

ORIGINATOR: CHIEF CONSTABLE

PAPER NO: AP23/25

SUBMITTED TO: ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL – 12 MAY 2023

SUBJECT: TACKLING SERIOUS VIOLENCE

SUMMARY:

1. This report will explain the Constabulary's approach to Tackling Serious Violence. It details the current performance, demand and activity with the inclusion of statistical information where relevant.

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 It is recognised that the Constabulary's response to offences involving serious violence is imperative to protecting the public, supporting victims, and establishing wider trust, confidence and satisfaction in our service.
- 1.2 Suffolk's Police and Crime Plan for 2022-2025, clearly sets out the Police and Crime Commissioners commitment to ensuring Suffolk Constabulary meets national policing priority requirements, including the need to reduce serious violence. The Police and Crime Plan also acknowledges our commitment to meeting forthcoming changes in legislation as contained within the Serious Violence Duty.
- 1.3 Tackling serious violence features as a priority within the Chief Constable's Force Strategic Plan, 2020 - 2023. The constabulary's local policing command has made tackling serious violence a priority performance improvement requirement, for the six months January – June 2023.
- 1.4 The primary offences this report refers to are as follows:
- S18 Grievous Bodily Harm (GBH);
 - S20 GBH Wounding;
 - S47 Actual Bodily Harm;
 - Violence without Injury;
 - Knife Crime;
 - County Lines drug offences.
- 1.5 Rape and Serious Sexual Offences, domestic abuse, Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) and Robbery could be included within the Serious Violence criteria, however these areas are reported on separately and therefore activity relative to these offence types is not covered in any detail within this report.

2. GOVERNANCE – SERIOUS VIOLENCE

- 2.1 There are several cross-cutting activities relevant to the response to Serious Violence which feature in our approach to seeking continuous improvements in broader crime management performance. In particular, the Constabulary continues to pursue actions which will enhance victim support, offender management, use of protective measures and improvement in investigation standards.
- 2.2 Governance of our response to serious violence continues to be maintained through several performance and continuous improvement boards operating both internally, as well as in partnership with stakeholders. Key governance processes as relate to serious violence are summarised as follows: -
- Force Monthly Performance Board chaired by Chief Officers;
 - Rape and Serious Sexual Offence operational delivery and improvement boards (police only and joint with the Crown Prosecution Service, regional forces);
 - Violent Crime Delivery Board;
 - Drugs and County Lines Governance Boards;
 - Domestic Abuse Continuous Improvement Board;

- Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) steering group, Suffolk Violence and Abuse Partnership (SVAP), Safer Stronger Communities Board;
- Force Child Protection Delivery Board;
- Joint Norfolk and Suffolk Investigation Standards Board;
- Force Vulnerability Board;
- Joint Norfolk and Suffolk Offender Management Working Group;
- Joint Norfolk and Suffolk Victim Support Working Group.

2.3 A Violent Crime Delivery Board was introduced in 2021 and is led by the Constabulary's Head of Crime. It is the primary mechanism for co-ordinating activity to tackle relevant areas of serious violence with support from senior representatives from County Policing Command, Safeguarding, Investigations and analytical departments.

Serious Violence Duty (SVD)

2.4 Introduced as part of the Police Crime Sentencing and Courts Act 2022, the Serious Violence Duty requires specified authorities to work together to prevent and reduce serious violence in their local area. This Duty is supported by national guidance, finalised in December 2022, which balances prescriptive expectations with room for flexibility.

2.5 The SVD commenced on 31st January and requires that all duty holders undertake a strategic needs assessment to understand the causes and consequences of serious violence in their local area and to work together to implement a corresponding strategy which must be published by no later than January 2024. The SVD places an emphasis on local strategies incorporating a public health-based approach with a focus on early intervention to prevent serious violence.

2.6 In January 2023, the Constabulary and Suffolk County Council formally established a Serious Violence Duty Partnership Board (SVDP) to ensure that the county fully meets the requirements of new legislation.

2.7 The SVDP board meets monthly and is comprised of senior representatives from all authorities who have a legislative responsibility to work in partnership to tackle serious violence, as well as other authorities who can contribute towards the same.

2.8 The Suffolk Office for Data analytics (SODA) have been commissioned to prepare the strategic needs assessment and this work is progressing with a target date of July 2023 for first draft.

2.9 A formal assessment of forces ability to meet the requirements of the Serious Violence Duty has recently been conducted by Crest Advisory on behalf of the Home Office. This has entailed surveys, interviews with practitioners and strategic leads and document reviews. As part of a 'readiness report', Crest have concluded that *"Suffolk has demonstrated a strong commitment to meeting the Duty at a high standard and made several positive steps towards a mature partnership"*. Key achievements are cited as follows: -

- Partnership and governance structure has been established and partners are engaged across all specified authorities;
- An initial review of police-recorded crime types has been conducted to identify which crime types should be considered within the Serious Violence Duty;
- There is a strong culture around monitoring and evaluation and SODA has the capacity, capability and experience to support this work;
- The SVDP are undertaking work to conduct a gaps analysis on current commissioning.

2.10 Further SVD briefings, communications and engagement work is planned to ensure that our strategic needs assessment and strategy are cognizant of practitioner and public views as to what constitutes serious violence and what is needed to ensure a fully effective response.

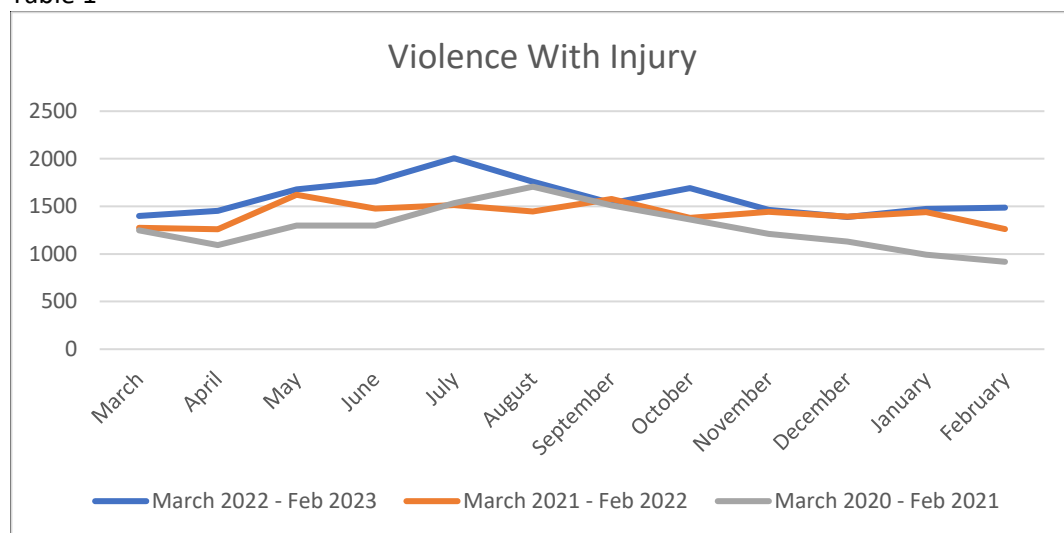
3. ANALYSIS SERIOUS VIOLENCE AND PERFORMANCE

3.1 Future APP reporting on the Constabulary’s response to serious violence will be able to take account of the findings of the ongoing strategic needs assessment as referenced in 2.8.

3.2 The below chart (Table 1) summarises the total volume of violence with injury (VWI) offences for the period March 2022 – February 2023, by comparison with the same period for the preceding two years.

3.3 This shows that total volumes of VWI offences have exceeded preceding years, however it is reasonable to assert that COVID lockdowns applied in the latter periods would have suppressed demand, not least in the context of reduced violence associated with the night-time economy.

Table 1



3.4 Table 2 below, compares the volume of VWI offences for the year ending September 2022 with the year ending September 2021 with our most similar force areas.

3.5 This shows that whilst Suffolk continues to have one of the lowest rates of VWI offences, it has experienced one of the biggest percentage increases in volume of crimes, albeit it should be noted all force areas have experienced largely similar increases in demand.

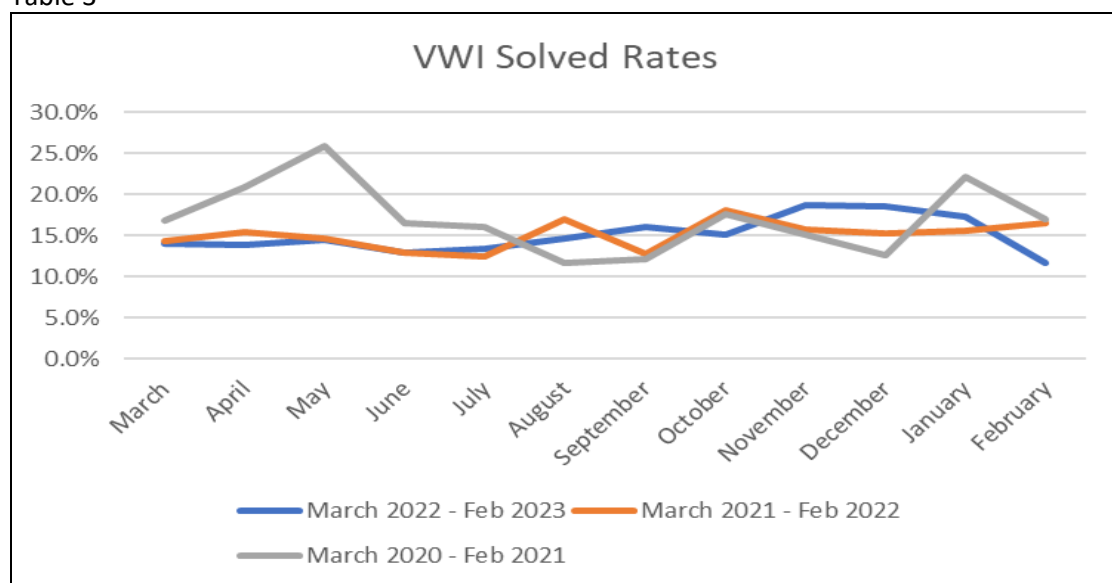
Table 2

Force Area	Violence with injury		Change	
	Year ending Sept 2022	Year ending Sept 2021	Numeric	%
Warwickshire	4681	4082	+ 599	+ 15%
Wiltshire	5980	5500	+ 480	+ 9%
Suffolk	6223	5270	+ 953	+ 18%
North Yorkshire	7220	6270	+ 950	+ 15%
North Wales	7301	6193	+ 1108	+ 18%
Norfolk	8693	7524	+ 1169	+ 16%
West Mercia	11500	9370	+ 2130	+ 23%
Devon and Cornwall	16270	14309	+ 1961	+ 14%

3.6 Table 3 below, summarises the monthly solve rate for violence with injury (VWI) offences for the period March 2022 – February 2023, by comparison with the same period for the preceding two years.

3.7 This chart reflects improvements in solve rates consistent with past performance for months between July 2022– January 2023, whilst acknowledging reduced solve rates in February 2023.

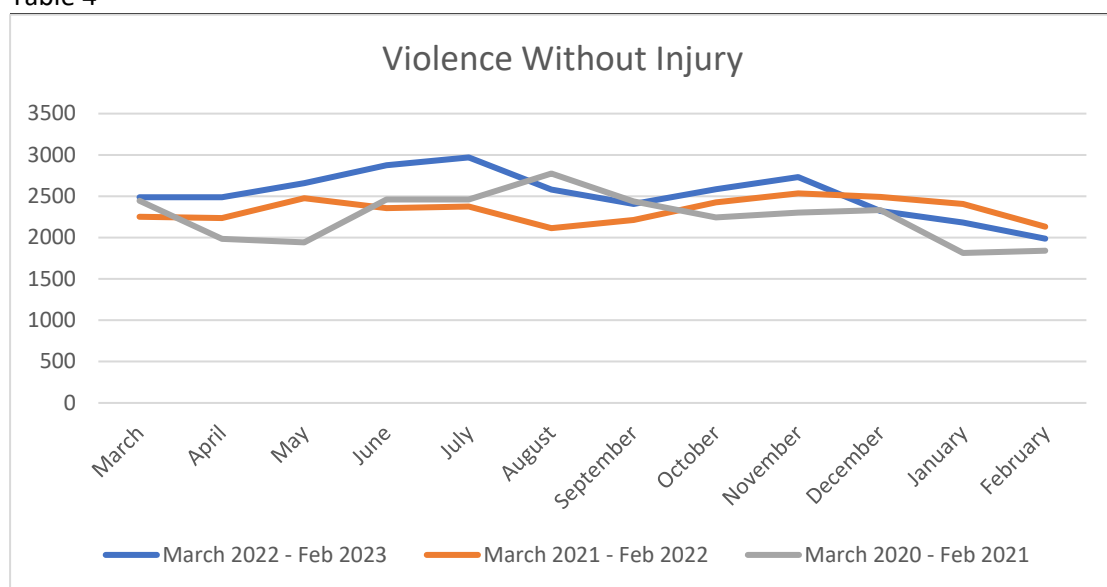
Table 3



3.8 The below chart (Table 4) summarises the total volume of violence without injury (VWOI) offences for the period March 2022 – February 2023, by comparison with the same period for the preceding two years.

3.9 This table shows total volume for the past year exceeding demand for the equivalent periods of March to December, albeit with a decline in volume for the period December 2022 to February 2023 and which is more in keeping with preceding years demand.

Table 4



3.10 Table 5 below, compares the volume of VWOI offences for the year ending September 2022 with the equivalent year ending September 2021 with our most similar forces.

3.11 In summary this shows that similar force areas have experienced like increases in demand from VWOI crime, albeit Suffolk’s increase is slightly above the average increase of 13.5%.

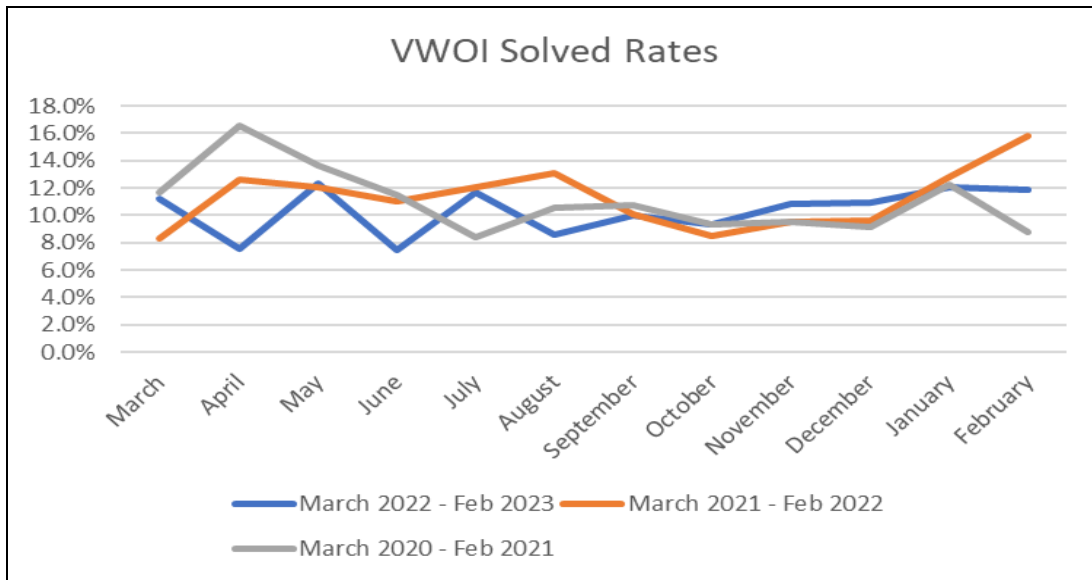
Table 5

Force Area	Violence without injury		Change	
	Year ending Sept 2022	Year ending Sept 2021	Numeric	%
Warwickshire	6474	6006	+ 468	+ 8%
Wiltshire	7476	6512	+ 964	+ 15%
North Yorkshire	7788	6675	+ 1113	+ 17%
Suffolk	10245	8893	+ 1352	+ 15%
North Wales	12036	10493	+ 1543	+ 15%
Norfolk	12735	12139	+ 596	+ 5%
West Mercia	14060	11962	+ 2098	+ 18%
Devon and Cornwall	18119	15805	+ 2314	+ 15%

3.12 Table 6 below, summarises the monthly solve rate for violence without injury (VWOI) offences for the period March 2022 – February 2023, by comparison with the same period for the preceding two years.

3.13 This shows, that since September 2022 solve rates for VOWI have largely remained consistent with preceding years.

Table 6



4. POLICING RESPONSE - VIOLENCE

4.1 As referenced in 1.5, given the need to tackle growth in demand and to improve solve rates, tackling serious violence has been identified as a key priority for the constabulary’s local policing command for the period January – June 2023. Key activity to drive performance improvement has been identified as follows: -

i) Prevention

- Increased use of prevention orders, particularly Domestic Violence Prevention (DVPN/O) and Stalking Prevention Orders (SPO);
- Ensuring effective use of bail conditions and robust enforcement of breaches;
- Raising awareness and encouraging proactive use of Clair's law to ensure effective use of Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme;
- Use of technology for vulnerable victims (alarms/CCTV for example);
- Management of repeat victims/offenders with routine use of Vulnerability-Victim Offender Location data (V-VOL analytical tool) to support tasking processes;
- Use of 'Street safe' and 'My beat data' to inform police and partner identification of vulnerable areas;
- Work with licensed premises to; improve awareness and reporting of violence; identify risk offenders and ensure compliance with conditions (Night- Time Economy plans);
- Further investment in Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Unit and targeted interventions;
- Effective use of Serious Violence Duty partnership and associated funding.

ii) Victim Engagement and Support

- Active intrusive management and effective supervision, to ensure a consistently effective initial response to crime reports and thereafter crime investigation monitoring;
- Independent assessment of standard of 'golden hour' actions in response to incidents of domestic abuse (Body Worn Video review) and in turn use of lessons learnt to influence training, continued professional development and communications activity;
- Securing of witness statements from victims of domestic abuse at the earliest point possible to secure evidence and enhance opportunities to progress charges against perpetrators.
- Inspector quality assurance (auditing of crimes);

- Improve knowledge & application of Victim Codes of Practice requirements (training, knowledge inputs & reality testing);
- Victim support, safeguarding & Design Out Crime referrals.

iii) Suspect Management

- Positive Action at point of initial attendance, with a presumption of arrest in all Domestic Abuse cases;
- Timeliness of Investigations ensuring supervisory review within 24 hours and frequent reviews thereafter (Inspectors to review all cases which remain live after 28 days);
- Vigilance towards offences which are subject to statutory time limits;
- Community Resolutions, Restorative Justice and Conditional Cautions to be considered as an alternative to words of advice and informal disposal mechanisms;
- Inspectors' authority to be sought for use of Outcome 15/16 in Domestic Abuse cases.
- Targeted work using team level performance data (training /individual action plans, enhanced monitoring);
- Increase use of offenders seeking to take other offences into consideration (TIC) for violence where appropriate and where multiple offences are suspected;
- Application of the alternate offence (use of outcomes 1A) for harassment and malicious communications offences, to ensure legitimate means of solving crimes are not missed;
- Ensuring that crime cancellations are sought in all cases where there is clear verifiable evidence to confirm an offence hasn't been made out and therefore has been recorded in error.

Prevention Activity

- 4.2 The Constabulary has recently launched a new Crime Prevention Strategy which is aligned to the National Policing Prevention Strategy. Within the objectives reducing harm, proactive prevention, tackling drivers of crime and tackling root causes through effective problem solving are key considerations. Our Design Out Crime Officers (DOCOs) are crucial in the implementation of this strategy and provide critical support to problem solving plan owners and locality teams with repeat and vulnerable victims and locations. They are pro-active and are deployed dynamically via daily and area tasking meetings
- 4.3 Current initiatives and activity being undertaken includes working with local authorities in areas experiencing gang violence, VWI and Violence Against Women and Girls. This has for example included liaison with business and retail premises to make these environments more hostile for large groups to congregate by adapting the environmental design using lighting, CCTV and instructing guardians to deter offending.
- 4.4 DOCOs support evidence gathering and provide specialist advice for Safer Streets funding applications through their knowledge and expertise in environmental design and effective crime reduction solutions. They have brokered emergency help points in isolated locations experiencing VAWG, suggested taxi marshals and promoted the Ask Angela campaign to business and retail sectors as well as within the night-time economy.
- 4.5 Within the planning application process DOCOs are providing evidenced commentary to assist in reducing the potential for violence. Examples include requesting electronic gates to secure an undercover hotel car park adjacent to the Ipswich Town Football ground to prevent serious match day violence; securing conditions for town centre telecommunications hubs to ensure restrictions on Wi-Fi use and the activation of integral cameras to remove opportunities for antisocial behaviour (ASB)/gang related activity.

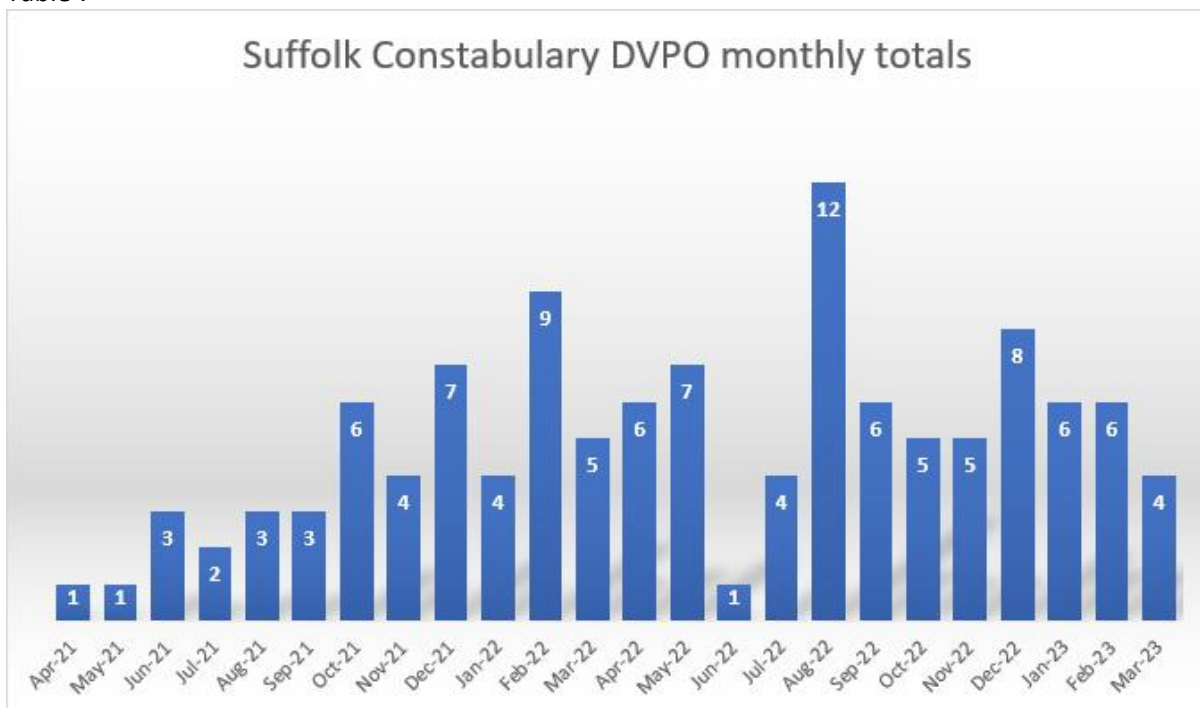
- 4.6 DOCOs create and maintain the force Crime Prevention Library and most recently in responses to VAWG, personal safety and domestic abuse where they have highlighted the active bystander approach as well as drawing attention to perpetrator attitudes and behaviour.
- 4.7 The V- VOL (Vulnerability - Victim/Offender/Location) analytical tool introduced in late 2021, enables operational staff to review persons who are repeat victims and/or perpetrators of violence as well as the locations offences occur in.
- 4.8 Force Tasking and Co-ordination processes ensure that the Constabulary takes appropriate measures to proactively deal with recurring or high threat issues involving violence. Using V-VOL analysis repeat victims, offenders or locations are identified at Monthly Intelligence Meetings before being brought to the relevant Area Tactical Tasking Coordination Group for consideration of risk and then subsequent allocation of ownership and resource.
- 4.9 The Constabulary has reviewed its Operation Comfort process to ensure consistent management of the county's highest risk domestic abuse perpetrators. V-VOL will serve as key data to support this process.

Protective Measures

- 4.10 A Detective Chief Inspector continues to act as a senior operational lead to ensure the constabulary takes a continual improvement approach in its use of ancillary orders and protective measures. This is recognised as key to managing offenders and tackling all forms of criminality not least from perpetrators of serious violence.
- 4.11 In November 2021, the Constabulary launched a 3-year continuous improvement plan (2021-2024) to enhance the response to domestic abuse crime. A key part of this continuous improvement plan is to develop a culture focused on prevention and protection, including improved awareness and use of preventative powers. Delivery of this plan is overseen by the head of crime reporting to a Chief Officer Lead (Assistant Chief Constable lead for local policing).
- 4.12 Additionally, Suffolk Constabulary's Local Policing Priorities January 2023 – June 2023 emphasises the Constabulary's commitment to focus and improve on positive outcomes in the areas of domestic abuse and violence against women and girls, and specifically denotes the intention to increase the number of applications for preventative orders.
- 4.13 Crime, Safeguarding & Investigations Management (CSIM) Department Civil Orders intranet page has recently been updated to include the new Civil Orders Toolkit which supplies a wealth of information to investigators regarding civil orders and provides step-by-step guidance on how to apply for each of the key civil orders used by police.
- 4.14 All supervisors including Police Staff Supervisors and Sergeant and Inspector rank officers have attended the Weightman's Solicitors training input as part of a wider Continuous Professional Development (CPD) training package. This input supplied by trained lawyers focussed on Domestic Violence Prevention Orders (DVPOs) and Stalking Prevention Orders (SPOs) but also included lesser-known Violent Offender Orders. The intention of this training was to promote the volume of civil orders applied for by Suffolk Constabulary, and to increase understanding of the coexistence of preventative orders along with traditional criminal justice outcomes.
- 4.15 The Constabulary monitors uptake of key orders, notably DVPN/O and stalking prevention orders via several key governance meetings (DA, Local Policing Command meetings). Table 7 below presents monthly output of DVPOs since April 2021 and current performance has

remained largely consistent and positive especially when compared to earlier periods depicted.

Table 7



- 4.16 There have been a total of 6 stalking protection orders obtained in the five months from November 2022 to March 2023.
- 4.17 As of 1st April 2023, every Stalking investigation will be reviewed by a dedicated Detective Sergeant and assessment will be made as to the suitability of applying for an SPO at the earliest possible stage of the investigation. The effectiveness of this methodology will be measured in July 2023 and compared against the number of SPOs applied for during the same period in 2022.
- 4.18 In February 2023 Suffolk Constabulary received the following formal recognition from the Safeguarding Minister Sarah Dines MP, recognising our positive usage of Stalking Protective Orders.

On 26 January, we published the second set of [data](#) on SPOs covering the period of February to December 2021. I am pleased that the number of applications for SPOs and the number of full and interim SPOs issued have all increased when compared to the same period in 2020. However, there is still a large disparity between forces in the number of orders which they have applied for relative to their population. I have written to those forces which have applied for fewer orders than might have been expected, but I am also keen to congratulate forces such as yours which are amongst the most successful in terms of the numbers of orders applied for relative to population. I would like to thank you for your effective use of this important tool and would encourage you to keep up the good work and continue to consider applying for a SPO in every stalking case.

I know that the NPCC lead for stalking has been doing good work to identify good practice to share with police forces. You and your officers are welcome to contact my officials or the NPCC if you have any questions on SPOs and their use.

I would like to thank you once again for all your work to protect victims of stalking and I look forward to continuing to engage with you on this important issue.

Yours sincerely,



Sarah Dines MP

Licensing

- 4.19 Localities provide a focussed approach to their individual night-time economy (NTE) needs. Force Licensing Officers work with Safer Neighbourhood Teams and Problem-Solving Tactical Advisors to look at long term resolutions. Premises are now graded by Suffolk Police based on a number of factors that drive demand, with the resulting rating used as a guide to drive engagement and visits to that premises.
- 4.20 In this reporting period there have been a total of 726 reported criminal offences either in, or linked to licensed premises. Of these, 147 (20.25%) have been solved.
- West: 325 offences tagged in licensed premises, 65 solved 20%
 - South: 285 offences tagged in licensed premises, 47 solved 16.5%
 - East: 116 offences tagged in licensed premises, 35 solved 30.12%
- 4.21 Our response to licensed premises, currently prioritises locations directly linked to serious violence. Examples of ongoing activities include:
- Research and implementation of internal and external Welfare and Vulnerability Engagement (WAVE) training. This will be offered to the Local Authority, CCTV providers, Designated Premises Supervisors and management agencies. The focus of the initiative is to upskill industry providers and front-line police officers in identifying those vulnerable and more susceptible to crime.
 - Working with the Local Authority and licensed premises to explore tactics to reduce the threat of people becoming perpetrators of serious violence, linked with the Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy. There is a particular focus within this work on perpetrators, ensuring it is the source of the problem that is our target, and not the victim.

- Increasing police pro-activity through the 'condition of entry' operations, using ION Track devices to identify persons of risk based on drug responses.
- Utilising Project Servator trained officers (officers trained to enhanced level to spot suspicious activity) in high demand areas.
- Supporting the Local Authority in working with premises to move towards Security and Vulnerability Initiative (SAVI) accreditation.
- Increasing visibility in licensed premises, both at peak times of business and at other times, focussing on building stronger relationships with managers, staff and customers.
- Focussing on repeat offenders, using preventative measures to reduce the risk of further offending (community protection notices/barring from premises).
- Continued promotion of national campaigns, such as 'Ask for Angela' and 'BE LADS' as well as reality testing to understand effectiveness.

Night-time Economy (NTE)

4.22 The following summarises recent Night-Time Economy Activity in the Southern Area.

- A refreshed NTE plan was implemented in November 2022.
- Geographical areas of responsibility have been given to officers to complete foot patrols and engage with licensed premises, focussing on positive action for VWI, VAWG offences and vulnerability.
- Officers have received vulnerability and licensing training.
- Two operations in this time period, Op Facilitate and Op Drawbridge, both focussing on engagement and early intervention/disruption of offending in the NTE.
- Engagement with partners for licensing checks, supporting licensees by offering training opportunities through Safer Streets funding.
- Work with partners focussing on vulnerability, working with Town Pastors and taxi marshals, community survey under Op Drawbridge, sharing results with partners.
- Expansion of taxi marshals, in additional locations throughout the town centre.
- Use of Op Servator trained staff during NTE operations
- Use V-VOL data, intelligence and Innkeeper to focus targeted patrols.

4.23 The following summarises recent Night-Time Economy Activity in the Western Area.

- Each locality has created a NTE plan which then links into an overarching West NTE plan. The Locality plan is bespoke to each town with a NTE and also identifies outlier issue premises in the wider locality, providing street level direction to officers in respect of early intervention (firm/fair approach).
- Use V-VOL data, intelligence and Innkeeper to focus targeted patrols.
- Partnership work to increase CCTV coverage in Bury St Edmunds – an area of youth violence and NTE related violence behind McDonalds. Additional cameras have been agreed and awaiting installation.
- Newmarket races – increased use of Special Police Services (SPS) to support positive policing of Newmarket Nights and the larger race cards, giving us a footprint for early intervention and education. ION track to be deployed in spring at Race meets.
- The SOS Bus in Newmarket is exploring expanding its geographical footprint and is open to attendance in other areas or events with a focus being on vulnerability and demand reduction for the NHS. In its previous deployments, it has offered a secure space for statement taking as well as providing respite for drunk people in the NTE environment.

- USAF – continued partnership working on raising awareness of VAWG amongst personnel and ensuring reporting to civilian police & signposting to relevant on and off base support services.
- Street Drinking – increased working with West Suffolk District Council Homeless Team to address street drinking and the associated violence across the street homeless community in Bury St Edmunds – increased use of preventative orders with positive obligations around accommodation.

4.24 The following summarises recent Night-Time Economy Activity in the Eastern Area.

- Embedded a problem-solving methodology and evidence-based approach for licenced premises which are identified as “hot Spots” for violence/disorder/ ASB with good information and intelligence sharing between key partners and joint agency visits undertaken where necessary and appropriate.
- The NTE Plan for east was refreshed, and in addition, a NTE Vulnerability briefing was developed – to be delivered twice yearly (Christmas and Summer) and which sets out expectations around safeguarding and vulnerability, particularly for women and girls, within the NTE setting and premises of concern.
- There has also been renewed emphasis to ensure that all incidences where police have attended an incident, which can be linked to a licenced premises, are recorded on the Innkeeper system
- There has been significant publicity around ASK ANGELA and general promotion of First Principle with licenced premises and their staff.
- In addition to targeted patrols and engagement with licensed premises, a number of proactive Drug-Wipe operations (with the permission and assistance of licenced premises) have been run which require drug wipe testing as a condition of entry.

Victim support and Engagement

- 4.25 Victim support is reported on separately for accountability and performance purposes and as such only key updates are provided in this report from a violence perspective.
- 4.26 Between January and March 2023 all Sergeants and Inspectors received renewed training to reinforce the importance of active intrusive management of crime investigations, inclusive of the need to ensure compliance with the Victim Codes of Practice (VCOP).
- 4.27 A VCOP performance dashboard is now live enabling line managers to identify and target repeat areas of performance concern, at an individual or team level. VCOP performance is now additionally monitored at local policing command meetings chaired at ACC level.
- 4.28 A process to ensure routine independent assessment of ‘golden hour’ actions at Domestic Abuse Crimes has commenced (Body Worn Video review) managed by the force 2025 corporate improvement and innovation and force DA teams. It is envisaged this process will enable identification and use of lessons learnt to improve training, enhance continued professional development and inform communications activity to improve performance at individual, team and force level.
- 4.29 Formal quarterly auditing of crimes by Inspecting ranks continues managed by SBOS and CSIM. These audits are completed in a consistent manner and cover a range of performance questions, inclusive of whether opportunities have been missed to achieve positive outcomes or safeguard victims through use of protective measures.

Offender Management

- 4.30 Effective offender management is critical to prevention of offences as well as victim and public confidence and satisfaction.
- 4.31 Offender Management is reported on separately for accountability and performance purposes and as such only key updates are provided in in this report.
- 4.32 The Constabulary has also developed an Outstanding Suspects Dashboard using software that will allow officers to view a list of the current outstanding suspects. This will assist with effectively prioritising the most dangerous or persistent offenders using a crime severity scoring mechanism.
- 4.33 All commands are continuing to prioritise those cases which are over 28 days old and where suspects have been identified and outcomes pending.

Integrated Offender Management

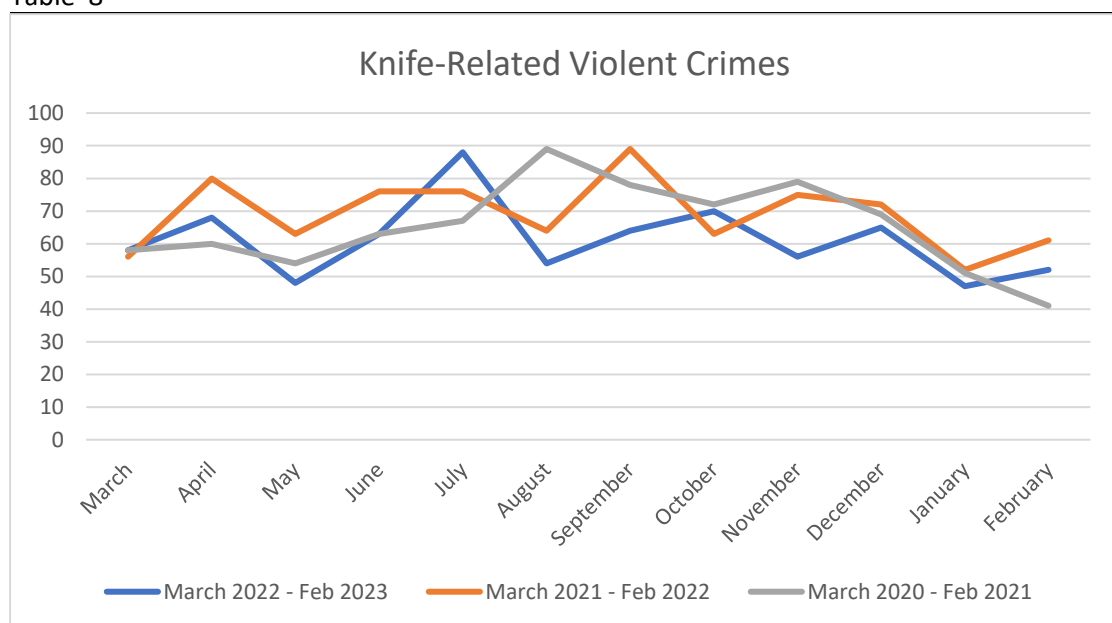
- 4.34 The Integrated Offender Management Scheme is a National Initiative which is locally known as the 180 Team. The team works to protect the public from offending and reduce demand on policing resources by working with partners to provide prolific harmful offenders with the opportunity to break away from the cycle of offending.
- 4.35 The team works with offenders in conjunction the National Probation Service through a number of pathways which are proven to contribute to the cycle of offending. This includes accommodation, substance misuse, debt and finance, mental and physical health, family and relationships, thinking skills, education and training, and associates
- 4.36 Offenders on the scheme are identified by referrals into the scheme and an assessment based on their offending history, information and intelligence held on police systems, complexity of needs, and the risks they present, is undertaken to ascertain their suitability for adoption. During that process if a trigger offence is linked to domestic abuse, then an assessment whether a 'Claire's Law' disclosure is required to any new partners.
- 4.37 The scheme is looking to adopt youth violent offenders in the future to create recognized pathways to reduce offending from an early age. Other considerations in respect to the adoption of domestic abuse and violent offenders is being considered although there are already schemes to manage Domestic Abuse (DA) perpetrators and reduce offending. We are currently working with the Probation Service to secure more Buddi Tags that monitor people on the scheme, as whilst a voluntary process this is seen as an additional measure to help reduce risk of re-offending.
- 4.38 Suffolk currently has a total of 119 offenders on the cohort consisting of 63 in prison and 56 outside of prison. Since January 2023 12% of the cohort have been charged with offences and 17% have breached their license conditions resulting in either being warned or recalled to prison.

5. PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW KNIFE CRIME

- 5.1 The below chart (Table 8) summarises the total volume of knife related violence offences for the period March 2022 – February 2023, by comparison with the same period for the preceding two years.

5.2 With the exception of July 2022, this data would indicate incidence of offences is in keeping with and often times below the preceding two years demand.

Table 8



5.3 Table 9 below, compares the volume of knife related violence offences (per 100,000 population) for the year ending September 2022 with the year ending September 2021, with Suffolk’s most similar forces.

5.4 With the exception of North Wales all similar force areas have seen increases in knife crime, however Suffolk is at the lower end of increases seen.

Table 9

Force Area	Knife Crime		Change	
	Year ending Sept 2022	Year ending Sept 2021	Numeric	%
Suffolk	36.7	36.1	+ 0.5	+ 1%
Wiltshire	37.7	37.1	+ 0.6	+ 1%
Norfolk	40.9	40.2	+ 0.8	+ 2%
North Yorkshire	44.3	43.5	+ 0.7	+ 2%
Devon and Cornwall	44.3	37.4	+ 6.9	+ 18%
North Wales	47.3	50.8	-3.4	-7%
West Mercia	49.8	43.7	+ 6.1	+ 14%
Warwickshire	53.8	49.3	+ 4.5	+ 9%

5.5 In the last 12 months there have been a total of 478 stop searches completed for offensive weapons against a total of 325 searches for the previous 12 months. This constitutes a 47% increase in associated activity against the previous year and a 31% increase against the long-term average (363 searches).

Op Sceptre

5.6 As reported previously, Operation Sceptre centres on knife related crime, and is implemented on a biannual basis across the country. In Suffolk, we have continued to work with our partners in focussing attention on the week of action around the key areas of engagement and pro-activity. The latest activity took place between 14th and 20th November 2022. The results of which are summarised as below:

- 2 Arrests;
- 1 knife related warrant executed;
- 60 Intelligence led stop searches;
- Focused engagement with those identified through intelligence as carrying a higher risk of being involved in knife crime;
- Comprehensive media and social media plan developed and implemented with the Local Authority and police engagement officers;
- 8 Bespoke knife related engagement events delivered to residential homes for looked after children;
- Safer Neighbourhood Teams, Schools Liaison Officers and Community Engagement Officers attended events at 29+ schools, reaching in excess of 3000 young people;
- Targeted weapons sweeps;
- Joint operation with British Transport Police using Project Servator trained officers at Ipswich Train Station;
- Leaflet distribution in areas identified as hot spots through crime recording and intelligence;
- 924+ knives and bladed items recovered from surrender amnesty bins.

5.7 The next Op Sceptre week of Action will commence on 15th May 2023. Primarily the focus will be on working with education providers to maximise engagement opportunities in schools. Pro-activity will be focussed on individuals and places highlighted through scanning and information sharing as being involved, or likely to be involved in knife crime. There will also be conversations with HM Prison Service regarding the new Op Wilson tactic that involves search trained police officers entering prisons focussing on the possession and concealment of weapons in the prison environment. We will also be building on our trusted relationships with the Local Authority, Trading Standards and neighbouring Forces to increase awareness and focus on knife related issues within our communities.

6. COUNTY LINES

6.1 The County Lines definition has been reworded since the last period and the home office has defined County lines as a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”. They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

6.2 Suffolk Constabulary has a clear governance structure for maintaining accountability and delivery of drug related activity in tackling supply and harm caused, this is through the Suffolk Drugs Board, chaired by Chief Superintendent (County Policing Command) and a specific County Lines Board which is headed by a Detective Superintendent (CSIM) focusing on enforcement activity.

- 6.3 County Lines are identified through both intelligence and evidence-based activity. Tier 1 lines are then scored through a Matrix which considers risk and harm, including serious violence and weapons.
- 6.4 Currently in Suffolk there have six tier 1 County Lines with Ipswich being the top impacting location and the popular drug type being crack cocaine and heroin. There are 7 tier 2 lines in Suffolk. Both tier 1 and tier 2 lines are assessed as low risk.
- 6.5 During County Lines intensification week at the end of February 2023, 53 people were arrested and more than a kilo of Class A drugs were seized. Through engagement over 1,500 adults and children benefited from engagement and awareness work, making Suffolk a hostile area to operate county lines.

Operation Orochi

- 6.6 Operation Orochi is Metropolitan police led initiative, involving the sharing of information and tactics with county forces. The aim is to identify and arrest the individual controlling the dealer's mobile phone. Suffolk Constabulary's Serious Crime Disruption Teams (SCDT) lead operational delivery of Orochi in Suffolk and since November 2022 they have continued to achieve significant successes including:
- 16 County Lines disrupted;
 - 13 Line Holders of County Lines arrested and charged;
 - 10 Line holders of County Lines convicted and sentenced;
 - 36 years in prison sentences for Line Holders;
 - 4 Line Holders awaiting sentence after pleading guilty (since Jan 2023);
 - 2 Line Holders charged with Modern Slavery offences
 - 2 people were sentenced to a total 7 years for operating the Marlow line in Ipswich during June 2021 and February 2022
 - 1 man was arrested for operating the Mitch line in Ipswich during June and July 2022. They pleaded guilty at the earliest opportunity and received a sentence of 3 years and 6 months.

Operation Pester

- 6.7 Operation Pester is a tactic used in partnership with service providers and public health, where mobile phone numbers found on mobile phones seized from county lines holders are sent a text offering health advice, Crimestoppers details and awareness from a police perspective that their number was found on a supplier's phone. This has been deployed once in Suffolk with some positive early results provided from Turning Point reporting users seeking support. Plans are in pace to deploy again with metrics to measure success. During the last period further members of staff have been trained in deployment of this tactic.

Operation Magpie

- 6.8 Operation Magpie reviews numbers found on Class A drug users' phones with the aim to identify common suppliers and target them with enforcement. This has now become normal practice for SCDT's utilising any opportunity to support users and targeting those higher up the supply chain.

7. COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGNS

- 7.1 It is recognised that effective communications are central to achieving improvements to victim and public confidence and satisfaction, including in the context of tackling serious violence.

7.2 A summary of communications activities which have taken place since November 2022 is outlined as follows: -

- Publishing charges/court case results involving offences of violent crime;
- Promotion of the work done to tackle county lines/human trafficking by our Sentinel Teams – including broadcast interviews with local radio stations such as BBC Radio Suffolk Crime-beat slot;
- Continued support of Operation Hull – an operation in Ipswich targeting drugs and those involved in gang/knife crime. This includes producing social media videos of warrants being carried out;
- Continuous and ongoing engagement with local media regarding interviews on all areas of violent crime – with the emphasis on violence against women and girls (Including support available/commitment to pursuing perpetrators), and gang-related/knife crime.

8. VIOLENT CRIME CASE STUDY - OPERATION HULL

8.1 Operation Hull continues to serve as a leading example of the approach taken by the constabulary to prioritise activity to tackle serious incidence of violence working in partnership both internally within the constabulary and more broadly with external stakeholders and partners.

- Operation Hull remains a commissioned operation to tackle serious violence in the Ipswich Area affiliated to gangs. In particular the operation places a keen emphasis on Youth Violence.
- Operation Hull remains a force priority and is supported by policing resourcing from across disciplines, including specialist assets.
- Serious violence involving gang affiliated young people has seen a sustained reduction since a peak during early summer of 2022 but remains a long term concern.
- The operation is backed by a complete Strategic and Tactical Structure, focusing delivery across Pursue, Protect, Prevent & Prepare.
- Monthly Meetings are chaired by the Lead Responsible Officer (Southern Area Commander) with internal and external partners, supported by weekly tactical meetings focussed on partnerships and intelligence sharing.
- Partnership meetings focuses on young persons at risk and coordinates responses as appropriate, including fast time actions in response to incidents involving those under 18.
- The Criminal Exploitation and Gangs team are an integral part of Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) Panels in the Southern Area, enhancing our response to children at risk of exploitation through gang affiliation.
- Key partners in Public Health, Education, Youth Justice Service, Local Authority, Child Exploitation Hubs and Community Safety remained engaged in delivery.
- Tactical Partner Meetings have mapped diversionary opportunities, undertaken gap analysis and conducted bespoke activity to identify key opportunities to support young people in both exiting gangs, and preventing them joining.
- Third Sector provision is being pursued in partnership with the constabulary to provide a bespoke programme for young person's involved or on the periphery of gang related activity.
- A dedicated investigation team overseen by an allocated Senior Investigating Officer continues to seek Criminal Behaviour Orders and Gang Injunctions to prevent reoffending and assist partner agencies with intervention measures. To date over thirty Criminal Behaviour Orders have been drafted in anticipation of criminal convictions.

- Strong links have been developed with Norfolk Constabulary to help manage the transient nature of gang related activity and assist in the prevention of cross border offending.
- A dedicated tactical group remains in place with key partners from partner agencies to manage offenders on prison release and has successfully achieved placements out of county and prison recall, reducing the risk of offending and to others.
- The operation is now linked into a policing counterpart to coordinate supportive workshops and act as a critical friend, based on previous experiences and similar issues.
- Operation Hull has dedicated communications support to ensure the public and partners are appraised early of incidents, police response and successes to build confidence and demonstrate our response.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The Home Office has allocated funding to support the local implementation of the Serious Violence Duty over the next three years. It has been agreed with the SVDP board that initial allocation of funds for the period 31st January to 31st March 2023 will be prioritised towards covering the costs of SODA's work to progress a strategic needs assessment.
- 9.2 The SVDP is looking to implement a formal bidding process to agree future allocation of grant funding and it is envisaged that the findings of the strategic needs assessment will be key to determining prioritisation of grant allocation.

10. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

- 10.1 As referenced in section 2.9, Suffolk has been assessed as being in a positive state of readiness to deliver the requirements of the serious violence duty. However, it should be noted that the delivery of a comprehensive strategic needs assessment and associated strategy are significant requirements that must be completed by January 2024. Capacity and progress towards meeting legislative requirements will continue to be monitored and reported to the county's Safer Stronger Communities Board.

11. CHIEF OFFICER CONCLUSION

- 11.1 This serious violence report should be considered in conjunction with other relevant reporting related to Domestic Abuse, managing offenders and supporting victims as all are interconnected. Collectively they provide wider insight around the Constabulary commitment to developing approaches in all areas.
- 11.2 The Constabulary can demonstrate strong governance and partnership arrangements where serious violence is concerned. The recent CREST advisory assessment around preparedness for the serious violence duty supports this assertion and there is a healthy culture of support across public sector agencies seeking reductions in serious violence in the county.
- 11.3 Crime reporting rates for both VWI and VWOI have increased since the pandemic period in line with other MSG forces. The county has seen the lowest increases in knife crime within its MSG and there are consistent levels where solved rates are concerned despite the general demand challenges of calls for service that are being seen.
- 11.4 The Constabulary can demonstrate plans to make further improvements in prevention, victim services and offender interventions and this report highlight case studies of specific work that has been developed to tackle youth crime in Ipswich to good effect (Operation Hull). There has been significant progress made in combatting the threat of 'County Lines' operating in Suffolk.