
Exploitation	1	17
Healthy Relationships	34	7272
Knife Crime	24	4202
Internet Safely	24	3389
Other input	48	4212
<b>Totals</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>20,076</b>

Core theme/OCS	Raedwald Trust (Alternative Provision)	
	Inputs	No. of Young People
County Lines	13	26
Exploitation	4	12
Healthy Relationships	22	32
Knife Crime	29	52
Internet Safely	9	16
Other input	3	5
<b>Totals</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>143</b>

Core theme/OCS	CYP 16 + provision	
	Inputs	No. of Young People
Consent	3	128
County Lines	7	607
Digital Footprint	3	386
Domestic Abuse	10	345
Drugs	5	198
Exploitation	4	201
Hate Crime	2	737
Knife Crime	10	613
Sexting & Revenge Porn	10	848
Other	78	8275
<b>Totals</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>12,338</b>

\*Other includes, but not limited to, mini-Police sessions & Spiking inputs

2.8.5 The HOPE awards continue to be a success providing us with an opportunity to focus on the achievements and resilience of Children and Young People within Suffolk. This year there were 18 applications, for a total of 59 young people. The winners selected in March 2023 by a panel which consisted of the Deputy Chief Constable, Suffolk PCC, The Leader of Ipswich Borough Council, East Suffolk District Council, Suffolk FA, ITFC and Community Safety from Suffolk County Council. This will continue to be a yearly event coordinated jointly by Suffolk Constabulary and Suffolk County Council.

## 2.9 Suffolk Youth Justice Service and Suffolk Constabulary Partnership

2.9.1 The Police are a statutory partner of the Youth Justice Service and three Youth Justice Officers are permanently seconded to the service, with one based in each of the area teams (Lowestoft, Bury St Edmunds & Ipswich). They are complemented by two match funded Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) which provide additional provision outside of the Police Constable role.

2.9.2 Suffolk Police are an integral partner of Suffolk Youth Justice Service (SYJS), preventing young people from being unnecessarily criminalised with a focus on reducing the number of first time entrants into the criminal justice system. We have jointly developed multi-agency decision making panels which will be introduced in 2023 and involve an early assessment of the child, the nature of the offence and the views of the victim to determine the most appropriate outcome for the offence. Options such as early intervention, education and diversion programmes will be utilised to address the causes of offending. As part of this model police will no longer issue Community Resolutions for under 18's without YJS support, thereby ensuring consistency, avoiding early escalation and preferencing non-punitive action on first contact. This also opens up other diversionary and early intervention avenues that would not typically be available to frontline officers.

2.9.3 Non-Crime Diversion continues to be offered to Suffolk Police with a new referral process whereby YJS Police Officers assess suitability prior to a formal referral to increase the likelihood of acceptance. If the non-crime diversion is not suitable. YJS police officers will seek to identify alternatives programmes for the young person, including third sector provision.

## 2.9.4 Referrals to Youth Justice Service (known as Youth Offending Teams) and outcomes:

PENYs to YJS South	Jul - Dec 22
Youth Conditional caution	4
Youth Caution	21
Diversion Crime	41
Community Resolution	29
No Further Action	2
Charge	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>108</b>

PENYs to YJS East	Jul - Dec 22
Youth Conditional caution	3
Youth Caution	9
Diversion Crime	23
Community Resolution	15
No Further Action	5
Charge	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>

PENYs to YJS West	Jul - Dec 22
Youth Conditional caution	4
Youth Caution	14
Diversion Crime	61
Community Resolution	2
No Further Action	2
Charge	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>86</b>

## 2.9.5 Youth Justice Service (YJS) Example (Child A);

A 13-year-old male came to YJS attention as part of an Assault investigation. He had admitted his part in attacking another young male by hitting, kicking and throwing paper at him which was set alight. At this stage he had a number of previous assault investigations where no further action was taken due to lack of victim support. There were also a number of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) matters recorded with him as involved and he had previously been issued a Community Resolution for Harassment.

The intelligence picture around him was one of him being involved in possible drug dealing and gangs, including carrying knives, travelling to London and having access to unexplained money. Information suggested that Child A was regularly skipping school.

Child A was issued with a diversion programme and allocated to a youth offending practitioner who completed a 3-month programme of work, focusing on the offence of Assault, but also including topics such as Gangs, weapons and family risks. This included a Gangs and weapons intervention which Child A engaged in and allowed the practitioner to dispel some myths around being in a Gang. A joint session was also completed with the Criminal Exploitation Hubs who were able to explore this further and speak to the young person about their experience. Victim work was completed around the assault which highlighted the impact of the Child A's actions on the victim and those around the victim, exploring the idea of the wider impact of crime.

Referrals were completed to Turning point to address Child A's drug use, the Wellbeing hub and to the YJS Speech and Language Therapist who compiled a report for the school in order for them to help support the young person better.

The end result is that Child A is back in school, engaging well and no new investigations have been recorded against him.

## 2.9.6 Youth Justice Service (YJS) Example (Child B);

A 13-year-old male who was involved in extensive ASB in a rural town, he was suspect of being involved in 25 offences and reported missing 38 times. He was accepted on to a Diversion programme in summer 2022 for Harassment and Criminal damage offences. This led to a lengthy intervention which focussed on relationship building, solution focussed therapy, healthy friendships and safety planning so that he can ultimately have some freedom in a safe and responsible manner. He has ceased all contact with the two co-defendants and reflected well on how their behaviour influenced his own.

He is starting make new friendships which are a more positive influence. After a period of time not in education, he is reintegrating into a Pupil Referral Unit which, after some false starts, he is now attending regularly. Plans are being developed to further re-integrate Child B into main stream education. He has not been linked to any new offences since November 2022.

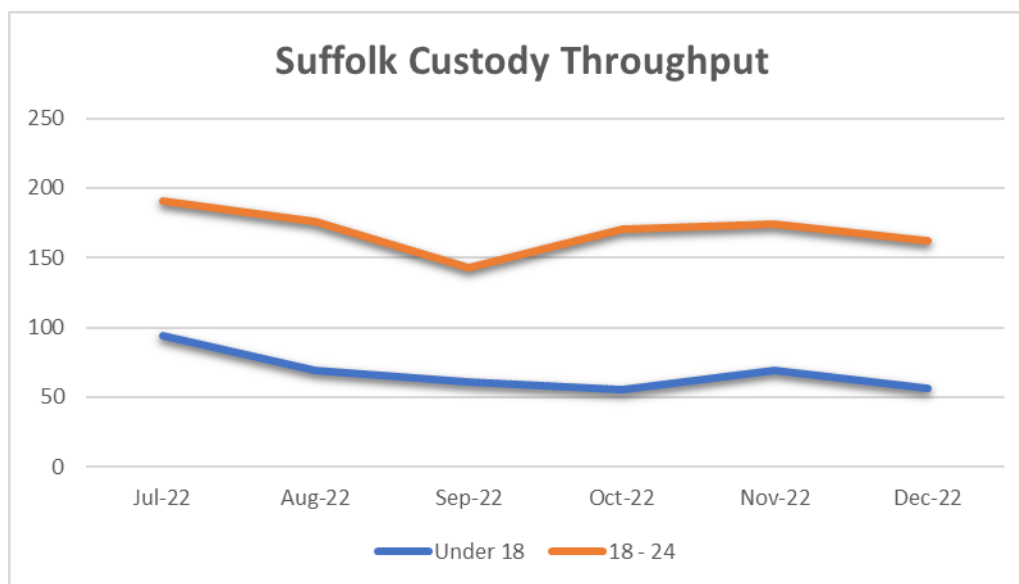
2.10 Young People in Custody

2.10.1 The total number of all persons being arrested and attending custody has now returned to the levels that were noted pre-covid pandemic. There are in the region of 27,000 persons arrested across Norfolk and Suffolk in a normal 12-month period.

2.10.2 July through to December generally sees a seasonal decline in throughput within custody, this decrease is particularly evident in juveniles and 18-24-year olds attending custody. This suggests that whilst more people are coming into custody, other ways of managing the investigation, including voluntary attendance and out of court options are being explored for younger detainees.

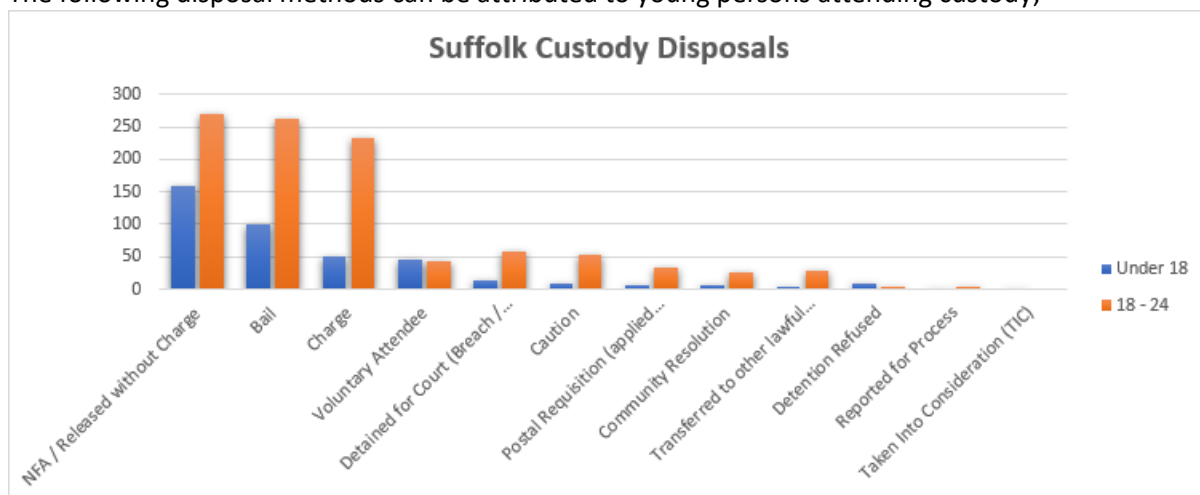
2.10.3 Custody throughput is monitored through a number of processes within Suffolk Constabulary, including the Children and Young Persons Board, which specifically considers children and young people.

2.10.4 Suffolk custody throughput:



Age / Month	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22
Under 18	94	69	61	55	69	56
18 - 24	191	176	143	170	174	162

2.10.5 The following disposal methods can be attributed to young persons attending custody;



2.10.6 3 Detainees aged under 24 had a formal Mental Health Act assessment between July – December 2022 within Suffolk PICs. One detainee, aged 20, was sectioned to a Mental Health Bed.

2.10.7 The average waiting time from when the Mental Health Act assessment was requested to when it was completed was 2 hours 47 minutes. However, the time made to detain under Mental Health Act to a bed being confirmed was 22 hours 16 minutes. In totality, with transport the detainee was held post MHA sectioning for 28 hours 38 minutes before leaving custody. The Mental Health escalation process was strictly adhered to through custody Bronze Inspector and Chief Superintendent.

2.10.8 Mental Health escalation process is followed for both adults and juveniles following MHA detention where a bed is required but not available where Insp / Supt raise to NSFT Director levels.

2.10.9 Every detained person attending custody has an opportunity to engage with Liaison and Diversion (provided by the NHS). The role is to provide support and guidance with a view to reducing re-offending rates. Originally intended to support individuals with mental health problems, the service has extended to offer support options for drug/alcohol abuse, employment concerns, gambling addictions, financial problems, and anger management. This service offers a great opportunity for all detainees to look for a better future post custody.

## 2.11 Cadet Scheme

2.11.1 The Cadet scheme continues to flourish, currently there are 166 cadets with a further 27 on the waiting list. The national volunteer cadet hub has recently issued mandatory safeguarding standards which have been fully adopted by Suffolk, a recent audit scored Suffolk as good.

2.11.2 There are eight cadet units across the county (three joint with the Fire Service). Mildenhall, Haverhill and Bury St Edmunds remains at risk due to lack of volunteer leaders however it is hoped that recent recruitment incentives introduced will encourage further leaders to join. These incentives include, out of pocket travel expenses, half time back for hours volunteered and skills development opportunities. Concerns have been raised by leaders who are

Community Engagement Officers (CEO's) that the new operating model will affect their opportunity to run sessions, this has been discussed with the 2025 team and will be considered in future plans.

#### 2.11.3 Key Headlines:

- Cadets are no longer required to undergo police vetting;
- The National Safeguarding Standards are now being followed by Suffolk and a national audit has scored Suffolk as 'good';
- Changes to the County Policing Command (CPC) operating model could impact officers and staff availability to run sessions;
- An annual protected training day for all leaders has now been agreed to ensure consistency in safeguarding training and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for all leaders;
- The National Volunteer Police Cadets (NVPC) are considering mandatory monthly PND checks for all leaders;
- A pathway for referrals from the Youth Justice Service into Cadets has been agreed to support identifying vulnerable children and young people who may benefit from the scheme;
- Regular Fire/Police Cadet strategic meetings are now in place;
- Recruitment of volunteers to lead the units continues to be an area of concern but new incentives are being used to aid internal recruitment;
- There is a current external recruitment campaign.

2.11.4 Recruitment of leaders remains a focus and currently an incentive and recruitment campaign are being explored to attract new leaders both within the organisation and from external members of the community.

2.11.5 Risks to the Cadet scheme remain the same as previously, being lack of consistent volunteer leaders. the possibility of mandatory PND checks on all leaders will impact on Vetting resources as well as the goodwill of volunteer leaders along with the withdrawal of the CEO role which may impact on officers availability to attend meetings.

2.11.6 Several engagements were supported by the cadet scheme in this period:

- Latitude;
- RAF Hannington open day;
- Specials & Regular recruitment events;
- Suffolk dog days;
- ITFC community days;
- Suffolk Police PSU training days (crowd);
- Family Day;
- Force Fireworks event;
- Force Carol Service;
- Bury Christmas Market;
- Fire Service open days;
- Various town Carnivals throughout Suffolk;
- Charity works/runs and cycle events;
- Henham Steam rally;
- Remembrance Events.



### **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 The Children and Young Persons Strategy and resulting activity continues to reflect the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) Strategy and action plan. It is recommended that this should continue to be the case when the current Strategy is renewed in 2023. The national strategy continues to capture key thematic areas for delivery and drives consistency and learning across borders, drawing on regional support and learning.
- 3.2 Primary Non-Crime diversion provision is currently provided by the Youth Justice Service supplementary to its statutory requirements. This is enhanced by the match funded PCSO provision within the service. Following a renewal of the PCSO provision, it has been agreed that a review will be completed with YJS to ensure ongoing productivity for the service and police.

### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The current funding arrangement for the Youth Justice Service PCSOs will expire in March 2024.
- 4.2 The current financial contribution made by the constabulary to the Youth Justice Service is expected to continue increasing each year in line with inflation, which will be above average at the next point of review (23/24).

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

- 5.1 As per the previous reporting period, Serious Youth Violence continues to be a national and local concern. This area should continue to be monitored robustly by the force and partners to identify in advance any trends through existing strategic and tactical boards. Opportunities for funding should be considered as part of early identification of risk, prevention and diversion where provision gaps are identified and in support of MACE Panels which are likely to see a growth in activity.

### **6. CHIEF OFFICER CONCLUSION**

- 6.1 The Constabulary can demonstrate strong governance and partnership arrangements where children and young people are concerned. There are clear plans around how to make further improvements to service and performance and these are commented on in this report.
- 6.2 There are growing demands in most areas of policing where child issues are concerned and there remains a strong commitment to avoidance of criminalising young people where appropriate. Both of these elements are evidenced in this report as are the approaches to ensure the Constabulary response is proportionate.
- 6.3 The recent HMICFRS inspection around child protection should be considered in conjunction with this report to provide wider understanding of areas of strength and those that require strengthening. These have been communicated separately and work is continuing to make progress against the highlighted areas that are not documented.