

ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL

A meeting of the Accountability and Performance Panel was held at Police Headquarters Martlesham, and via Microsoft Teams at 09:30 on Friday 1 March 2024.

PRESENT:

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

Colette Batson (Chief Finance Officer), Kate Boswell (Executive Assistant to the PCC and Chief Executive), Sandra Graffham (Head of Communications and Engagement), Amanda Houchen (Administrative Assistant), Tim Passmore (Police and Crime Commissioner), James Sheridan (Policy and Commissioning Officer), Vanessa Scott (Head of Policy and Performance).

Suffolk Constabulary

Rob Jones (Deputy Chief Constable), Rachel Kearton (Chief Constable), Kenneth Kilpatrick (Assistant Chief Officer), Janine Wratten (Superintendent County Partnership and Prevention Hub).

In attendance for the Public Agenda

Joao Santos (Local Democracy Reporter).

In attendance for the Public Agenda via Teams

John Burns (Town Councillor for Haverhill East), Mike Chester (Member of the Police and Crime Panel), David Ellesmere (Member of the Police and Crime Panel), James Finch (Member of the Police and Crime Panel), Simon Furlong (Independent Member of the Police and Crime Panel), Sarah Mansel (Chair of the Police and Crime Panel), Adriana Stapleton (Senior Democratic Services Officer, Suffolk County Council), John Ward (Member of the Police and Crime Panel).

Apologies:

Eamonn Bridger (Temporary Assistant Chief Constable), Julie Dean (Temporary Assistant Chief Constable), Christopher Jackson (Chief Executive).

1 Public Question Time

1.1 The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) welcomed everyone to the meeting, invited both Constabulary and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner attendees to introduce themselves, and advised that no questions had been received in advance of this meeting.

2 Open minutes of the meeting held on 19 January (Paper AP24/11)

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2024 were agreed as an accurate record and approved by the PCC.

2.2 All actions were noted as complete or in hand and were being followed up outside of the meeting.

3 Financial Monitoring (Paper AP24/12)

3.1 Assistant Chief Officer (ACO) Kenneth Kilpatrick invited questions on this report.

3.2 The PCC asked for comment on the increase in the underspend. The ACO responded that the drivers for this are around operational expenditure which has improved since the last report. Cheaper fleet insurance and a reduction in energy costs have resulted in a more accurate forecast which has led to a move from a position of overspend to surplus. The approach of the Constabulary is that operational income needs to fund operational expenditure and any investment income is used for funding of capital programmes.

3.3 The PCC asked for clarification regarding Airwave handset replacement which is showing an overspend of £190K. The ACO advised that although it is showing as an overspend, this is reassigned budget from the delayed mobile device replacements. The ESMCP project has been repeatedly delayed.

3.4 The PCC asked for clarification on the CCR Smart Storm Upgrade. The ACO advised that the contract is due to expire within the next few years. Work has been authorised jointly with Norfolk to undertake market testing to inform any decisions on replacing Storm and to research what alternatives are available on the market. The costs for this work will be split with Norfolk.

3.5 The PCC asked if the ACO expected there to be any significant changes with the financial reporting between now and the end of this financial year. The ACO commented that the numbers are not yet finalised but any changes will be communicated to the Chief Finance Officer (CFO). However, he is not expecting any significant movement. There remains uncertainty around the 1425 uplift recruitment project figures and the funding that will be available from the Home Office. The OPCC will be kept informed of progress.

4 Supporting Vulnerable Victims (Paper AP24/13)

4.1 Deputy Chief Constable (DCC) Rob Jones invited questions on this report.

4.2 The PCC asked when can full compliance with the Victims Code be expected. At the September 2023 APP meeting compliance against the code was reported at 96%, however the figure has dropped for this reporting period. DCC Jones advised that whilst figures fluctuated, the overall goal is to ensure that victims in Suffolk have access to services and support. The emphasis is on improving the Victim's Personal Statement (VPS) and its efficacy. Rather than achieving 100% compliance, it is preferable to ensure the statement makes the right impact, particularly when used in court. When officers attend a crime, the crime report is taken on-site via the Optik system and information on victim support services is provided at that time. The VPS may not be taken at this stage as the attending officer may not deem it appropriate.

4.3 The Chief Finance Officer (CFO) asked for an explanation in the difference of the figures in the graphs on VPS on page 4 and page 5, as the figures showing on page 5 look far higher.

Superintendent Wratten responded that the graphs use different data sets. The one on page 5 relates to the VPS being offered, which is measured with data taken from a tick box response, whilst the graph on page 4 shows the figures of those who have completed a VPS.

- 4.4 The Head of Policy and Performances commented that it is the Force's responsibility to offer the VPS 100% of the time. It is then up to the victim as to whether they complete it, and the court as to how it is used. Therefore, it is important the report makes clear the nuance between 'offered' and 'taken' in the future. DCC Jones responded the Constabulary is trying to change the system to make the VPS box mandatory to ensure accuracy of recording but to date this has not been possible.
- 4.5 The PCC asked whether the figures at point 3.9 have been split to show just Suffolk's cases as previously requested. He also enquired after what the role of Special Measures Advisor had delivered. DCC Jones responded that the figures are both Norfolk and Suffolk and will request they are separated for the next report. The Special Measures Advisor duties include helping to ensure victims are as prepared as they can be for going to court and giving evidence, as the experience of court for victims can be incredibly difficult. The PCC asked when does the funding for the Special Measures Advisor role end. DCC Jones responded that he would need to find out and would update the PCC accordingly.
ACTION: DCC Jones to confirm the timeframe of funding for the Special Measures Advisor role, and to ensure the figures at point 3.9 are for Suffolk only in future reports.
- 4.6 The PCC asked about the review of the county Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) plan, specifically what role the Constabulary has in this, and what changes the Police want to see. DCC Jones responded that in Suffolk VAWG is a partnership strategy covering a wide range of offences, therefore getting the right support in place for these crimes requires constant review. This review is looking at the strength of the partnership approach and how to improve it. Current data is showing a strong performance for dealing with risk and implementing protective measures, and enables different areas within Suffolk to implement solutions to meet their specific needs.
- 4.7 The PCC asked how effectively Operation Comfort is working within the new policing model. DCC Jones responded that so far he was pleased with how the new policing model is working, and will be able to provide a more thorough answer once the six-month evaluation has been completed in June 2024. The Chief Constable added that the model has resulted in gaining a greater grip on repeat domestic abuse perpetrators, and agreed to provide the six-month evaluation to the PCC after June 2024.
ACTION – DCC Jones to provide an update to the PCC at the six-month evaluation stage for how Operation Comfort is working within the new policing model.
- 4.8 The Policy and Commissioning Officer asked if there will be changes as a result of the Performance Improvement Unit (PIU) review into how the Constabulary Investigates Domestic Abuse. The Chief Constable responded that she has now received the written report and will share further details with the PCC around areas of concern and those requiring improvement.
ACTION – The Chief Constable to share an update with the PCC on the Performance Improvement Unit (PIU) review into how the Constabulary Investigates Domestic Abuse.
- 4.9 The Policy and Commissioning Officer asked if there is a timescale for the completion of the DARA evaluation which states it is due in the first quarter of 2025. DCC Jones responded that he would check and confirm.

ACTION – DCC Jones to confirm the timescale for completion of the DARA evaluation to the OPCC.

4.10 The PCC asked why the overall satisfaction figures in the Supporting Vulnerable Victims table on page 9 have reduced. DCC Jones responded that overall, this is only a small decline. Most domestic abuse victims are contacting the police for the first time, and when we take into consideration the challenges of the 101 services during the past 12 months this may have influenced these results. Now improvements are being seen within the control room, we can monitor if this translates into these figures also.

4.11 The PCC noted that he is pleased to hear of the improvements within the control room, which has been reflected by comments received from the recent HMICFRS revisit.

4.12 The PCC asked why the domestic abuse figures for Lowestoft are showing an increase when all other areas in Suffolk are reporting a decrease. DCC Jones responded that monthly meetings with Area Commanders review these figures at a more local level, and will offer a further analysis for Lowestoft. It is believed that there is a link to the increase in domestic abuse in deprived areas and the increased pressure triggered by the cost-of-living crisis. The PCC commented he would be interested to see if there is any correlation between social deprivation and the current economic situation.

ACTION – DCC Jones to follow up with the PCC on possible correlation between social deprivation, the current economic situation, and an increase in domestic abuse.

4.13 The Policy and Commissioning Officer asked if the 48-hour time frame to request a Domestic Violence Protection Notice (DVPN) is monitored, and how does the force support victims where DVPOs are refused. DCC Jones responded that the purpose of ancillary orders is to give the police another tactical option to keep victims safe. DVPNs require work, and the enforcement numbers are relatively small compared to the number of victims. When a DVPN is not approved, there are a number of options to keep a victim safe, so the force does not rely exclusively on them. In addition to DVPNs, there is an increase in the use of both bail and remand conditions.

4.14 The PCC asked if the Constabulary has the time and resources in place for Clare's Law applications. DCC Jones responded that this is not an issue, and since the launch of Single Online Home the process has become simpler. The Chief Constable added that the changes within the control room will allow more of these requests to be dealt with, and results will be evaluated accordingly.

4.15 The PCC asked when the Constabulary expected the requirements from the HMICFRS PEEL inspection in relation to protecting vulnerable people to be completed. DCC Jones reassured the PCC that the work has been completed, and he has submitted a letter confirming that the Constabulary is satisfied that progress has been made.

ACTION – DCC Jones to share letter to HMICFRS with PCC.

4.16 The PCC asked for examples to be provided, together with any thoughts on what can be done to improve the evidential difficulties as referred to in the table on page 15 of the report in relation to the RASSO. DCC Jones responded this area of work is dealt with by specialist detective teams, and that Suffolk Constabulary works closely with the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) to achieve justice outcomes. A large number of investigations relate to historic cases where there are no biometric and forensic opportunities to corroborate. Often the crimes have taken place in private, meaning there won't be CCTV

evidence. In many cases it is one person's word against another, resulting in difficulty achieving the evidential threshold. This is where video recording and in-depth interviewing plays an important part.

- 4.17 The PCC asked what "mandating hate crime in Optik" means. DCC Jones responded that this relates to data fields used within the Optik system for the recording of hate crime. If there is the option of having more mandated fields, it would likely lead to an increase in data quality, ensuring officers are capturing these details whilst they are with the victim.
- 4.18 The PCC asked if Suffolk Constabulary has seen an increase in hate crimes due to the current global difficulties. DCC Jones replied that, to date, Suffolk has not seen an increase in this crime area, or in targeting of individuals. However there have been some protests within the region.
- 4.19 The PCC asked for comment on the situation within Suffolk regarding organised crime's involvement in modern slavery, drug supply and labour exploitation. DCC Jones responded that there are dedicated Suffolk teams (SENTINAL and SCORPION); supported by intelligence from ERSOU, with expertise to deal with these perpetrators. He added that Suffolk was one of the first constabularies to use modern slavery legislation.

5 Managing Offenders and Reducing Reoffending (Paper AP24/14)

- 5.1 DCC Jones invited questions on this report.
- 5.2 The PCC commented on the excellent work being delivered by Suffolk Constabulary on Drug Testing on Arrest (DTOA). Suffolk is a leading force within this area, which does not always receive the recognition it deserves.
- 5.3 The Head of Policy and Performance asked if the tables on page 4 of the report are showing the numbers tested rather than positive results, if so, what are the number of positive results. DCC Jones replied that the focus has been on delivering these tests, which is easy to measure. In terms of assessing the efficacy of diversionary schemes from positive results this is far harder to track. However it may be possible to track the Integrated Offender Management (IOM) scheme and measure the outputs of this.
- 5.4 The Head of Policy and Performance asked why DTOA figures show a higher usage at Bury St Edmunds than Martlesham Police Investigation Centres (PIC), when Martlesham has a higher throughput of detainees. DCC Jones responded that he was unsure of the reason and agreed to explore the reasons further. The Chief Constable added that there must be a connection with drug use before DTOA can take place and the detainee has to be over 18. The reasoning behind the difference might therefore be explained by the demographics and differing offence types between Bury St Edmunds and Martlesham PICs.
ACTION – DCC Jones to explore the difference in DTOA figures for Bury St Edmunds and Martlesham PICs, in relation to throughput figures.
- 5.5 The PCC asked for a progress update on how the NS Mental Health Foundation Trust is providing beds or safe accommodation for those coming to the custody suite experiencing mental health issues. DCC Jones responded that this area remains an enormous challenge for the Constabulary but feels there are some positives in how the Suffolk system is working, with the hours taken for finding a bed in these situations having improved compared to 12-

months ago. The feedback received around the escalation process between Chief Officers and the equivalent within the Foundation Trust, is that it has improved and is working. Difficulties remain for dealing with young people in custody, but the Force has worked to ensure the provision within the custody suites is suitable, and overall he believed that this is being taken seriously by the whole system.

5.6 The PCC asked whose responsibility is it to transfer those brought into custody to a suitable bed / accommodation provision. DCC Jones and the Chief Constable confirmed that it would be the responsibility of the Force to take them. The PCC noted that other agencies should play their part.

5.7 The Head of Policy and Performance asked with the extensions to the Red Snapper programme; to include provision of courses for foreign nationals, how effectively were these courses being used, given the graph on page 9 showed a reduction in the use of Conditional Cautions. DCC Jones responded that with the pressures on court there is a real emphasis on the use of out of court disposals. The aspiration is to step up the number of conditional cautions, to integrate them further into the policing model, and to ensure that the knowledge is there to get these opportunities and interventions used with young adults. A progress report on these interventions will be included in the next Managing Offenders report for APP.

ACTION – DCC Jones to ensure a progress report on the Red Snapper interventions to be included in the next Managing Offenders report for APP.

5.8 The Head of Policy and Performance asked whether if the terms of a Conditional Caution are breached, the person will then be arrested, and whether these courses reducing reoffending. DCC Jones confirmed that the powers are there to be used, with anyone breaching their terms being rearrested. The reoffending rates are looked at, and further information on these can be provided in the next APP report on Managing Offenders and Reducing Reoffending.

ACTION – DCC Jones to ensure the reoffending rates are included within the next APP Managing Offenders and Reducing Reoffending report, and supplied to the OPCC.

5.9 The PCC asked for clarification around the comment that Conditional Cautions administered within Suffolk are mainly those of white ethnicity. DCC Jones replied that they are offered to all ethnicities, but in communities where there is a lower level of trust in policing, people are less likely to admit to the offence, which was a requirement of their use. However there has now been a change nationally to the rules around the use of Conditional Cautions, and an offender no longer has to admit the offence, which may result in a change in the figures.

5.10 The PCC asked if Suffolk Constabulary has plans to adopt the same bail system that is being used in Lancashire, where since implementation no bail cases have been lost. DCC Jones responded that the figures are very low for lost bail cases, and the use of the Lancashire adopted app is a way of efficient tracking. The Constabulary are happy to look at how this works in Lancashire and if it would be possible for Suffolk.

ACTION – DCC Jones to follow up on the Lancashire bail app, and the possibility of its use it in Suffolk.

5.11 The Head of Policy and Performance asked whether following a diminution in Restorative Justice (RJ) champions within Suffolk, the force can commit to an improvement to ensure RJ is being used successfully in Suffolk. DCC Jones will look at the figures to provide the OPCC with a plan for this.

ACTION – DCC Jones to provide the OPCC with a plan for Suffolk for increasing the RJ champions.

- 5.12 The PCC asked about the re-branding of DAPU and the removal of the term ‘perpetrator’ from its title. DCC Jones responded that this change goes to the heart of people changing their behaviours, and the moment where people do want to change and stop offending. The word perpetrator is loaded, implying blame and judgement. The inclusion of it within the name of a scheme where you are actively wanting to change behaviour could be a deterrent to getting the help needed to change.
- 5.13 The PCC observed that the figures for the completion of the DAPU programme are low, with 104 joining, but only 31 completing the programme. DCC Jones responded that the force is working on ensuring the right people are put onto this programme in the first place. The Force is aiming for a higher completion rate. The PCC highlighted the importance of evaluating the efficacy of such schemes in order to maintain funding from the Home Office and PCC in the future.
- 5.14 The Head of Policy and Performance asked for reassurance that the areas for improvement highlighted in the PEEL report have been completed. DCC Jones confirmed that the improvements have been signed off and he will share the response to PEEL with the OPCC.
ACTION – DCC Jones to share the PEEL response for the areas for improvement with the OPCC.
- 5.15 The PCC asked how the Constabulary sees the progress of the Integrated Offender Management (IOM) service and the decision to de-collaborate this area from Norfolk. DCC Jones responded that the probation service has already been split for Norfolk and Suffolk, therefore there is no longer a need for this to be combined. Some work is required on how it will fit within the operating model, but there is already an established relationship with Suffolk probation.
- 5.16 The PCC commented on the ongoing importance of Operation Hull, to address those involved with gang violence aged 18–25-years old. DCC Jones responded that Operation Hull continues to deliver on safeguarding and interventions work which will not change. However further work is required on the active management of young people who are further down the offender pathway.
- 5.17 The PCC asked why there was a reduction of 1% for those on the IOM scheme. DCC Jones replied that he would share the annual report for the IOM which will have details of these figures with the PCC.
ACTION – DCC Jones to share the annual report for the IOM with the PCC.
- 5.18 The PCC asked if point 13.4, referring to this area as good, is from the HMICFRS report. DCC Jones responded that this is a self-assessment term used by Suffolk Constabulary. The Chief Constable added that it is a collective phrase being used, and that the HMICFRS graded the force as “good” in this area in the last PEEL inspection.

6 Update on the work of the Rural Crime and Wildlife Team (Paper AP24/015)

- 6.1 Superintendent Wratten invited questions on this report.

- 6.2 The PCC highlighted a report from the NFU stating that livestock worrying is costing the UK farming community £2.3M, therefore what are the Rural Crime Team in Suffolk doing to address this. Superintendent Wratten responded that this is an issue that is monitored daily by the CPC, who are also aware of seasonal focuses such as lambing season. The team use their expertise to provide the relevant focus to these calls when received. There remains an emphasis on the rural community to report these types of crime.
- 6.3 The PCC asked who will be replacing Brian Calver within the Rural Crime Team. Superintendent Wratten confirmed that the final stages of the job offer are with HR and will be confirmed in due course, but reassured the PCC that there will be a handover period and no break in service.
- 6.4 The PCC inquired about the issue of fly tipping, although not directly a police responsibility and whether there have been multiagency days in which the Rural Crime Team have participated in. Superintendent Wratten confirmed that there have been some multiagency days organised by Suffolk County Council, and if the Rural Crime Team are invited, they are happy to attend.
- 6.5 The PCC asked if there is anything the force needs to address Heritage Crime within the county. Superintendent Wratten responded that she is proud of the successful working relationship between the Rural Crime Team and Heritage England and at present there are no areas of concern.
- 6.6 The PCC asked for an update on the serious issue of the theft of plant machinery, and what is being done locally to address this. Superintendent Wratten confirmed this type of crime is regularly monitored for the area, and currently there is nothing being flagged up from the reports. There is a strategy to address this, and crime prevention tools are ready to be deployed should reports of theft be received.
- 6.7 The PCC asked in relation to the theft of GPS systems, how are ERSOU linked in. Superintendent Wratten confirmed that once the crime has been reported, they are mapped across the system and shared with relevant areas which includes ERSOU. There is also the education of front-line officers to make the connection between a theft of GPS and the wider implications for the rural community.
- 6.8 The PCC asked if the Constabulary is now able to claim back the full costs of kennelling dogs seized in relation to crime and are we claiming these costs in full. Superintendent Wratten responded that she would have to look into this and confirm to the PCC in due course.
ACTION – Superintendent Wratten to look into the costs being claimed back for kennelling dogs seized in relation to crime.
- 6.9 The PCC asked what the joint policy document referred to at point 7.1 is. Superintendent Wratten advised that it is a document detailing how things are done internally, rather than a strategy. The Chief Constable added that policies wherever possible are shared between Norfolk & Suffolk, to enable people to work in the joint space, therefore this remains in line with the majority of other policies for internal process management across both forces.
- 6.10 The PCC asked that whilst the decrease in the crime of hare coursing is a positive, what is the force's view of the sentences imposed upon those who have now been prosecuted. Superintendent Wratten responded that the law to address hare coursing only changed last

year, and has not been tested to date in Suffolk, but will check to see what has happened nationally and update the PCC accordingly.

ACTION – Superintendent Wratten to feed back to the PCC on the outcome of any national prosecutions for hare coursing.

7 Collaboration (AP24/16)

- 7.1 The Chief Constable commented that regarding the Athena update, a more realistic timeframe for the update will be summer 2024.
- 7.2 The PCC asked about the meaning of the use of the term pan-organisation within the report. The Chief Constable responded that it is a catch-all phrase used to refer to everyone within the organisation.
- 7.3 The PCC commented that the report does not include any mention of ERSOU and requested it be included in future Collaboration reports.

ACTION – Suffolk Constabulary to include ERSOU in future Collaboration reports.

8 Any Other Business

- 8.1 There was no other business.

The open part of the meeting closed at 11.31 when members of the public left the meeting.

PRIVATE AGENDA

[A detailed account of the discussions and decisions on the following items is contained in the confidential minutes]

9 Closed minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2024 (Paper AP24/17)

- 9.1 The confidential minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2024 were agreed as an accurate record and approved by the Police and Crime Commissioner.

10 Protective Services Command Update (Paper AP24/18)

- 10.1 Suffolk Constabulary invited questions on this report.

11 Risk Register / Chief Officer Risk Register (Paper AP24/19)

- 11.1 Suffolk Constabulary invited questions on this report.

The meeting closed at 1145.

Summary of Actions

Item / Paper	Action	Owner
4.5 Supporting Vulnerable Victims	DCC Jones to confirm the timeframe of funding for the Special Measures Advisor role, and to ensure the figures at point 3.9 are for Suffolk only in future reports	DCC Jones
4.7 Supporting Vulnerable Victims	DCC Jones to provide an update to the PCC at the six-month evaluation stage for how Operation Comfort is performing within the new policing model.	DCC Jones
4.8 Supporting Vulnerable Victims	The Chief Constable to share an update with the PCC on the Performance Improvement Unit (PIU) review into how the Constabulary Investigates Domestic Abuse.	Chief Constable
4.9 Supporting Vulnerable Victims	DCC Jones to confirm the timescale for completion of the DARA evaluation to the OPCC.	DCC Jones
4.12 Supporting Vulnerable Victims	DCC Jones to follow up with the PCC on possible correlation between social deprivation, the current economic situation, and an increase in domestic abuse.	DCC Jones
4.15 Supporting Vulnerable Victims	DCC Jones to share letter to HMICFRS with PCC.	DCC Jones
5.4 Managing Offenders and Reducing Reoffending	DCC Jones to explore the difference in DTOA figures for Bury St Edmunds and Martlesham PICs, in relation to throughput figures.	DCC Jones
5.7 Managing Offenders and Reducing Reoffending	DCC Jones to ensure a progress report on the Red Snapper interventions to be included in the next Managing Offenders report for APP.	DCC Jones
5.8 Managing Offenders and Reducing Reoffending	DCC Jones to ensure the reoffending rates are included within the next APP Managing Offenders and Reducing Reoffending report and supplied to the OPCC.	DCC Jones
5.10 Managing Offenders and Reducing Reoffending	DCC Jones to follow up on the Lancashire bail app, and the possibility of its use in Suffolk.	DCC Jones
5.10 Managing Offenders and Reducing Reoffending	DCC Jones to provide the OPCC with a plan for Suffolk for the RJ champion.	DCC Jones
5.14 Managing Offenders and Reducing Reoffending	DCC Jones to share the PEEL response for the areas for improvement with the OPCC.	DCC Jones
5.17 Managing Offenders and Reducing Reoffending	DCC Jones to share the annual report for the IOM with the PCC.	DCC Jones
6.8 Rural Crime and Wildlife Team	Superintendent Wratten to look into the costs being claimed back for kennelling dogs seized in relation to crime.	Superintendent Wratten
6.10 Rural Crime and Wildlife Team	Superintendent Wratten to feed back to the PCC on the outcome of any national prosecutions for hare coursing.	Superintendent Wratten
7.3 Collaboration Report	Suffolk Constabulary to include ERSOU in future Collaboration reports.	Suffolk Constabulary