

The Rt Hon Suella Braverman KC MP
Home Secretary
Home Office
2 Marsham Street
London

Our ref:TP/VS

26 May 2023

Dear Home Secretary

RE: HMICFRS – An inspection of how well the police tackle serious youth violence.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this inspection. Suffolk Constabulary has provided an update on the two recommendations for Chief Constables, which is attached and will be published on my website.

I welcome the report acknowledging that due to Violence Reduction Unit funding being distributed to some forces, there is some difference in levels of resourcing across the country in respect of dealing with this issue. Suffolk has not received any VRU funding. Despite that, I am proud that partners in Suffolk (including Suffolk Constabulary) continue to work together with cross system commitment to violence against women and girls and tackling child and criminal exploitation.

The Constabulary's response to tackling serious violence is routinely monitored through my Police and Crime Plan Performance Framework of reports to my Accountability and Performance Panel. These reports also pick up on the Constabulary's role as a duty holder in relation to the Serious Violence Duty. The new duty, and linked funding streams, should begin to support the Suffolk system and the policing approach to preventing and tackling violence.

Yours sincerely



Tim Passmore, Police and Crime Commissioner for Suffolk



Subject	An Inspection of how well the police tackle serious youth violence
Date	8 th March 2023
Purpose	To provide Suffolk Constabulary's response to recommendations made in the above report from His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services.

Suffolk Constabulary welcomes the report by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services into how well police tackle serious youth violence.

Serious Youth Violence presents a challenge for forces and partners nationally and locally, as demonstrated by the introduction of the Serious Violence Duty and a number of high-profile incidents in recent years. Suffolk Constabulary is committed to addressing Serious Youth Violence from the early stages, working closely with statutory and third-sector agencies to support diversion and early intervention. Suffolk Constabulary is an active partner in the Suffolk Youth Justice Service and continuously strives to improve the provision for young people in the county and offer alternative routes both to those who commit criminality, and those susceptible to the risk of doing so.

Serious Violence is managed across a number of work areas. In response to the recommendations the force will review and consider how racial disproportionately is monitored within the force, how this forms part of the Police Race Action Plan and Serious Violence Duty, as well how this affects our work with Children and Young People. The force particularly welcomes the recommendations regarding outcome 22 and has already taken a number of steps to introduce this.

In relation to the recommendations that are specifically aimed at Police Forces:

Recommendation 3

By 31 March 2024, chief constables should make sure their officers are trained in the use of Home Office crime outcome 22. The Home Office defines outcome 22 as when: "diversionary, educational or intervention activity, resulting from the crime report, has been undertaken and it is not in the public interest to take any further action"

Diversionary, educational and intervention activity is primarily provided through Suffolk Youth Justice Service (SYJS), supported by Suffolk Constabulary. To ensure its proportionate and effective use, all under 18s are referred to SYJS for a disposal decision (outcome), where emphasis is on the use of Outcome 22. To support this Suffolk Constabulary has transferred the use of Community Resolutions in to SYJS and removed the ability for officers to make disposal decisions (excluding in the case of remand applications) in favour of Multi-Agency Decision Panels. This supports decriminalisation of under 18s and intends to improve consistency in decision making. The use of Outcome 22 is particularly relevant regarding serious youth violence and gang criminality through both mandated and voluntary diversionary programmes provisioned by SYJS / Suffolk Constabulary or third-party agencies. Training is being refreshed around referrals to SYJS and both diversion and non-crime diversion processes within the force to ensure all under 18s take the same route through to a Multi-Agency Panel.



Recommendation 4

By 31 March 2024, chief constables should make sure their forces, through data collection and analysis, understand the levels of racial disproportionality in serious youth violence in their force areas.

Suffolk Constabulary is a key duty holder, and Chairs, the Suffolk Serious Violence Duty Partnership arising from the new Serious Violence Duty. The force also has an internal Violent Crime Delivery Board. The ability of the force to put in place better monitoring of racial disparity in serious violence is being impacted by a number of 'in train' workstreams:

- *The Home Office is working to clarify its expectations on forces with regard consistent data collection for serious violence. Currently a number of considerations impact upon serious violence data collection (e.g. Violence Against Women and Girls and Serious Violence Duty - and facets such as appropriate definitions and public and private space offences and their implications for this data need to be understood).*
- *The Police Race Action Plan is being worked on by the force and will begin to profile racial disparity issues across many aspects of policing.*
- *The Serious Violence Duty 'strategic needs assessment' development will further enhance the knowledge in this area of victims and suspects impacted by serious violence across the Suffolk system.*