



Creating a safer
Cambridgeshire

To: Business Coordination Board

From: Chief Constable

Date: 26 May 2020

Police Crime and Plan Victims Theme Performance Report

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the Business Coordination Board (“the Board”) on the Constabulary’s performance against strategic “Victims” theme identified in the Commissioner’s Police and Crime Plan (“the Plan”) and a performance update - 12 months ending March 2020.

2. Recommendation

2.1 For the Board to note the contents of this report.

3. Background

3.1 The most recent Force Performance Meeting was held on 20th April 2020 and reviewed performance in the 12 months ending March 2020. This report reflects the updates provided to that meeting and is therefore the annual review of performance.

- 3.2 Alongside an overall review of performance, the report will also update on the priorities under the Victims pillar of the PCC's Police and Crime Plan. This month's priority areas were domestic abuse, child exploitation and serious sexual offences.

4. Performance Meeting Updates

4.1 Strategic measures

4.1.1 Victims

The management information underlying this is victim satisfaction rates and response performance

Victim satisfaction

77.2% of the victims of crime surveyed in the 12 months ending March 2020 were at least fairly satisfied with overall service delivery (n = 971). This is marginally lower than, but comparable to, the 12 months ending March 2019; and reflects both longer term challenges around follow-up, and more recent challenges around ease of contact and actions taken by the police. While there were year on year improvements in satisfaction rates for victims of both burglary and hate crime, there has been notable deterioration in satisfaction rates for victims of violent crime, particularly for follow-up.

While we continue to see higher satisfaction rates for victims of Domestic Abuse, follow-up again remains the most challenging aspect of service delivery. Improving the effective use of Victim Care Contracts has been a key area of focus this year; with improvements across most areas.

Response performance

The median time to respond to immediate grade incidents has remained stable over the last 12 months. Prompt grade response performance has continued to prove challenging, with notable differences by incident type and variation by district. There has been a shift in the grading profile from prompt to immediate, which has had implications on the availability of resources to attend prompt graded incidents. The latter remains a key inhibitor to achieving sustainable improvements. This is being considered as part of the Demand Hub review; which aims to deliver recommendations by the end of May.

4.1.2 Offenders

The management information underlying this is prosecution possible outcome rates: for all recorded crime, burglary dwelling and domestic abuse

The *all crime* prosecution possible outcome rate for the 12 months ending March 2020 was 10.8%. This is lower than, but comparable to, the long term benchmark, with improvements notes across a number of crime types, albeit to varying degrees.

While North area continued to outperform South area, both are now trending upwards. Recent improvements have been largely attributable to the work of the Out of Court Disposals (OOCDD) team, but improvements in investigation throughput and a focus on supervision is likely to have been influential.

The long term prosecution possible outcome rate for *burglary dwelling* was significantly higher than the year end benchmark, both at Constabulary and area level and represents a key success. The long term prosecution possible outcome rate for domestic abuse was significantly lower than the year end benchmark, with rising crime numbers influential. However, there are early signs that the long term downward trend has been halted.

4.1.3 Communities

The management information underlying this is confidence as measured by the Policing in Cambridgeshire survey

56.4% of people surveyed in the 12 months ending March 2020 agreed that the Constabulary was dealing with the things that matter to people in their local community (n = 879). While there has been some improvement in the rolling 12 month rate in recent months, it remains lower than at the same time last year. However, there is notable variation by district, with levels of confidence in all four districts in South area either stable or improved year on year, but deteriorated in North, particularly in Fenland where confidence levels fell below 50% (n = 134).

4.2 National Context

4.2.1 On 23rd April 2020, the ONS (Office for National Statistics) released crime figures for the 12 months ending December 2019¹. This contained data from both the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) and police recorded crime figures.

4.2.2 Nationally, whilst overall levels of crime as reported by CSEW had been stable in recent years, latest estimates showed a 5% fall year on year. Underlying this was a 9% fall in theft offences, with all other main crime groups showing no change. Police recorded data showed a 2.9% rise in overall crime, but the rate of growth had slowed compared to both the 12 months ending September 2019 and the same time last year. There was a smaller 2% decrease in theft offences, with burglary offences (all) down 7%; but increased in the number of offences involving knives or sharp instruments (7%), possession of articles with a blade or point (11%) and robbery (12%).

4.2.3 Police recorded crime in Cambridgeshire increased by 5.9% in the 12 months to December 2019, which was the 15th highest increase nationally. It is likely this is related to CDI compliance, and the fact that Cambridgeshire was one of only 7

¹<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/crimeinenglandandwales/yearendingdecember2019>

forces to report a year on year decline in recorded crime in the previous year. The overall crime rate per 1,000 population in Cambridgeshire remains lower than both the regional and national averages. Direction of travel by crime type was broadly in line with the national picture; with the exception of criminal damage where the number of crimes in Cambridgeshire was up year on year.

4.2.4 There is some evidence that recording improvements are starting to have a smaller impact on crime types typically prone to changes in recording and reporting. However, the COVID-19 pandemic is currently having a significant impact on crime levels, and it is this which is likely to have the bigger impact on trends going forward.

4.3 Performance Headlines and Department Updates

4.3.1 A number of feedback processes have been put in place over the last 12 months to address data quality issues, focusing on driving forward improvements in CDI compliance, keyword usage and casefile quality by providing an additional level of supervision and oversight. This has led to incremental improvements in the CDI compliance rate over recent months, and has helped drive up casefile quality. Work remains ongoing to ensure improvements are sustained.

4.3.2 Workload across the Demand Hub has remained high. Combined call volumes were down compared to the previous financial year; however, this masks a year on year increase in the number of 999 calls received, and the impact that this increased demand has had on 101 call handling performance, with longer average wait times and higher abandonment rates for secondary calls. Use of online services has also increased, with Webchats and online crime reports both recording double digit growth year on year.

4.3.3 The Investigation Management Unit (IMU) has faced ongoing challenges. Backlogs of crimes awaiting either QA/linking or closure has frequently impacted on workflow, particularly during periods of both unplanned and unscheduled Athena downtime; this has in turn continued to artificially inflate live crime workload. The fall in demand following the introduction of social distancing measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic is now providing the opportunity to redress this. The effects are already visible, with the number of investigations in IMU work trays and live crime workload both notably reduced in recent weeks.

4.3.4 A review of the Demand Hub, which is looking to provide evidence for a sustainable operating staffing model to deal with current and predicted demand effectively, is due to be completed by the end of May.

4.3.5 Recorded crime levels were up year on year, with increases in both Victim and Non Victim based crime. While crime levels were up across both policing areas, the increase was greater in South than in North, with Cambridge City and East Cambridgeshire both reporting double digit growth year on year. Peterborough was

the only district not to record significantly higher levels of crime compared to the previous financial year.

- 4.3.6 Recent improvements in the all crime prosecution possible rate have been largely attributable to the work of the Out of Court Disposals (OCD) team, with higher numbers of Community Resolutions influencing the direction of travel. The team continues to find alternative pathways to redress offender behaviour, with more than 80 diversionary pathways now available, and a 96% attendance rate by those who are referred for engagement. An evaluation of the impact of the team will be carried out in 2020/21; with the expectation that the diversionary (crime control) benefits of out of court disposals will be evidenced in recorded crime figures.
- 4.3.7 Challenges around crime allocation, supervision, inactivity, VCC compliance and accurate suspect categorisation have been, and continue to be, recurring themes. While there is some evidence that closer scrutiny has led to recent improvements, it is hoped that the new Supervisor's e-Book, an interactive electronic reference tool which launched on 2nd March, will help Supervisors, many of whom are relatively young in service, consolidate knowledge and give them the necessary tools to achieve the highest standards of crime supervision. It also addresses the issue of where information should be recorded, with the expectation that this will in turn drive up data quality.
- 4.3.8 With the current COVID-19 pandemic leading to lower levels of demand, there has been some improvement in key indicators in recent weeks, including VCC compliance and timeliness of reviews. There is also evidence that local supervisors are already thinking differently about the way we investigate crimes and how we make best use of available resources while protecting the frontline. This includes using those officers and staff who are working remotely to rebalance workloads and build in resilience to better cope with abstractions.

5 Priority Updates

5.1 Domestic Abuse

- 5.1.1 Prompt grade response performance has remained challenging over the last 12 months, with non-availability of resources a key inhibitor to improvement; the latter is consistently higher for domestic incidents than for most other incident types. A number of changes to Domestic call types have been introduced in recent months to allow for better prioritisation of non-familial domestic incidents, but there is evidence to suggest these have yet to be fully embedded.
- 5.1.2 Recorded crime numbers have continued to trend upwards over the last 12 months, with all six districts seeing significantly higher levels of demand. This increase in demand is a challenge to the organisation's ability to improve or

maintain current levels of service delivery in the face of this level of demand, with officers managing higher workloads and competing demands.

- 5.1.3 While there was further deterioration in the prosecution possible outcome rate through much of the last 12 months, there are now early signs that the long term downward trend has been halted in both North and South policing area, with an increase in the number of charges over the last three months influential.
- 5.1.4 The Domestic Abuse Allocations pilot has been completed. This aimed to provide an evidenced evaluation around the most effective investigations allocations approach for Standard and Medium risk domestic abuse investigations, with a view to providing the highest levels of service delivery; however, the findings proved inconclusive. Work to develop a consistent approach remains ongoing, and will be widened to include discussions around the role of Response Investigators going forward.
- 5.1.5 It is anticipated that Domestic Abuse is likely to rise the longer that social distancing measures are in place and anxiety and stress levels continue to rise. A thorough communications plan is in place internally and externally in response. This includes enhancing the role of the newly relaunched DA champions, social media posts, eCops messages and Facebook Q&A sessions. Posters are also being sent out to supermarkets, GP surgeries, pharmacies and independent food shops throughout Cambridgeshire highlighting the risk of Domestic Abuse and making victims aware that they can still receive support. All communications messages are being shared with partners to support consistent messaging.

5.2 Child Abuse and Child Exploitation

- 5.2.1 A significantly higher number of Child Sexual Abuse offences were recorded over the last 12 months in both North and South policing areas. Over a third of all crimes related to Child Sexual Exploitation; a notable year on year increase. Investigations remains resource intensive, often requiring an initial whole team approach.
- 5.2.2 While the number of missing children reports continued to trend upwards over the year, there was a fall in the number and proportion of reports related to children in care. Police callouts to children's homes were also down year on year, but demand had begun to rise in recent months, and continued to fluctuate on a monthly basis, often as a result of children being moved in and out of our force area.
- 5.2.3 The number of missing from home reports has fallen since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. While police and partner agencies continue to work together, clear guidance around the expectation of partners within the care home setting has been provided, and has been well received.

5.2.4 The current lockdown represents a real risk to vulnerable children who have no outside support. This is exacerbated by the likely increase in stress and anxiety within households. A thorough communications plan is in place internally and with partners to raise awareness of both traditional abuse and online exploitation. This includes education packages to children and their parents, social media posts and Facebook Q&A sessions. It is anticipated that as restrictions are lifted and children return to school, there will be a significant spike in demand for CAISUs, MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) and partners. A plan is currently being worked on to ensure all agencies are able to quickly identify and support these vulnerable children.

5.3 Serious Sexual Offences

5.3.1 A significantly higher number of serious sexual offences were recorded over the last 12 months, at both force level and in North policing area. This was driven by an increase in Sexual Assaults, with the number of recorded rapes stable year on year. Offence levels in South were comparable to the long term benchmark. It is of note that adult offences now account for a greater proportion of total offences. As a result of the current social distancing measures, there is a risk that we may see an increase in sexual violence in the home.

5.3.2 The long term prosecution possible outcomes rate has been trending upwards for much of the last 12 months, and is now significantly higher than the year end benchmark, with both North and South policing areas showing a year on year improvement.

5.3.3 The average length of investigation for a rape offence is currently around 8 months. The focus going forward will be on identifying those cases that can be resolved quickly, and on conducting proportionate investigations. As a result of COVID-19, the CPS have indicated that they should be in a position to look at cases more quickly; however, face to face interactions have now been suspended.

5.3.4 Rape STOs are now embedded, and are already beginning to have a positive impact on victim engagement.

6 Victim Updates

6.1 The police respond to an individual's immediate needs and safeguards them from potential future victimisation

6.1.1 *'Ensure that victims from the three priority groups (as defined in the Victims Code) are identified and provided with an appropriate response based on their level of risk at the initial point of contact'*

The risk assessment tool THRIVE² continues to be integral to our processes and is now firmly embedded as business as usual. This helps ensure that the Constabulary provide the appropriate response based on the level of risk. The Constabulary are currently conducting a review in order to facilitate the Demand Hub Senior Management Team in providing evidence for a sustainable operating staffing model, able to deal with current and predicted demand. The objectives of this review are to provide relevant data and analysis to support any identified need to align the resource model with actual and expected demand; and to make recommendations/provide options designed to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Demand Hub.

The Demand Hub communications plan is focussed on providing support and assistance to all victims of crime, especially those deemed to be from priority groups. This work includes releasing videos on YouTube and the Force Website titled “what happens when I report crime” and “what happens when I report a concern”. These are also being sent to every victim/member of public via email to explain what happens next and to set realistic expectations of the service.

All victims of crime are assessed at the point of initial contact and signposted to the Victim and Witness Hub and relevant support services as a matter of course, in order that bespoke assistance is provided to each individual based on their unique set of circumstances.

6.1.2 ‘Ensure victims of crime receive a timely and high quality investigation and are kept informed in line with the Victims Code’

Levels of VCC compliance continue to fluctuate, with variation noted by crime type and by supervisory unit. This is monitored at the Force Performance Board, with daily management information available for this to be tracked locally.

VCC compliance and compliance with the Victims Code forms part of the Supervisory Review process, as outlined in the Supervisor’s e-Book, launched at the beginning of March. This should help ensure that appropriate levels of victim care are in place, that the victim has been updated as per the agreed contact frequency and has been notified of key events within the expected timescales, and that any new safeguarding issues have been considered. This will also allow Supervisors to task remedial action where necessary, ensuring that the care provided to the victim is of the highest possible standard.

² Thrive stands for Threat, Harm, Risk, Investigation Opportunities, Vulnerability of the victim and Engagement level.

6.1.3 *'Develop a performance matrix which incorporates a qualitative measurement as well as quantitative'*

The current performance framework focusses on a small number of headline measures, supported by Key Performance Questions (KPQs). Daily and monthly management information is available to support this, and retains the ability to flex where necessary. This framework is in the process of being changed to reflect the five new operational priorities outlined in the new Corporate Plan which was published last month.

6.1.4 *'Ensure we maximise the use of civil powers, for example SHPOs and DVPOs'*

Stalking Protection Orders have now gone live in force. Divisional training was commenced at shift briefings, but due to COVID-19 the North/South leads finished this with a briefing document being sent to all frontline officers. Guidance has been sent out to all officers and the documents have been added to the vulnerability Microsite. IPLDP officers receive a one hour input on Stalking at week 40. At the time of writing, the first SPO application was currently going through the Courts.

CARA went live in January. This enabled us to refer low risk Domestic Abuse offenders in the programme. However, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, this has unfortunately now been suspended.

6.1.5 *implemented to protect the victim and they have been assessed as appropriate (for example presumption of bail for DA)'*

The Domestic Abuse Scrutiny Group continues and has been further enhanced. In addition to the 30 Domestic Abuse crimes reviewed by the Domestic Abuse Scrutiny Group, 5 Stalking investigations are now reviewed every month. There is a plan in place to also review 10 cracked and ineffective Domestic Abuse court cases with CPS.

There continues to be scrutiny around the use of positive action and presumption of bail (over RUI) for Domestic Abuse Cases. One-to-one feedback is provided to officers where it has been identified that they have incorrectly stepped outside of force policy and not taken positive action.

6.1.6 *'Develop a clear understanding of those most at risk from the highest harm, from vulnerable children to those unlikely to report crime (hate/DA) in order to effectively reduce re-victimisation'*

The Constabulary's currently active annual Strategic Threat and Risk Assessment (STRA) process is looking once again at opportunities to ensure the best approach

to the challenges of safeguarding, with a strong sense of being able to identify and prioritise those at greatest risk of harm.

Most notable from this recent reflection is an opportunity to more effectively draw together Neighbourhood Policing Teams and the work of the Protecting Vulnerable People (PVP) department. This is to gain efficiencies and a clearer common approach to vulnerability affecting different demographics and from low through to the most high risk of cases. Business cases have been tabled looking at how this work can be adapted and further strengthened, building on good progress already made under the Force's Policing Neighbourhoods strategy. Recognising a commitment to growing officer numbers under current national plans, the benefits of increased investment in this area have been scoped and are being considered within the STRA process.

The Cambridge Crime Harm Index (CHI) continues to be used across the Country by Neighbourhood Teams predominantly as a tool to identify and engage offenders who are presenting the greater public risk and also to assess and engage in early intervention work with children and young people vulnerable to criminal exploitation and taking paths to criminality themselves. Work to build on the initial evaluation of the CHI approach in South policing area has been extended to cover the North too and then to establish a six monthly impact assessment process.

As part of looking at the options for synergy between different departments, additional best practice ways of assessing and prioritising harm are also being considered to supplement the CHI, with the PVP and Intelligence and Serious Crime Department reviewing and engaging originators.

The excellent work of the Victim and Witness Hub continues and the Force has been informed by increasing work to better understand victim needs and service delivered.

6.1.7 'Ensure the 'lived experience of the child' has been captured and safeguarding is effective to prevent future victimisation'

IDLDP officers are given a two hour input on Child Abuse/Child Death at week 40; the lived experience of the child is covered as part of this input. The DA Champions network has been revitalised with additional guidance and training support to these officers and staff to ensure they can provide additional support to officers dealing with complex DA cases.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, it is pleasing to see we have been able to continue with safeguarding practices including full MARACs, Op Encompass and IDVA/3rd sector support.

6.2 Victims and witnesses of crime can access appropriate and proportionate needs-led emotional and practical support at all stages of the criminal justice process

6.2.1 'Fully engage with the countywide partnership response aimed at reducing the number of victims of high harm and risk crime types'

This objective continues to be delivered through the effective service offered by the Victim and Witness Hub. Key to this is ensuring that victims of crime have their needs assessed when reporting a crime and that victims with needs are referred to the Hub. This is emphasised to constabulary staff through training/CPD inputs and communication and has contributed to an increase in the rate of victim referral from 20.8% in the last quarter to 22.3% this quarter.

The resilience of this model has been demonstrated by the ability to maintain a service to victims and witnesses through the current COVID-19 crisis. Significant constabulary support, including the provision of laptops and mobile phones has enabled staff, prioritising those who are vulnerable or shielding, to work effectively from home. A small number of staff continue to maintain presence in the Hub to ensure that any calls for support from victims and witnesses using the Freephone number are answered, and that the service remains accessible to criminal justice staff and other specialist support agencies.

The resilience mentioned above has enabled the Hub to support other organisations maintain a service to victims referred to them. The Bobby Scheme is unable to operate during the current crisis so all referrals are passed to the Hub where Coordinators will contact the victim (if they are not already supporting them) to advise them on the temporary suspension of the Bobby Scheme service and to use the call to offer emotional and practical support. The Hub is also supporting Women's Aid with their workload by receiving referrals of all victims of medium risk Domestic Abuse crimes from them, whilst they focus their available resources on support for all Domestic Abuse incidents (excluding crime). The Hub would usually only offer support to victims of standard risk Domestic Abuse crime. Additional guidance has been provided to Hub staff and three Coordinators in the Hub are DA Champions with enhanced knowledge on dealing with Domestic Abuse.

6.2.2 'Ensure effective and efficient use of the referral process into Victim and Witness Hub/Sexual Assault Referral Centre'

The in-house Victim and Witness Hub offers needs-led emotional and practical support to help victims cope and recover from the impact of their crime. These

needs should be identified at the point of recording the crime, with guidance given to all police officers and staff to help them identify victims who might benefit from additional support, and how to refer them to the Hub.

Links are in place to receive referrals of victims who live in Cambridgeshire from BTP and Action Fraud. Victims of crime can also directly access free confidential support from the Hub even when they do not wish to report their crime to the police.

6.2.3 'Ensure suitable forensic and welfare medical facilities are available (SARC) for adult and child victims of sexual abuse'

The commissioning process for Sexual Assault Referral Services (SARS) And Sexual Violence Support Services (SVSS) has now been finalised and contracts awarded. The SARC contract has been awarded to Mountain Health Care Limited, who are our current suppliers. The Sexual Violence Support Services contract has been awarded to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Rape Crisis Partnership. We are seeking to build on the existing relationships and maintain the strong service that we provide to victims of sexual abuse.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, both the forensic medical and support services have continued to be delivered effectively.

6.3 Victims and witnesses are treated with respect and their needs are acknowledged during the criminal justice process

6.3.1 'Ensure that when new Criminal Justice processes are implemented the impact on victims and witnesses is considered and negative impacts mitigated against'

The Victim and Witness Hub is a key stakeholder in the CCJB Efficiency Group and CCJB Delivery Board which enables the negative impacts of any criminal justice process on victims and witnesses to be raised, discussed and resolved through the representation and involvement of other CJ partners. This has been particularly valuable during the current COVID-19 crisis where the Efficiency Group is meeting weekly to ensure justice can continue, in a revised form, during this crisis whilst considering the impact of revised processes on victims and witnesses.

6.3.2 'Develop an effective way to measure compliance with the Victims Code'

This remains dependent on victim updates being consistently recorded on Athena as intended, using the inbuilt functionality, rather than as updates on the enquiry log as has been frequently found to be the case in the past. This will enable a much more reliable and robust methodology to be used to monitor compliance with the Victims Code.

6.3.3 *'Ensure there is a comprehensive victim strategy in place which acknowledges the impact of key timings in a 'victim's journey' from initial report to finalisation through the Criminal Justice system'*

The Victim and Witness Hub is a stakeholder in the Regional Victim and Witness Governance Group and is active with other regional stakeholders in the development of a regional victim and witness strategy, reporting the progress through to the NPCC Victim and Witness Strategy Group. A regional action plan is in place to direct and capture progress.

Victims' Code of Practice (VCOP) compliance audits are now in place with 30 cases a quarter being audited with the results provided to the Ministry of Justice (MoJ).

6.3.4 *'Where a criminal threshold is not reached police support partners with civil proceedings'*

The DA Alliance pilot has gone live in Peterborough. This is an App developed by a civil solicitors that enables victims to be directly referred to them to assess suitability of a non-molestation order. Where appropriate this firm will then undertake the work on behalf of the victim. This can take place regardless of whether there is an ongoing criminal investigation/prosecution.

To date there have been 85 referrals, resulting in 41 Non Molestation Orders, 1 Occupation Order and 1 Child Arrangement Order.

7 Recommendation

7.1 For the Board to note the contents of this report.