



Creating a safer  
**Cambridgeshire**

**To:** Business Coordination Board

**From:** Chief Constable

**Date:** 16 May 2019

## **CAMBRIDGESHIRE CONSTABULARY'S PERFORMANCE UPDATE – 12 MONTHS ENDING MARCH 2019**

### **1.0 Purpose**

1.1 The purpose of this paper is to provide an update to the Business Coordination Board ("the Board") on the Constabulary's performance against strategic themes identified in the Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan ("the Plan"). It should be considered alongside the 'Police and Crime Commissioner's ("the Commissioner") Performance Update March 2019' document, which includes a range of other performance data.

### **2.0 Recommendation**

2.1 The Board is invited to note the contents of this report.

### **3.0 Performance Headlines**

3.1 Comparing the 12 months ending March 2019 with the 12 months to March 2018, Cambridgeshire saw a 3.4% decrease in recorded crime year on year. However, this decline, apparent in both North and South areas, is smaller than that recorded last month, with higher average daily crime volumes in the last two months reversing the long term downward trend.

3.2 This remains in contrast to the national picture, with latest ONS data showing Cambridgeshire as one of only seven forces to report a year on year decrease in recorded crime. However, care should be taken when making national comparisons

as the timing of HMICFRS Crime Data Integrity Inspections, as well as changes in reporting and recording practices, continue to contribute towards some of the variation between forces, preventing accurate like for like comparisons.

- 3.3 In some crime types, the decline in Cambridgeshire may reflect lower levels of compliance with national crime recording standards, rather than an actual fall in crime. Despite recent challenges, work to address this remains ongoing and the headline compliance rate is beginning to show signs of recovery. We also have less confidence in recorded crime numbers for those offences which require flagging by way of manual intervention in the crime recording system, e.g. Domestic Abuse, Hate Crime and Knife Crime. Work remains ongoing to improve the use of keywords with a view to improving our wider understanding of the underlying drivers. A new tool to assist with quantifying the errors and feeding back to officers has been implemented and it is expected that this will result in improvements.
- 3.4 However, it is also important to recognise the positive impact of crime prevention activity over the course of the last year. While we have seen increases in some crime types, we have also seen key reductions in others which are not believed to be linked to changes in recording or reporting practices. This is particularly true for dwelling burglaries which fell by 16.5% year on year, albeit the recent trend is upwards.
- 3.5 The number of Violence with Injury offences remained stable year on year, but offence levels have begun to increase in recent months. However, Robbery increased by 24.7% over the last 12 months, with the longer term trend upwards. These are thought to be genuine increases, with the focus now turning to early identification and prevention. In contrast, the 32.6% year on year increase in Stalking and Harassment offences has been largely driven by recording improvements and a change to the Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR) in April 2018.
- 3.6 Theft offences fell by 7.6% year on year, but the downward trend in the long term indicator is now reversed, driven by recent increases in vehicle crime, particularly in North area.
- 3.7 Serious sexual offences rose by 11.4% year on year, with the number of rape offences up by almost 19%. However, fewer offences have been recorded in recent months. Although this continues to impact on capacity in the Rape Investigation Team, work is ongoing to improve investigative throughput and increase the efficiency of the unit.

#### **4.0 Victims**

- 4.1 Levels of satisfaction with overall service delivery have fluctuated over the last 12 months, with the rolling 12 month rate in March 2019 lower than at the end of the previous financial year. This is true across all three crime types (burglary, violent crime and hate crime). Follow up has continued to see the lowest levels of satisfaction, with victims often reporting little or no contact after the initial report. While comments continue to evidence the level of professionalism in the service and the support offered to victims of crime, some comments suggest the need for clearer messaging and better management of victim's expectations. With rates of Victims Care Contract (VCC) non-compliance still high across all crime types and all supervisory groups, a greater focus on victim contact is needed. Work has been

commissioned by the Operational Performance Meeting (OPM) for areas to bring their plans to improve VCC compliance in May.

- 4.2 Response performance has been varied. The median time to attend immediate graded incidents held stable at 15-17 minutes. Prompt grade response performance was mixed, with notable increases in the median time to respond during the summer months when demand peaked. Op Nadal remained the tactical response, helping to focus efforts and resources on emergency response and high harm investigations during periods of exceptionally high demand. The implementation of the Local Policing Review also yielded improvements in response times, particularly in some key incident types (including burglary dwelling, domestic abuse and sexual offence incidents).
- 4.3 The number of incidents closed with a mental health qualifier remained stable year on year, but increased as a proportion of total incidents. In the 12 months ending March 2019, the Integrated Mental Health team in the FCR reviewed almost 8,300 calls for service, offering advice and signposting to other agencies and helping reduce demand on frontline officers. Over two thirds of those incidents resulted in referral, diversion or follow up, up from c47% in the previous financial year.
- 4.4 A number of key performance indicators have pointed towards ongoing challenges around demand management and investigative throughput over the last 12 months. The strategic response has continued to be through effective supervision, better ongoing management of decisions, and a stronger approach to individual performance management through feedback. Work to improve the organisation's understanding of Athena process and functionality in order to help supervisors better manage and prioritise workload is ongoing.

## **5.0 Offenders**

- 5.1 The long term downward trend in the all crime prosecution possible outcome rate continued. It now stands at 11.1%, down from 15.9% at the end of the previous financial year. Although the national average prosecution possible outcome rate has also been in decline, Cambridgeshire now ranks in the bottom quartile nationally.
- 5.2 Over the past 12 months, more than 84% of all crimes were filed as prosecution not possible with a notable increase in the number and proportion of those filed due to evidential difficulties, with the victim unsupportive of police action (Outcome 16). Further work is being undertaken to better understand this and identify areas for improvement, particularly in relation to Domestic Abuse investigations where use of Outcome 16 is much higher. The increase in Outcome 16 as an outcome is also a feature of national data.
- 5.3 Changes to the Bail Act in April 2017 resulted in more suspects being released under investigation (RUI) rather than bailed to return at a pre-determined date in the future. Following concerns around the excessive use of RUI, particularly in circumstances where conditional bail would have been more appropriate to protect the victim or a third party from harm or further risk, numbers have been increasing, but remain comparatively low.

## **6.0 Communities**

- 6.1 September saw the permanent transfer of 999 call handling from the FCR into the Contact portion of the Demand Hub, allowing greater resilience for 999 call handling and better management of the highest risk calls for service. Emergency call handling performance remained strong, but non-emergency 101 calls and online webchats were initially subject to longer average wait times during the transition period while new members of staff were trained and gained in experience.
- 6.2 The gradual upward trend in the number of emergency 999 calls received has continued, with calls for service peaking in July 2018. The total number of 101 calls received remained stable year on year, but the long term trend remains downwards.
- 6.3 Take-up of ongoing crime reporting services has continued to grow, with 7,277 crime reports submitted online in the last 12 months. Take-up is expected to continue to improve as public awareness of these services grows. Use of the webchat facility has also increased.
- 6.4 The number of incidents raised has risen in recent months, driven by an increase in the number and proportion of incidents graded No Response. The latter was expected, given the partial reversal of the decision, taken two years ago, not to record incidents logs for non-police matters. This change should help improve our wider understanding of non-police demand. The impact on the grade of service for call handling, and frontline officers, is believed to have been minimal.
- 6.5 The number of ASB incidents fell by 17.5% year on year; this was true for all three categories of ASB (personal, nuisance and environmental).
- 6.6 Public confidence has fallen over the last 12 months, with only 59.0% of survey respondents agreeing that Cambridgeshire Police are dealing with the things that matter to people in their local community; this compares to 65.2% in the previous financial year. Surveys are currently carried out by telephone interview, but work is being undertaken to look at other communication channels with a view to engaging with the widest possible audience.
- 6.7 Levels of police officer and police staff sickness have increased over the last 12 months. While there have been improvements in recent months, this has yet to feed through to the long term indicator which remains on an upward trajectory.
- 6.8 The total number of hours worked by the Special Constabulary increased year on year, with over 39,500 hours of policing activity. Over 21,700 hours were spent in support of reactive colleagues. However, there was a marginal drop in establishment from 229 in March 2018 to 221 in March 2019.

## **7.0 Transformation**

- 7.1 The implementation of Athena in May 2018 closely followed the Local Policing Review and brought with it significant changes to the organisation. It was widely recognised that it would take time for new processes to become fully embedded, and that data quality and recording issues would likely impact on the availability of reliable performance data. The latter remains key to improving our wider understanding of demand and the underlying drivers.
- 7.2 Work is ongoing to raise levels of compliance with national crime recording standards, and to improve case file quality. This is being achieved through targeted training, feedback to officers through an escalation and review process, and the

central collation of data to help identify underlying trends and recurring themes. These should help drive forward sustainable improvements in the coming months.

- 7.3 Further work is now being undertaken to help the organisation better understand the *impact* of poor data quality by assessing quality at the point of recording. By getting the basics right, we aim to stem the flow of failure demand and the associated resource implications of this.

<b>Contact Officers</b>	Neil Stacey, Head of Performance and Analysis, Cambridgeshire Constabulary
<b>Bibliography</b>	<a href="https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/crimeinenglandandwales/yearendingdecember2018">https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/crimeinenglandandwales/yearendingdecember2018</a>