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Police Headquarters Martlesham Heath Ipswich Suffolk IP5 3QS

9th June 2023

Dear Colleague

Re: Adopting the 'right care, right person' strategy in Suffolk Constabulary.

Right care, right person is being adopted by several police services across the UK and its aim is to ensure that vulnerable people are given the right support from the right agency when they need it.

As Chief Constable and Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Suffolk, we delivered a presentation to the Health and Wellbeing Board (23 March 2023) to inform partners and stakeholders of our intention to implement this strategy in Suffolk Constabulary. This letter provides more information and sets out our intended timelines as well as reiterating our intention to work in partnership with you to ensure this approach helps improve the response to mental health in Suffolk.

In recent years Suffolk Constabulary, like most other police services, has seen a significant increase in the number of calls for service it receives that are related to mental health including reports of concern for welfare originating from partner agencies. These have often led to the Constabulary deploying to situations where it has no legal duty to attend and, probably more importantly where police officers and staff are not equipped with the skills, knowledge, or training to provide the best and most effective response to a member of the public at time of crisis.

At the same time, other general demands on policing have increased as crime and criminality has become more complex. This context, coupled with our increased focus on reducing non-crime demand, is such that like many police services, Suffolk Constabulary must adapt its approach and focus on the core role of the police which is to: -

- Prevent and detect crime.
- Keep the King's peace.
- Protect life and property.

The Police and Crime plan for Suffolk and the Chief Constable's strategic plan set out that the protection of the most vulnerable in our communities is and will continue to be a priority and the Police will of course continue to attend incidents where there is a risk of serious harm or threat to life and where police powers and skills are required. However, the Constabulary also to attend when there is a 'concern for safety. Routinely such calls do not present an immediate risk to life and, when officers attend, they assume responsibility which places a legal obligation on them to keep the individual reasonably safe until the matter can be resolved. The police are not the right agency to respond to individuals in such circumstances. The 'Right care, right person strategy' enables the Police to identify and attend only those calls where there is a clear role for the police and to not attend to deal with a matter that could better be dealt with by a partner agency.

2.

A key principle of the 'Right care, right person' strategy will provide the call centre staff with the ability to clearly and unequivocally be able to decide whether the call is or is not a matter for the Police and if it is not, pass it on to the correct agency and make an evidenced – based decision not to deploy resources and refer it to another organisation to attend. All calls will continue to be logged and such decisions and rationale explained to the caller and recorded on the log.

On 23rd of February 2023, the Home Secretary wrote to all Chief Constable's and Police and Crime Commissioners regarding the pressures that mental health issues are placing on policing and to update on agreements made with the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) to ensure people in mental health crisis were responded to by healthcare professionals to get the appropriate assessment or treatment in the right environment. The letter explained that good progress was being made regarding national partnership agreements that will incorporate the principles of Right care, Right Person. This letter can be accessed via [Letter to chief constables and police and crime commissioners \(accessible\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/letters-communications/letter-to-chief-constables-and-police-and-crime-commissioners-accessible).

Furthermore, the letter also stated that the College of Policing and National Police Chiefs Council are working on a smarter practice product and a toolkit that will contain a range of products to assist forces in the implementation of the right care, right person approach and that the Home Office and DHSC will also work with NHS England to ensure that guidance for integrated care board and mental health trusts are developed.

It is our intention that Suffolk Constabulary will start to introduce some of the principles in October 2023 and a phased programme is being developed with the first phase being to implement changes to the way that the Constabulary assessed and responds or not to calls regarding 'concerns for welfare'.

The Chief Constable has asked Superintendent Angus Moir (Angus.moir@suffolk.police.uk) to lead this programme and Angus has already been in touch with many of you and your colleagues. Angus will develop and implement the programme and, to ensure partners and stakeholders can engage in this work, will be setting up a process for health and social care partners to obtain information, make suggestions or raise any concerns to enable it to be implemented effectively and considerately in Suffolk. Please contact Angus if you would like an operational colleague to be engaged in this work. The process to be adopted will be provided (and published) in advance of its implementation to give all interested parties an opportunity to prepared for the change in approach and ensure that vulnerable people are kept safe by the receiving the right care from the right agency.

As Chief Constable and PCC we are keen that the Constabulary continues to work closely with partners and stakeholders in the care sector and local authorities to identify where gaps in services exist so that any changes required because of the introduction of 'right care, right person' can be made by the relevant agencies. Furthermore, we trust that announcing our intention in March, with implementation in October provides a sufficient lead- in time.

With regard to oversight, monitoring and governance of 'right care, right person' the Chief Constable will present a paper at a future Suffolk Police and Crime Commissioner Accountability and Performance panel meeting (open session) and we will provide an update at the Health and Wellbeing Board on 16 November 2023.

3.

In the same way that the Home Office and DHSC are committed to working together to improve the response to mental health, we trust this letter demonstrates our commitment to ensure that the 'right care , right person' strategy is implemented effectively in Suffolk to ensure that the appropriate health and social care is available to respond to those in crisis and to reiterate that Suffolk Constabulary will continue to play their part in mental health incidents when it is necessary and appropriate for us to do so.

Yours sincerely



Tim Passmore
Police and Crime Commissioner



Rachel Kearton
Chief Constable