



HMIC Inspection Report

Suffolk Constabulary

Neighbourhood Policing

Developing Citizen Focus Policing

September 2008



Suffolk Constabulary – HMIC Inspection

September 2008

ISBN: 978-1-84726-805-1

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FIRST PUBLISHED 2008

Contents

Introduction to HMIC Inspections
HMIC Business Plan for 2008/09
Programmed Frameworks
Statutory Performance Indicators and Key Diagnostic Indicators
Developing Practice
The Grading Process
Force Overview and Context
Force Performance Overview

Findings

Neighbourhood Policing

Developing Citizen Focus Policing

Appendix 1: Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

Appendix 2: Assessment of Outcomes Using Statutory Performance Indicator Data

Introduction to HMIC Inspections

For a century and a half, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) has been charged with examining and improving the efficiency of the police service in England and Wales, with the first HM Inspectors (HMIs) being appointed under the provisions of the County and Borough Police Act 1856. In 1962, the Royal Commission on the Police formally acknowledged HMIC's contribution to policing.

HMIs are appointed by the Crown on the recommendation of the Home Secretary and report to HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary, who is the Home Secretary's principal professional policing adviser and is independent of both the Home Office and the police service. HMIC's principal statutory duties are set out in the Police Act 1996. For more information, please visit HMIC's website at <http://inspectors.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/>.

In 2006, HMIC conducted a broad assessment of all 43 Home Office police forces in England and Wales, examining 23 areas of activity. This baseline assessment had followed a similar process in 2005, and thus created a rich evidence base of strengths and weaknesses across the country. However, it is now necessary for HMIC to focus its inspection effort on those areas of policing that are not data-rich and where qualitative assessment is the only feasible way of judging both current performance and the prospects for improvement. This, together with the critical factor that HMIC should concentrate its scrutiny on high-risk areas of policing – in terms of risk both to the public and to the service's reputation – pointed inexorably to a focus on what are known collectively as 'protective services'. In addition, there is a need to apply professional judgement to some key aspects of leadership and governance, where some quantitative measures exist but a more rounded assessment is appropriate.

Having reached this view internally, HMIC consulted key stakeholders, including the Home Office, the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and the Association of Police Authorities (APA). A consensus emerged that HMIC could add greater value by undertaking more probing inspections of fewer topics. Stakeholders concurred with the emphasis on protective services but requested that Neighbourhood Policing remain a priority for inspection until there is evidence that it has been embedded in everyday police work.

HMIC uses a rigorous and transparent methodology to conduct its inspections and reach conclusions and judgements. All evidence is gathered, verified and then assessed against specific grading criteria (SGC) drawn from an agreed set of national (ACPO-developed) standards. However, the main purpose of inspection is not to make judgements but to drive improvements in policing. Both professional and lay readers are urged, therefore, to focus not on the headline grades but on the opportunities for improvement identified within the text of this report.

HMIC Business Plan for 2008/09

HMIC's business plan (available at <http://inspectors.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/our-work/business-plan/>) reflects our continued focus on:

- protective services – including the management of public order, civil contingencies and critical incidents as phase 3 of the programme in autumn 2008/spring 2009;
- counter-terrorism – including all elements of the national CONTEST strategy;

- strategic services – such as information management and professional standards; and
- the embedding of Neighbourhood Policing.

HMIC's priorities for the coming year are set in the context of the wide range of strategic challenges that face both the police service and HMIC, including the need to increase service delivery against a backdrop of reduced resources. With this in mind, the business plan for 2008/09 includes for the first time a 'value for money' plan that relates to the current Comprehensive Spending Review period (2008–11).

Our intention is to move to a default position where we do not routinely carry out all-force inspections, except in exceptional circumstances; we expect to use a greater degree of risk assessment to target activity on those issues and areas where the most severe vulnerabilities exist, where most improvement is required or where the greatest benefit to the service can be gained through the identification of best practice.

The recent Green Paper on policing – *From the Neighbourhood to the National: Policing our Communities Together* – proposes major changes to the role of HMIC. We are currently working through the implications to chart a way forward, and it will not be until the late Autumn when we are able to communicate how this will impact on the future approach and inspection plans. In the meantime, we have now commenced work covering the areas of critical incident management, public order and civil contingencies/emergency planning – which will conclude in early 2009. In consultation with ACPO portfolio holders and a range of relevant bodies (such as the Cabinet Office in respect of civil contingency work) we have conducted an assessment of risk, threat and demand and, based on this, we will focus on those forces where we can add most value. We will also commence a series of police authority inspections in April 2009, which will follow a pilot process from November 2008 through to January 2009.

Programmed Frameworks

During phase 2 of HMIC's inspection programme, we examined force responses to major crime, serious and organised crime, Neighbourhood Policing and Developing Citizen Focus Policing in each of the 43 forces of England and Wales.

This document includes the full graded report for the Neighbourhood Policing inspection and Developing Citizen Focus Policing inspection.

Neighbourhood Policing

The public expect and require a safe and secure society, and it is the role of the police, in partnership, to ensure provision of such a society. The HMIC inspection of Neighbourhood Policing implementation assesses the impact on neighbourhoods together with identified developments for the future.

The piloting of the National Reassurance Policing Programme (NRPP) between April 2003 and 2005 led to the Neighbourhood Policing programme launch by ACPO in April 2005.

There has been considerable commitment and dedication from key partners, from those in neighbourhood teams and across communities to deliver Neighbourhood Policing in every area. This includes over £1,000 million of government investment (2003–09), although funding provision beyond 2009 is unclear.

The NRPP evaluation highlighted three key activities for successful Neighbourhood Policing, namely:

- the consistent presence of dedicated neighbourhood teams capable of working in the community to establish and maintain control;
- intelligence-led identification of community concerns with prompt, effective, targeted action against those concerns; and
- joint action and problem solving with the community and other local partners, improving the local environment and quality of life.

To date, the Neighbourhood Policing programme has recruited over 16,000 police community support officers (PCSOs), who, together with 13,000 constables and sergeants, are dedicated by forces to 3,600 neighbourhood teams across England and Wales.

This report further supports Sir Ronnie Flanagan's *Review of Policing* (2008), which considers that community safety must be at the heart of local partnership working, bringing together different agencies in a wider neighbourhood management approach.

Developing Citizen Focus Policing

Citizen Focus policing is about developing a culture where the needs and priorities of the citizen are understood by staff and are always taken into account when designing and delivering policing services.

Sir Ronnie Flanagan's *Review of Policing* emphasised the importance of focusing on the treatment of individuals during existing processes: this is one of the key determinants of satisfaction.

A sustained commitment to quality and customer need is essential to enhance satisfaction and confidence in policing, and to build trust and further opportunities for active engagement with individuals, thereby building safer and more secure communities.

This HMIC inspection of Developing Citizen Focus Policing is the first overall inspection of this agenda and provides a baseline for future progress. One of the key aims of the inspection was to identify those forces that are showing innovation in their approach, to share effective practice and emerging learning. A key challenge for the service is to drive effective practice more widely and consistently, thereby improving the experience for people in different areas.

Latest data reveals that, nationally, there have been improvements in satisfaction with the overall service provided. However, the potential exists to further enhance customer experience and the prospect of victims and other users of the policing service reporting consistently higher satisfaction levels. All the indications show that sustained effort is required over a period of years to deliver the highest levels of satisfaction; this inspection provides an insight into the key aspects to be addressed. It is published in the context of the recent Green Paper *From the Neighbourhood to the National – Policing our Communities Together* and other reports, which all highlight the priorities of being accountable and responsive to local people. The longer-term investment in Neighbourhood Policing and the benefits of Neighbourhood Management have provided an evidence base for the broad Citizen Focus agenda.

Statutory Performance Indicators and Key Diagnostic Indicators

In addition to the inspection of forces, HMIC has drawn on published data in the Policing Performance Assessment Frameworks (PPAFs) published between March 2005 and March 2008 as an indicator of outcomes for both Neighbourhood Policing and Developing Citizen Focus Policing.

The statutory performance indicators (SPIs) and key diagnostic indicator (KDI) that are most appropriate to indicate outcomes for the public and are used to inform this inspection are set out below:

Neighbourhood Policing

- SPI 2a – the percentage of people who think that their local police do a good or excellent job.
- KDI – the percentage of people who ‘agree local police are dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime that matter in this area’.
- SPI 10b – the percentage of people who think there is a high level of anti-social behaviour in their area.

Developing Citizen Focus Policing

- SPI 1e – satisfaction of victims of domestic burglary, violent crime, vehicle crime and road traffic collisions with the overall service provided by the police.
- SPI 3b – a comparison of satisfaction rates for white users with those for users from minority ethnic groups with the overall service provided.

Forces are assessed in terms of their performance compared with the average for their most similar forces (MSF) and whether any difference is statistically significant. Statistical significance can be explained in lay terms as follows: ‘The difference in performance between the force and the average for its MSF is unlikely to have occurred by chance.’ A more detailed description of how statistical significance has been used is included in Appendix 2 at the end of this report.

Developing Practice

In addition to assessing force performance, one of HMIC’s key roles is to identify and share good practice across the police service. Much good practice is identified as HMIC conducts its assessments and is reflected (described as a ‘strength’) in the body of the report. In addition, each force is given the opportunity to submit more detailed examples of its good practice. HMIC has therefore, in some reports, selected suitable examples and included them in the report. The key criteria for each example are that the work has been evaluated by the force and the good practice is easily transferable to other forces; each force has provided a contact name and telephone number or email address, should further information be required. HMIC has not conducted any independent evaluation of the examples of good practice provided.

The Grading Process

HMIC has moved to a new grading system based on the national standards; forces will be deemed to be meeting the standard, exceeding the standard or failing to meet the standard.

Meeting the standard

HMIC uses the standards agreed with key stakeholders including ACPO, the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) and the Home Office as the basis for SGC. The standards for Neighbourhood Policing and Developing Citizen Focus Policing are set out in those sections of this report, together with definitions for exceeding the standard and failing to meet the standard.

Force Overview and Context

Suffolk Constabulary has:

- 2 BCUs;
- 47 Neighbourhood Policing teams;
- 316 officers dedicated to Neighbourhood Policing; and
- 146 police community support officers (PCSOs) dedicated to Neighbourhood Policing.

It is a member of five crime and disorder reduction partnerships (CDRPs) which cover the force area.

Geographical description of force area

Suffolk Constabulary is responsible for policing an area of 939,510 acres with a population of 702,037, which has grown by 33,484 (5%) since 2001. Suffolk is a rural county and has large areas of low population density, principally in Mid-Suffolk. The long coastline stretches from Felixstowe in the south to Lowestoft in the north, and the county is renowned for its rural businesses, such as farming, light industry, brewing and tourism. The county has some notable landmarks, such as the headquarters of British horseracing at Newmarket and the largest container port in Europe at Felixstowe. It has a number of military bases, two of which – Lakenheath and Mildenhall – are home to the United States Air Force and approximately 20,000 dependants. The county town of Ipswich poses the greatest policing demands, many of which relate to the night-time economy.

Demographic description of force area

As Suffolk is a predominantly rural county, it is perhaps not surprising that its economic growth is lower than the national and regional averages. Suffolk also has a relatively low proportion of working-age population (59.2%), and this is closely related to the fact that some parts of the county are popular locations for retirement. This figure is below that for the East of England (60.9%) and significantly less than that for England and Wales as a whole (65.0%). The proportion of people of working age reflects the generally older age structure in the county. The number of young people aged 15–19 in Suffolk is the second lowest in the region generally, suggesting that young people are inclined to move away from the area on reaching working age.

The National Index of Multiple Deprivation (2007) shows that Ipswich and Lowestoft are the most deprived areas in the county. In April 2008 there were 7,327 unemployed persons in the county, representing 1.8% of the total working-age population.

Some significant developments will impact on the county in the foreseeable future. The A14 corridor between Cambridge and Ipswich has been identified as a key area for development in terms of investment in science, technology and small businesses. Equally, there will be substantial increases in student populations as the University of East Anglia and Essex University continue to come together to underwrite an enhanced higher education provision in Suffolk. This expansion of University Campus Suffolk alongside Suffolk New College will see a growth in students from outside the county living and studying in Ipswich. Planning consent has been granted for the SnOasis development at Great Blakenham, which will have a substantial impact on the infrastructure of the county in terms of service and transport requirements. All these developments pose major challenges for the force.

Strategic priorities

The constabulary's strategic priorities for 2008–11 include the vision, mission and values of the authority and constabulary, as well as key operational priorities.

Suffolk Constabulary's vision

"We take pride in keeping Suffolk safe, while ensuring our communities value and trust what we do."

Suffolk Constabulary's mission

"A proud county served by a constabulary trusted by all to keep our communities safe."

To achieve this Suffolk Constabulary will:

- be highly responsive to local needs;
- work with its partners to build strong, safe and cohesive communities;
- deliver high performance;
- reduce crime and disorder;
- make the best use of public funds; and
- deliver the highest quality of service.

Suffolk Constabulary's values

Suffolk Constabulary will:

- treat everyone with fairness and respect;
- be open and honest;
- listen and be responsive;
- act with integrity at all times;
- maintain the highest professional standards;
- make a positive difference in all it does; and
- be innovative in delivering its services.

In order to deliver on its vision, mission and values Suffolk Constabulary will focus on the following six operational priorities:

- tackling organised crime, with emphasis on Class A drug suppliers from London and associated firearms threats;
- tackling anti-social behaviour (ASB), with emphasis on alcohol and youth-related offending;

- tackling domestic abuse, with emphasis on high-risk cases and the impact on vulnerable adults and children;
- tackling road safety, with emphasis on casualty reduction and local community priorities;
- tackling burglary (dwelling), with emphasis on prevention and detection of crime; and
- counter-terrorism.

Force Performance Overview

Force development since 2007 inspections

Suffolk Constabulary has a new chief officer command team, with the recruitment of a new Chief Constable in 2007, and both a new deputy chief constable (DCC) and a new assistant chief constable (ACC) in 2008.

The force has also restructured and is now divided geographically into two basic command units (BCUs), Eastern and Western, both of which have their own challenges. Each BCU is divided up into policing districts, which are coterminous with the district and borough council boundaries, with each district commanded by a chief inspector. The move from three to two BCU forms part of an ongoing structural review process known as the strategic review project that is currently under way, with the aim of increasing efficiencies and cutting costs. Underpinning the districts are 47 safer neighbourhood teams (SNTs), which have been designed to improve local policing and enhance visibility in all communities, and are coterminous with ward and parish boundaries.

Each BCU has a dedicated command team comprising of a chief superintendent, superintendent (operations) and detective chief inspector (DCI) (crime manager). Centralised departments, based primarily at police headquarters in Martlesham, provide the majority of the support functions for each of the BCUs.

In the 2007 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) phase 1 report, the force received a Poor grading in respect of child abuse investigation. In the period following publication of the report, the force has made considerable strides towards securing the necessary improvement. Management responsibility for child abuse investigation, along with all other aspects of protecting vulnerable people, has been moved away from BCUs and now rests with a centralised public protection directorate.

In March 2008, a central referral and tasking unit was established and now covers the three victim care centres. This, combined with ongoing increases in staffing, has ensured a greater consistency around the receipt, recording and subsequent investigation of child abuse referrals. The force has worked closely with HMIC throughout and made significant progress in this area. As a result of a recent visit to the force by HMIC it is clear that the force now meets the standard in this area.

Neighbourhood Policing

2007/08 Neighbourhood Policing Summary of judgement	Meeting the standard
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Meeting the standard

Following the moderation process, Suffolk Constabulary was assessed as meeting the standard. Neighbourhood policing has been implemented to a consistent standard across the force.

Neighbourhoods are appropriately staffed (coverage).

Summary statement

The force is deploying across all its BCUs the right people in the right place at the right time to ensure that its neighbourhoods are appropriately staffed.

Strengths

- The force incorporated the need to review its implementation of Neighbourhood Policing, along with staff numbers and boundaries, within the initial project plan.
- All current neighbourhoods have a named contact at police constable (PC) and/or PCSO level. Contact details are publicised locally through posters and more widely through the force website.
- SNTs are generally well staffed at the present time, with vacancies being filled swiftly.
- The abstraction policy defines what is and what is not an abstraction and sets a target of 10%. Responsibility for managing abstractions rests with SNT sergeants and area based human resources departments collate the data. A separate policy relates specifically to PCSOs (see Work in progress below).
- The allocation of police officers to response teams, SNTs or hybrid teams is decided at the meeting of the force and area resource allocation groups. The needs of the relevant teams are matched against the skill profiles and development needs of individual officers and postings are made accordingly.
- The force is running a series of ten-week Polish and Portuguese language courses for a number of SNT officers. The training is provided by an outside company through Suffolk College at no cost to the force.
- The force has run a series of events for SNT sergeants with key inputs around the management, supervision and deployment of PCSOs and community engagement from the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA). In addition to this, the force organised a conference involving its SNT inspectors and key partners to discuss and refine the SNT tasking process.
- Problem solving continues as a core element of police probationer training and the ethos of problem solving is integrated into a number of other post-probationer training programmes.

- A series of PCSO refresher training courses were run by the force in early 2008 to incorporate their new powers.
- The force has an average ratio of one sergeant to every eleven PCs/PCSOs in its dedicated SNTs, with this number falling further on the hybrid joint response/SNTs. Although administrative tasks are considered burdensome (see Areas for improvement below), ratios do allow for effective supervision in most places.
- The force's prestigious Sheepshanks award for community policing was recently won, for the first time, by a PCSO. This officer will now go forward as the force nomination for the national community officer of the year award. In 2007, the Suffolk Sheepshanks winner went on to become the runner-up at the national award ceremony.
- BCU commanders send personal messages congratulating SNT and response officers for their good work, with a number of examples being read out at command team meetings. Staff can also be recommended for area merit awards, with an example provided of three SNT officers receiving such an award for their problem solving-activity to combat ASB in Newmarket. SNT sergeants are in receipt of special priority payments and BCU commanders have a sum of £5,000 set aside for bonus payments to their staff.
- Merit awards and commendations are given for delivering a high quality of service to the public. The Sheepshanks award recognises the contribution made by an officer to Neighbourhood Policing and, significantly, this is based on evidence provided by the local community.

Work in progress

- The force has carried out a fundamental inspection and review of how it delivers Neighbourhood Policing, led personally by the Chief Constable and building on themes emerging from NPIA and HMIC assessments. A number of issues arose from this inspection, for example; SNT staff still spending a disproportionate amount of time carrying out response work, a lack of supervision in some areas and a lack of clarity around roles and responsibilities. The review used the ten Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) Principles of Neighbourhood Policing as its benchmark and considered the need to better match resources to demand, as it was considered the 60/40 split in favour of SNTs was not necessarily appropriate. As a consequence of the review, a paper has been submitted to the police authority recommending that the number of SNTs be reduced from 47 to 30, but to should be used solely as SNTs, with clear role profiles supported by a robust abstraction policy and dedicated supervision.
- The force revised its abstraction policy, which was due for re-launch on 31 March 2008; however, this has been delayed to ensure that it is consistent with the new model of SNTs to be adopted following the force review of Neighbourhood Policing.
- The supervisory ratios in SNTs is likely to change as a result of the force review of Neighbourhood Policing, although on the figures provided by the force, no sergeant will be responsible for more than eight PCs/PCSOs, although eight sergeants in low-demand rural areas will still have additional responsibility for response staff.

Areas for improvement

- Other than by way of interviews carried out with partners as part of the internal force review, partner agencies and local communities were not involved or consulted. This is

potentially a significant oversight, as the new model will require a rationalisation of SNT boundaries and involve a reduction in overall numbers of SNT staff. Although it is acknowledged that the findings of the review appear sound, the force has not taken into account the views of partners or indeed the availability of partner resources, for instance wardens. The paper submitted to the police authority does recognise the need to develop an appropriate marketing strategy in order to 'sell' the proposed changes to partners and the public, although the commitment of the force to a truly integrated neighbourhood management agenda has to be questioned when the process of the review is taken into consideration. There are now considerable challenges ahead in how these changes are to be publicised across the county and the force and authority are urged to be clear and consistent in their delivery of key messages.

- While a number of partners were involved in the initial establishment of SNTs and the defining of boundaries in Suffolk, there appears to be conjecture and rumour around the fact that the force is reviewing SNTs and boundary changes are possibly to take place. This may lead to difficulties for some district councils who have aligned their own local area engagement forums around the existing SNT boundaries. The force is urged to engage with partners at the earliest opportunity in order to overcome such issues.
- The SNT profile provided by the force provides a breakdown of staffing across the force, but only as far as the seven districts within the two BCUs. It shows the number of inspectors, sergeants, PCs and PCSOs for response, dedicated SNT and hybrid teams. However, there is no formal structure around succession planning for SNTs, with matters left open to local interpretation and resolution. The force is urged to consider and incorporate succession planning to ensure consistent staffing of its SNTs.
- The force must provide greater clarity around what does and does not constitute an abstraction. This is of particular relevance to an issue highlighted during the phase 1 inspection around the night-time economy. The force considers the routine deployment of SNT officers on late shifts from areas that do not have premises operating late into the night, to surrounding areas that do, is not an abstraction. In light of this example, the force is urged to be consistent around not only the definition of an abstraction, but also how abstractions are categorised and recorded.
- The force utilises various means of collecting and presenting abstraction data. The force is planning to implement a duty management system (NSPIS Origin) but this is still 15 months away. A bespoke interim model is in use but it does not cover all areas of the force. Managers are reliant on locally-gathered information in terms of SNT abstractions which are fed into the SNT programme board. The accuracy of this information is therefore unknown by the force.
- Hybrid SNTs report difficulty in ascertaining accurate abstraction levels as there is a lack of clarity around the precise role of these SNTs. As such, a true picture around abstraction levels is not available in many areas.
- It is unclear what, if any role the neighbourhood profiles play in informing staff deployment to particular SNTs. Although demand management plays a key role, intelligence requirements around emerging communities or demographic factors are not routinely considered.
- Training for staff in advance of joining an SNT is non-existent, although the NPIA Neighbourhood Policing and problem-solving workbooks are completed by staff when in post and checked by supervisors. However, this checking is described as variable in

quality and on occasion is a mere 'tick-box' episode, with no process in place to monitor compliance or the quality of work undertaken. The force must stress to its staff the value of these workbooks; check to ensure they are properly completed; carry out a detailed training needs analysis for SNT staff; and establish an SNT skills profile for sergeants, PCs and PCSOs.

- Problem-solving training is inconsistent across the force. Examples were provided of joint problem-solving training taking place, albeit on an ad hoc basis. Areas appear to be carrying out their own bespoke training with little corporacy, or even awareness, at headquarters level as to what is taking place.
- Most training and legal updates are delivered to staff by email. This, combined with the requirement to update neighbourhood profiles, websites and engagement plans, effectively cuts the time SNT supervisors can spend on patrol with their staff to a virtual minimum. The force is urged to consider alternatives to SNT staff carrying out a number of primarily administrative functions.

Effective community engagement is taking place. Representative communities are being routinely consulted and are identifying local priorities and receiving feedback.

Summary statement

Most neighbourhoods in the force area are actively engaging with their local police force and its partners.

Strengths

- Each SNT has a specifically tailored engagement plan outlining a range of potential engagement options.
- Both the force and the police authority have forged good links with the business community in the county. A business crime forum was held in autumn 2007 to discuss issues affecting businesses, with an action plan generated thereafter in conjunction with the Federation of Small Businesses, Suffolk Chamber of Commerce and Suffolk Small Business Association. This plan is being developed to ensure a greater integration with SNTs across the force.
- Play My Part is an initiative developed by the county council whereby public and partners can ring a central non-emergency number to report concerns of any nature, for example graffiti or damage to roads. The system currently incorporates county, district and borough councils, with the inclusion of town and parish councils likely in the near future. Call takers are trained to identify the most appropriate agency to deal with the issue and the caller is directed accordingly. The caller is also offered the opportunity to receive updates as to progress on the issue they have raised.
- To increase the number of community contacts, particularly from within emerging communities, a range of initiatives have been identified, for example:
 - developing a community contacts flier for completion by members of emerging communities if they wish to be involved in shaping policing activity in their community. The flier has been further promoted through broadcasts on Ipswich

community radio's Polish programmes and engagement with partners such as Ipswich and Suffolk Council for Racial Equality, the Suffolk County Council Racial Harassment Initiative, the Suffolk Inter-Faith Resource and the Citizens Advice Bureau;

- enhancing the existing diversity unit community contacts database to include additional information and the potential for data exchange between SNTs and partner organisations;
 - holding a community information event at Community Service Volunteers Media (a multimedia centre combined with music and community art facilities) in Ipswich with members of the Polish community; and
 - arranging SNT display stalls with SNT personnel at the popular Portman Road car boot sale and at supermarkets known to be used by members of emerging or minority communities.
- Each SNT has a neighbourhood profile, parts of which it is responsible for updating. These are viewed as living documents and work in conjunction with engagement plans outlining planned activity. Profiles are shared with key partners.
- A variety of different engagement techniques are employed to ascertain the needs and concerns of various communities. Street meetings, surgeries, leaflet drops, questionnaires, attendance at existing community group events and particular work to identify and personally meet with harder-to-reach groups such as the Bridge Project (juveniles close to crime) and the YMCA, combine to feed SNT/partner tasking meetings, which will ultimately identify the neighbourhood priorities drawing upon the information gleaned from engagement activity.
- SNTs share information by way of their dedicated websites. Each site is regularly updated with details of engagement activity and events along with the respective neighbourhood priorities. Significant use is also made of the local media to publicise forthcoming SNT activity such as surgeries or street briefings. Two mobile police stations have recently been purchased and these will be deployed in areas where there is high footfall and/or where a need to increase engagement or intelligence activity is identified.
- Engagement activity is flexible and driven by a combination of information received from the community, police/partner statistics, local knowledge and the neighbourhood profiles. An example of responsive engagement took place in Lowestoft whereby briefings took place in Mandarin, Polish and Portuguese to pass on information regarding SNTs.
- Police Direct (a text messaging service providing information to members of the public) is now included in mainstream funding and forms part of the force's overarching contact strategy, although there is scope to increase its usage by SNTs.
- Each SNT has its own section on the force website and a facility whereby members of the public can email members of the team. This is in addition to individual SNT voicemail facilities.
- Levels of community intelligence, both in terms of quality and quantity submitted, have increased significantly over the last 18 months, with SNTs actively seeking such

intelligence through their routine engagement activity.

- Respondents to Swift (an independent surveying company used by a consortium of forces) and force surveys are asked to provide their postcode, which allows the force to map responses and potential gaps in either surveying opportunities or engagement.
- The force actively consults in schools with the 14–18 year age group. When carrying out such activity students are routinely asked if they know the identity of their local SNT officers.
- The force has quality assured an amount of its engagement activity and identified that issues are rarely highlighted by partners or the force in terms of trends without being simultaneously identified through community engagement.
- SNTs in the Western Area ask schools and housing associations to provide anonymised information regarding the ethnic make-up of their pupils/customers so as to allow SNTs to obtain a greater understanding of the nature of their communities. Similarly, SNTs in Lowestoft have engaged with individuals involved in the provision of late night refreshment, as they are acknowledged to be a significant employer of staff from different ethnic backgrounds.
- An SNT has identified an influx of Poles, Lithuanians and Bulgarians into a local hostel. Work with a local recruitment agency saw the creation of a welcome pack in their own languages and regular surgeries have now been set up.
- SNTs have been proactive in identifying employers of migrant workers with a view to ensuring they are included in the shaping of local priorities. Some teams have produced information leaflets and circulated these to migrant workers providing them with valuable information about contacting local police and SNTs.
- Part of the organised crime directorate (OCD) action plan is to improve marketing of the directorate across the force. As a result, the DCI OCD presents at the Suffolk First For You seminar, to Initial Police Learning and Development Programme courses and then again to probationers when they have reached 18 months' service. Copies of the OCD presentations appear on the directorate's micro-site.
- The DCI OCD meets monthly with the area intelligence unit (AIU) inspectors to discuss covert activity. From this the AIU can task SNT/BCU staff to gather intelligence around organised crime groups (OCGs). An example was provided of a specific request being made for intelligence on an OCG in Haverhill which resulted in an increased number of intelligence submissions. SNTs have also been heavily involved in gathering intelligence around OCG nominals as part of Operation Adrenalin, which saw a number of individuals arrested for drug trafficking offences in Ipswich.
- Knowledge among SNTs of the relevance of community intelligence is good and there was evidence of an increase in quality and quantity of intelligence submissions. The Western BCU has devised and delivered a presentation to staff around community intelligence and organised crime.

Work in progress

- The force internet site will be available in different languages from 2008/09, and all appropriate external forms/leaflets are beginning to be produced in various languages.

- The force is developing and piloting the use of an extranet system. This is similar in nature to an intranet, but allows information such as neighbourhood profiles to be accessed by partners through a secure password facility. The pilot is scheduled to begin in May 2008 and run for two months.
- The police authority Engaging Communities committee has identified engagement with the young and hard-to-reach groups as a priority area for 2008/09.
- The force is seeking to embed special branch staff in AIUs from May 2008 to enhance the flow of community intelligence and drive the work of the national counter-terrorism strategy.

Areas for improvement

- There is a gap in the process between initial public consultation and the setting of problem-solving priorities. Although consultation processes with the public are in place, for example surveys and street meetings, the opportunity for the public to regularly discuss issues with the police and partners face-to-face is lacking. SNT priorities are set at community tasking meetings which are not open to the general public. Many partners perceive the meetings and the subsequent setting of priorities to be entirely police-led, and although engagement activity is taken into account, final decisions are made at the community tasking meetings, which are invariably chaired by SNT inspectors. This reflects concerns raised during the phase 1 inspection that priorities are not necessarily reflective of local issues. The force must strive to ensure that its engagement activity and ensuing priority setting with partners and the public is truly representative and cognisant of all local communities.
- Neighbourhood profiles are mixed in terms of quality and value. A number are not routinely updated, many are based on individual officer's knowledge and few are routinely used to identify engagement activity or improve officers' awareness of communities within their areas. The link between profiles and engagement plans is not readily apparent and the force is urged to make better use of its neighbourhood profiles to drive engagement activity and enhance knowledge.
- The OneSuffolk website is a partnership site launched to provide the public with information about partnership activity and issues. This is not seen as a police-driven website and therefore a number of key messages from all partners can be posted. However, despite central government providing £750,000 to establish the facility, there is still reluctance from some partners to become fully involved, with a number setting up, financing and maintaining their own standalone websites. The force must work closely with its partners to market the OneSuffolk facility and ensure its obvious potential is not wasted.
- The administration required in updating and maintaining neighbourhood profiles and engagement plans is placing a significant strain on SNT resources. The provision of administrative support would go some way to alleviating these demands, although it is acknowledged that the use of volunteers in these roles is being considered.
- The quality of community engagement is not routinely tested across the force in terms of; mapping the post codes of people the local teams are engaging with to identify gaps on the map; checking the list of attendees for the last 12 months' engagement meetings and contacting one or two people who initially attended but have chosen not to re-attend subsequent meetings, or asking people from the community in a high crime and incident

area, not identified in the neighbourhood profile, whether they are engaged with their SNT. This is potentially an area that could be considered by BCU-based communications officers.

- The force acknowledges that it is at a very early stage in relation to OCGs and as such there is no clear position relating to how SNTs fit into the management of or intelligence-gathering processes around OCGs. The force is splitting its identified OCGs into tiers and needs to decide what role SNTs will play thereafter.

Joint problem solving is established and included within performance regimes.

Summary statement

Joint problem solving involves the police with partners and communities across all neighbourhoods. Joint problem-solving activity is partly evaluated and demonstrates moderate problem resolution at neighbourhood level.

Strengths

- Examples were provided of joint 'visioning days' where police and partners enter a particular area and engage with residents to identify local issues. These are then followed by 'impact days' where partners including police, environmental health and the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency deal with the issues addressed. These events are subject to widespread local publicity to inform local people of success and what was achieved on their behalf during the partnership activity.
- Good practice in relation to problem solving is sought and shared through the headquarters-based community safety unit, drawing upon a designated point of contact on each BCU for assistance in identifying such.
- Numerous examples of effective problem solving were examined during the inspection and although many were police-led, there were several instances of partners being tasked with problems and resolving them with little or no police involvement.
- Force problem-solving activity is centred upon the scanning, analysis, response, assessment (SARA) model and the majority of staff interviewed demonstrated a strong awareness of the SARA principles.
- Partner commitment to Neighbourhood Policing is comprehensive. SNTs are co-located in district council offices in Forest Heath, Mid-Suffolk and St Edmundsbury and although some issues have arisen, around for example security of incapacitating spray and access to the buildings by police clients, the close working relationships between police and partners allow such matters to be readily addressed.
- The community safety department of the county council works closely with all SNTs across the force as well as at strategic level. Relations with the force are described as excellent by partners.
- A representative from the county council attends every SNT tasking meeting. County council officers have responsibility for clusters of SNTs to ensure a consistent and

sustained presence at a relatively senior level. County council officers take tasks from these meetings and ensure they are carried out, reporting back at the following meetings.

- The community safety department at Suffolk County Council provides a central research and information service for a number of other partners and has recently sited two of its analysts in the force community safety unit to assist and enhance data sharing.
- A joint police and partner away day was recently held in an attempt to iron out difficulties around partnership work and SNTs. That such issues were identified and dealt with in a mature way is a testament to the strength of partnership arrangements in the county.
- Neighbourhood priorities are incorporated into all level 1 tactical tasking and co-ordination group (TTCG) documentation and discussed at the fortnightly meetings. In between times, the daily tasking process is used as a means of ensuring activity is undertaken by a cross-section of staff in support of the priorities.
- A number of partners were present at, and contributed to, the strategic TTCG meeting, at which the force control strategy was set. A wholly combined strategic assessment is planned for late 2008, although there was a significant police contribution to partnership strategic assessments through a multi-agency meeting which set priorities for the CDRPs.
- National Intelligence Model (NIM) principles are embedded in the force's problem-solving processes through use of the SARA model.
- Neighbourhood priorities are formally signed off by the community tasking meetings, with details recorded in the meeting minutes.
- Feedback on adopted local priorities is provided by way of updates to the community tasking meetings. Priorities are not formally signed off without the consent of the meetings and after considering any community feedback.
- The force recently hosted a joint problem-solving seminar attended by SNT supervisors, police authority, county and district councillors.

Work in progress

- The force has withdrawn from its use of the SPARKS problem-solving system (used by the county and district councils) as it was considered too bureaucratic and not user-friendly. The force is in the process of devising its own Word-based system which is based on NIM principles around tactical plans and uses the SARA model. In the interim, the force is still recording the headline priority issues on SPARKS (to minimise double-keying) so that in effect it becomes an indexing tool to signpost the user to the officer or SNT actually carrying out the problem solving, the details of which will be recorded on the force's own system.
- A community safety accreditation scheme is being introduced to accredit staff from partner agencies to support the neighbourhood management agenda. Accredited officers will enhance the work of the SNTs by dealing directly with low-level nuisance and disorder as well as by obtaining valuable community intelligence. Suffolk County Council has provided funding for two posts that will oversee the implementation and running of the scheme. These posts will work within the community safety unit alongside

the central SNT project team. It is anticipated that the first group of staff to be accredited under the scheme may be Suffolk County Council Trading Standards officers, although this has yet to be confirmed. Further work is in place develop the pilot phase of the scheme.

- The DCC is engaging with key partners to finalise the local area agreement priorities and oversee their linkage with the force's strategic priorities.
- The NPJA has been engaged and funded by the county council to provide a condensed one-day version of its problem-solving training course. The county council is currently ascertaining levels of interest, with the intention of running the sessions for 20 people at a time. The invitation to attend extends to community safety partnership members as well as SNT staff, and enough courses will be run to cope with demand. It is anticipated that the first course will take place in late June 2008.

Area(s) for improvement

- The county council heavily promotes and supports the use of the SPARKS system as a problem-solving database. The system was purchased through funding secured from the Government Office Eastern Region and the cost to the police is £1,000 pa for management of the system. However, the system has proved relatively difficult to use and administer and the force recently pulled away from using the system. The county council and other partners are however still using it and have recently made improvements to ensure it is more user-friendly. The force has developed and is implementing a separate database but is able to cross-reference its problem-solving activity to SPARKS. However, details of police problem-solving activity are not available for partners to view as the new police system is held on a police server. A brief cross-referenced entry on SPARKS is insufficient to provide full details of problem-solving work carried out by the police. The force and partners need to work together to ensure that problem solving is recorded accurately and is widely available to share good practice. The present systems do not appear to provide consistency or offer a truly joined-up approach to problem solving.
- Sharing of good practice and innovation between SNTs in terms of problem solving is virtually non-existent, and what does take place is reliant on SNTs checking their peers' websites or SNT tasking meeting minutes. Knowledge of problem-solving systems or databases was equally as poor, and much day-to-day problem solving takes place without being recorded. Although the force must guard against recording for recording's sake, there needs to be a corporate approach to the recording, conducting and monitoring of problem-solving activity.
- There is no routine assessment of problem-solving activity. The force must work to address this to ensure its activity is meaningful and its impact on local communities properly assessed. Examples were provided of the same problems being raised again by the community some time after they had been signed off.
- While there is an element of feedback and updates provided to communities in respect of problem-solving activity, for example through websites and the local media, they are not formally involved in the sign-off of problems or priorities, this taking place instead at the SNT tasking meetings at which the public is not present.
- Problem-solving training is inconsistent across the force. Examples were provided of joint problem-solving training taking place, albeit on an ad hoc basis. Areas appear to be

carrying out their own bespoke training with little corporacy, or even awareness, at headquarters level as to what is taking place.

The outcomes of Neighbourhood policing are being realised by the surveyed public.

	SPI 2a Percentage of people who think that their local police do a good or excellent job		KDI Percentage of people who 'agree local police are dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime that matter in this area'		SPI 10b Percentage of people who think there is a high level of anti-social behaviour	
	Difference from MSF (percentage point pp)	2005/06 to 2007/08 change	Difference from MSF	2005/06 to 2007/08 change	Difference from MSF	2005/06 to 2007/08 change
Suffolk	+2.2pp	+3.5pp	+1.9pp	+2.8pp	-1.7pp	-1.4pp

Summary statement

The SPI/KDI data shows that force performance is not significantly different to the average for the MSF.

The SPI/KDI data also shows that force performance is unchanged compared with two years ago.

Context

The SPI and KDI statistics are obtained from the PPAFs to March 2008. These figures are survey based and have been analysed for statistical significance, which can be explained in lay terms as follows: 'The difference in performance between the force and the average for its MSF is unlikely to have occurred by chance.'

Note: When comparing the force's performance with previous years, year-on-year statistical significance is explained as follows: 'The difference in force performance between the years compared is unlikely to have occurred by chance.'

There is a summary of how statistical significance is used at Appendix 2 at the end of this report.

As part of the BCS, approximately 1,000 interviews are undertaken in each force area in England and Wales. Included in the survey is the individual's assessment of whether the local police are doing a good job, whether the police are dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime that matter in their area, and whether anti-social behaviour in their area is a problem.

SPI 2a – percentage of people who think that their local police do a good or excellent job.

57.2% of people surveyed in the year ending March 2008 think that their local police do a good or excellent job, which is not significantly different to the average for the MSF.

Force performance was unchanged in the year ending March 2008; 57.2% of people surveyed think that their local police do a good or excellent job, compared with 53.7% in the year ending March 2006.

KDI – percentage of people who ‘agree local police are dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime that matter in this area’.

55.8% of people surveyed in the year ending March 2008 ‘agree local police are dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime that matter in this area’, which is not significantly different to the average for the MSF.

Force performance was unchanged in the year ending March 2008; 55.8% of people surveyed ‘agree local police are dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime that matter in this area’, compared with 53.0% in the year ending March 2006.

SPI 10b – percentage of people who think there is a high level of anti-social behaviour.

9.3% of people surveyed in the year ending March 2008 think there is a high level of anti-social behaviour, which is not significantly different to the average for the MSF.

Force performance was unchanged in the year ending March 2008; 9.3% of people surveyed think there is a high level of anti-social behaviour, compared with 10.7% in the year ending March 2006.

Force-level and local satisfaction/confidence measures are used to inform service delivery.

Summary statement

The force fully understands the needs of its communities. Identified service improvements are systematically made to improve local service delivery.

Strengths

- Variations in performance data between statutory performance indicators (SPIs) and key diagnostic indicators (KDIs) are identified, considered and reported through senior management teams at force and BCU level, with evidence of action plans being put in place as a result, for example around the gap between black and minority ethnic (BME) and white satisfaction rates.
- Managers are encouraged to examine dissatisfaction reports and issues arising from complaints both formally and informally.
- Confidence and satisfaction performance is discussed formally at the force performance delivery group chaired by the DCC. Other attendees are the BCU commanders, performance manager, head of policing and professional standards and the head of information technology.
- Data from Swift satisfaction surveys is made available to BCU command teams on a district (sub-BCU but not yet as far as SNT) basis. It is presented in raw format, allowing each of the five question categories to be considered individually. The data is also

summarised by the force performance department in a monthly package sent to BCUs, along with details of confidence levels. This is formally discussed at the monthly BCU performance meetings where district commanders and crime managers are held to account by the BCU commander.

- Examples were provided of how satisfaction and confidence data from surveys drives service improvement; for instance, a decline in satisfaction levels among burglary victims was identified in one particular district. A personal development review (PDR) objective was set for the respective district commander to address the situation. An officer on restricted duties was identified and allocated to contact victims and provide updates, while also taking the opportunity to re-educate staff around their responsibilities under the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime (VCoP). Satisfaction levels were soon restored to their previously high levels.
- At a county level, the police authority is using public surveys to gather information around the public's perception and opinions on policing matters. This information is used internally and also shared with partners to inform decision making. This sharing of information ensures a true county-wide perspective, as in return access to information and community research carried out by partners and other agencies is facilitated, with this being fed into the authority's and constabulary's planning and decision-making processes.
- At a neighbourhood level, some SNTs conduct door-to-door surveys. The findings from these surveys feed into the neighbourhood profiles, and, as a consequence, they are considered when the setting of priorities takes place.

Work in progress

- The force is working with partners to ensure that surveying and consultation activity is more joined-up so as to avoid over-surveying and duplication of effort.

Areas for improvement

- None identified.

The force demonstrates sustainable plans for Neighbourhood Policing.

Summary statement

The force and the police authority have convincingly shown how they plan to ensure that Neighbourhood policing will be sustained beyond April 2008.

Strengths

- An increase in the police precept will enable the force to maintain the momentum in respect of embedding Neighbourhood Policing during the next twelve months and beyond. Finance is in place for the force to recruit communications officers, sergeants and an additional ten PCSOs for SNTs, as well as community watch liaison officers to arrange and minute the SNT tasking meetings. The Chief Constable has a clear vision to take SNTs forward in the coming years, centring upon a fewer number of dedicated SNTs that are highly trained, highly visible and not bogged down by high investigative

workloads. Additional resources have also been re-invested in the central Neighbourhood Policing project team.

- The force has employed a volunteer co-ordinator on a temporary basis to develop and embed a framework within which volunteers can operate across the force. There is a bid currently before the police authority for funding to make this a permanent position. Nine volunteers are currently working in the force, with ten more undergoing vetting/clearance. They are primarily used to support the work of SNTs, for example by dealing with administrative tasks and requests from the public and liaising with parish councils. The aim of the force is to extend the use of volunteers in viewing CCTV and running community speedwatch schemes.
- The financial structure is in place to support the ongoing embedding of Neighbourhood Policing. Following considerable initial investment in SNTs, a further £450,000 has been set aside by the police authority which will in part lead to an increase in the numbers of PCSOs and volunteers and a community safety accreditation scheme. A separate estates strategy is actively considering ways in which the force SNTs can become more embedded in their communities.
- An additional £60,000 has been made available to recruit two administrative posts and an SNT development officer (communications and marketing) to support the SNT project team.
- All recommendations from HMIC, the NPIA and internal inspection work around SNTs have been pulled together into an overarching action plan, owned and overseen by the SNT project lead. An SNT project team on each BCU works in tandem with the force team to deliver sustainable improvements to Neighbourhood Policing and formal meetings take place between all three teams on a monthly basis.
- Leadership at BCU level is clear and unequivocal. Evidence was found of senior managers listening to the needs of SNT staff and driving change as a result: for example, standardised tasking sheets for PCSOs and SNT tasking meetings have been introduced.
- The senior management team on the Western BCU carries out monthly inspections, during which SNT priorities and websites are examined and response staff are questioned around their knowledge of, and contribution to, SNT priorities.
- The newly appointed Western BCU commander held a meeting with his SNT sergeants soon after his arrival to identify what was required to drive SNT business. As a consequence, a development team was established comprising an inspector, sergeant and constable to devise and implement an action plan which also took into account a number of areas identified through HMIC and NPIA reports, particularly around community engagement.
- There is a nominated lead police authority member for Neighbourhood Policing who has been a member of the project board from the outset. The authority continues to be strongly committed to Neighbourhood Policing.
- Every police authority member is 'linked' to an individual SNT and meets with SNT inspectors on a regular basis.
- The police authority has set aside its £25,000 partnership grant to focus on SNT work. SNTs can bid for funding from the grant if they are able to demonstrate that the bid is in line with their neighbourhood priorities and they have engaged with their police authority

link member.

- The police authority has established a scrutiny panel which has a clearly defined remit to scrutinise community engagement in Neighbourhood Policing. The terms of reference for the panel focus on the extent to which community engagement is undertaken and whether the information from community engagement is actively fed into SNT priorities and tasking.

Work in progress

- Ipswich police station has been identified as not meeting current or anticipated needs. The force is currently building business cases and reviewing alternative solutions, which are highlighted in the strategic estates document. The force is also in discussion with partners and anticipates progress towards a preferred building solution by early 2009. The costs assume a new build solution and take account of proceeds of the sale of existing buildings.

Area for improvement

- It is acknowledged by the force that the SNT project lead was removed prematurely. This has now been rectified with the appointment of an SNT inspector to head the project team and the secondment of two sergeants from the Eastern Area. The project board still exists with the same representatives, although the subgroup comprising partners has been disbanded and now only meets on a needs basis. The force SNT board meets quarterly, but in light of the significant change the force is likely to undergo in respect of Neighbourhood Policing, it is suggested that the frequency of these meetings should be reconsidered and thought be given to reforming the partnership subgroup on a more formalised basis.

Developing Citizen Focus Policing

2007/08 Developing Citizen Focus Policing Summary of judgement	Meeting the standard
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Meeting the standard

A citizen-focused ethos is embedded across the force, establishing an initial baseline.

Summary statement

The force fully understands the needs of its communities. Identified service improvements are frequently made to improve local service delivery. The force comprehensively communicates the National Quality of Service Commitment standards, the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime standards and the force corporate/accessibility standards to its communities.

Service users' views are partially sought and are partially used to improve service delivery

Strengths

- The force uses Swift, an independent market research company, to ascertain the satisfaction level of victims of crime through surveys. The findings are analysed and BCU commanders are challenged, through the performance delivery board, to improve service delivery.
- In addition to public surveys the force routinely uses public consultation processes, SNTs, partners and the police authority to gauge the public's view of the level of service the force is providing and how improvements could be made. For example, Suffolk Speaks is a consultation partnership between the police authority, county and district councils. A representative sample of Suffolk residents is consulted on issues ranging from budgets to crime and disorder and long-term priorities for public service providers.
- An electronic cutting system is used by the communications department to scan newspaper reports. The department aims to influence events before they appear in the press, thereby minimising any damage to the reputation of the force. Relevant news cuttings are transferred onto the force intranet so that staff can view how the force is portrayed by the media.
- Sergeants call back one victim of crime per officer on a monthly basis to assess the quality of service delivered using an IT-based system containing a number of standard questions. Any areas of underperformance or good work are identified and raised with the officer for developmental or feedback purposes.
- Through customer feedback the force identified the need to improve the manner and frequency with which victims were kept informed of progress on crimes committed against them, as this was having an impact on satisfaction levels. The communications department produced a series of internal posters to emphasise the importance of updating victims and, as a result, satisfaction levels have improved.

- The force has introduced event resolution units (ERUs) on BCUs to improve the management of non-urgent incidents. Their primary role is to resolve incidents by telephone, thereby negating the need to allocate a resource as well as reducing timescales to resolve events. However ERUs are also responsible for contacting callers for crime and non-crime related incidents, such as ASB, to provide them with an update of their incident, thereby providing a link between victims and local officers.
- SNTs have been proactive in engaging with employers of migrant workers to improve access to minority communities and opportunities to engage with them to shape local priorities. Examples of this include SNT information leaflets which are provided to migrant workers offering valuable information such as contact details. In addition, the force website has been adapted to enable it to be translated into the most common languages in the region.
- Where buildings are accessible to the public, force policy provides for full compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act. This includes interview rooms, toilets and front counters. Feedback from staff who have encountered issues in terms of physical access is also addressed.
- The Suffolk First For You programme has been used by the force for a number of years, its values being clearly aligned to the wider Citizen Focus ethos. Its aims are to give Suffolk the safest communities and provide the highest quality of service.
- The police authority has been a consistently strong supporter of Suffolk First For You and receives regular updates on the performance of the force under this programme.
- A police authority member will sit on the Citizen Focus programme board (CFPB), which was formally initiated on 16 July 2008. This will enhance linkage and development of the Citizen Focus agenda, which already included member involvement with the ACPO strategy for contact management.
- The police authority has established a scrutiny panel which has a clearly defined remit to scrutinise community engagement in Neighbourhood Policing. The terms of reference for the panel focus on the extent to which community engagement is undertaken and whether the information from community engagement is actively fed into SNT priorities and tasking.
- The police authority is using public surveys to gather information around the public's perception and opinions on policing matters. This information is used internally and also shared with partners to inform decision making. This sharing of information ensures a true county-wide perspective as in return access to information and community research carried out by partners and other agencies is facilitated, with this being fed into the authority's and constabulary's planning and decision-making process.
- Information relating to the National Quality of Service Commitment (NQoSC) is communicated to the public through the internet and to staff through the force intranet.
- Suffolk Constabulary, in conjunction with the local criminal justice board, has been selected as a beacon site for implementation of the Witness Charter.
- A PowerPoint presentation detailing the requirements of the Witness Charter and what it means was emailed to every member of staff prior to implementation of the charter. The presentation, Witness Charter documents and leaflets are on the force intranet site for the benefit of staff and the latter two have been placed on the force website for the benefit of the public.

- Compliance with the Witness Charter is ensured in a number of ways. These include witness care officers updating witnesses on matters such as bail conditions for suspects. In this instance the witness care supervisor would be responsible for dip sampling the records for compliance. In cases where the suspect has been charged, the officer in the case must update the witness every month. In such instances the officer's supervisor would be expected to dip sample the crime intelligence system to ensure this has been done.
- Officers are encouraged to inform victims of the standards of service they can expect in accordance with the VCoP.
- The force tasks a dedicated team of officers from neighbouring force professional standards departments to perform quality assurance and 'mystery shopper' checks. For example, an issue was identified in relation to how complaints against the police were being accepted and recorded. The mystery shopper team was tasked to visit a number of police stations and monitor the process and quality of service received when making the complaint. The findings were analysed and used to bring about improvements to the process.
- The policing and professional standards department (PPSD) provides service improvement documents where it identifies issues through the complaints procedure which require a change in service delivery. The force provided a number of examples of how direction and control complaints are assessed, resolved and used to improve service delivery. One particular example involved a complaint from anti-hunt activists who, over a three-year period, had submitted a number of complaints of illegal hunting activity with supporting evidence on DVD but had not received any response to their complaints or received back their DVDs. Through the service improvement procedure these complaints were investigated and addressed with the introduction of a single point of contact to receive future complaints from the activists, supported by a force policy documented circulated across the force.
- The PPCSD monitors complaints from the public and has a trigger mechanism to identify officers who frequently fall below the required standard of performance.
- An NQoSC working group was established in 2006 with all departments and BCUs represented. An action plan to monitor compliance with each of the NQoSC strands has been generated. Action owners are required to update the action plan (held on a shared database) to record planned, current or completed work along with costed timescales for delivery. This action plan is overseen by an inspector within PPCSD. Although there was a break in work undertaken during Operation Sumac, the group is being reinstated and progress reports will be provided to the CFPB.
- The force makes use of formal and informal consultation data to monitor its compliance with the NQoSC. This data is obtained from various sources including user satisfaction surveys, street meetings, telephone call-backs and community meetings.

Work in progress

- A robust strategic assessment process, carried out every six months, drives all force activity including the local community tasking process on each SNT. This process helps to define the delivery of policing in Suffolk and is in line with the vision of the Suffolk First For You programme. For example a survey carried out by the Suffolk Local Criminal Justice Board identified police response times as an issue among BME groups linked to fast food establishments. An action plan has now been developed to alert dispatchers in the force operations room (FOR) of the importance of responding more quickly to

incidents at these establishments.

- The force is planning to carry out its own public survey on a larger and broader scale than the one conducted by Swift. It aims to target a sample of 15,000 general users of police services (Swift targets only victims of crime) over a rolling 12-month period. The survey sample will be based on SNT postcodes, meaning that all respondents will either live or work in the force area. The force plans to target every SNT on a quarterly basis. All data received will be inputted onto the bespoke Suffolk management information and performance system for analysis.
- An internal 'health check' was carried out in autumn 2007 to review the levels of service delivery from the Neighbourhood Policing structure across the force. A sample of nine SNTs were reviewed, included a mix of urban, semi-urban and rural SNTs. The results have been used to develop a plan to adapt the Neighbourhood Policing structure across the force.
- The force is looking to pilot an online survey process, particularly targeting young people through schools, for example by setting up citizen panels to encourage feedback on various police-related issues on a monthly basis. The key to this will be what is fed back to SNTs. The aim is to inform SNTs of the top five issues identified by the community and the following month assess survey returns to measure the success of activity in addressing this top five list.

Area for improvement

- The force is considering replacing or re-branding the Suffolk First For You programme with a new Vision, Missions and Values programme which has been developed by the Chief Constable together with the force management board and the police authority. The force, however, is urged to exercise caution as the Suffolk First For You principles are extremely well embedded and clearly understood and embraced by a significant majority of the force.

The force has integrated Citizen Focus and operational activity, such as contact management, response, Neighbourhood Policing, and investigation through the criminal justice process.

Summary statement

The force has implemented corporate service standards expected of all staff when dealing with the public. Satisfaction and confidence performance is fully integrated into BCU and force performance management processes.

Strengths

- The Suffolk First For You programme is well embedded within the culture of the organisation at all levels and is the ideal vehicle upon which to drive the Citizen Focus agenda forward. Its values are incorporated into every departmental plan and every member of staff must have at least one Suffolk First For You related objective on their PDR. Awareness of diversity and customer focus issues within the programme are mandatory for internal promotion processes.
- Citizen Focus is seen as a cradle to grave concept, from the initial call from the public to the conclusion of any subsequent court case. The Citizen Focus department embraces

a range of force functions including call handling, criminal justice, custody (now centralised), diversity, crime reduction, SNTs, marketing and media (linked to public contact and therefore call handling) as well as BCUs. In an effort to make each department more citizen friendly, each department is looking at its own citizen journey and there is evidence of Citizen Focus becoming embedded across the force, although it is acknowledged that some departments are more advanced than others.

- The Citizen Focus department was created following a strategic review of the force structure and brings together a number of key business areas under the Citizen Focus banner. These areas include community safety, diversity, communication departments and criminal justice. The Citizen Focus ethos links all of these areas together with the aim of providing the best service to the community in all areas of business.
- While the force no longer has a statement of common purpose, the Suffolk First For You programme drives current corporate standards. Corporate call-handling standards (how the force will respond to calls) as well as external standards (informing the public of the standards of service it can expect to receive) are contained within a force policy document owned by the PPSD. The force publishes its call-handling standards through its three-year plan, a public document, as well as in local policing summaries, which have been distributed to every household in the county since June 2008.
- The force has published a grading policy and response to calls strategy. This document is designed to help operators within the FOR to provide a consistent response to call handling and event grading to ensure that resources are used to best effect.
- All operational officers carry contact cards showing their email address and force telephone numbers to give to members of the public. At first contact members of the public are asked to state their preferred method of contact by the force, eg telephone or email.
- The Suffolk First For You leadership seminars reinforced the message of the Citizen Focus agenda and were delivered across all departments including contact management, first response, Neighbourhood Policing, criminal justice units, front counters, crime management units and scenes of crime.
- An active intrusive management document provides guidance to sergeants on the supervisory standards required when managing their teams. The VCoP is included in the guide with an outline of the responsibilities of the police under the code and references to further information which can be found on the force intranet. The document also contains guidance on the minimum standards required for managing crimes which includes ensuring that the basic service standard for the investigation of a crime is adhered to.
- Respondents to BCU and FOR satisfaction surveys who stated they were completely satisfied are contacted to identify the high standards of service delivered. As well as developing learning opportunities, contact with these respondents enables good work to be acknowledged through positive PDR entries.
- The force's prestigious Sheepshanks award for community policing was recently won, for the first time, by a PCSO. This officer will now go forward as the force nomination for the national community officer of the year award. In 2007, the Suffolk Sheepshanks winner went on to become the runner-up at the national award ceremony.
- BCU commanders send personal messages congratulating staff for their good work, with a number of examples being read out at command team meetings. Staff can also

be recommended for area merit awards, with an example provided of three SNT officers receiving an award for their problem-solving activity to combat ASB in Newmarket. SNT sergeants are in receipt of special priority payments and BCU commanders have a sum of £5,000 set aside for bonus payments to their staff.

- Merit awards and commendations are given for delivering a high quality of service to the public. The Sheepshanks award recognises the contribution made by an officer to Neighbourhood Policing and, significantly, this is based on evidence provided by the local community.
- Data from the Swift satisfaction surveys, together with confidence level data, is routinely made available to BCU commanders on a district, but not as yet SNT, basis. These are discussed at the monthly BCU performance meetings where district commanders and crime managers are held to account.
- BCU performance meetings are used to drive service improvement and address any decline in service delivery or satisfaction levels. An example was provided of a decline in satisfaction levels among burglary victims in a particular district. An officer on restricted duties was tasked to contact victims and provide updates while at the same time providing some internal training to officers on their responsibilities under the VCoP. This resulted in satisfaction levels among burglary victims being restored to their previous high levels.

Work in progress

- The arrival of a newly appointed ACC has seen the establishment of the CFPB. It is intended that the CFPB will:
 - concentrate minds and promote the message that staff need to be customer led rather than performance led;
 - ensure staff are aware of the impact their actions have in relation to Citizen Focus and the public's confidence in the force;
 - hold workstream leads to account; and
 - as a forum, identify cross-cutting issues and their impact across departments.
- The Suffolk First For You programme board, with police authority membership, continues to meet twice a year. However this will be superseded by the CFPB which will continue to ensure Citizen Focus ideals remain within the culture of the constabulary.

Areas for improvement

- While the ethos of the Suffolk First For You programme is well embedded and understood within the force, the meaning of Citizen Focus is less understood. This was noticeable among front-line officers, while to call handlers it was viewed as something more appropriate to SNTs. It was also evident that staff had a tendency to operate in a silo mentality in that once their particular area of business was dealt with, issues thereafter were of no concern to them. The force work around the citizen journey faces a considerable challenge to address this and the force may wish to consider how understanding of Citizen Focus can be better cascaded to front-line officers and other key staff.
- There is no evidence that corporate voicemail messages are used. These tend to be generic and are rarely changed even when officers go on annual leave. This is despite

an instruction being circulated to SNTs at their launch on how to set up an SNT corporate voicemail message.

- Staff interviewed were generally dismissive of emails and rarely took detailed notice of their content. The force must reconsider how key Citizen Focus messages are delivered to staff.
- While the force and partners undertake a range of survey activity, there is considerable scope for this to be joined up.
- In the eyes of staff interviewed there remains a definite emphasis on volume crime performance (sanction detections) which they consider to be mutually exclusive to Citizen Focus policing.

The force can demonstrate that the relevant SPIs remain stable as a minimum.

	SPI 1e Satisfaction with the overall service provided		SPI 3b Satisfaction of users from minority ethnic groups with the overall service provided	SPI 3b Gap – comparison of satisfaction for white users and users from minority ethnic groups with the overall service provided
	Difference from MSF	2005/06 to 2007/08 change	2005/06 to 2007/08 change	+/-pp
Suffolk	+1.1pp	+3.3pp	-1.1pp	6.3pp

Summary statement

The SPI data shows that force performance is not significantly different to the average for the MSF.

The SPI data also shows that force performance has significantly improved compared with two years ago.

Satisfaction of users from minority ethnic groups with the overall service provided is unchanged.

There is a satisfaction gap between white users and users from minority ethnic groups with the overall service provided. Users from minority ethnic groups are 6.3 percentage points less satisfied.

Where there is a gap in satisfaction with service delivery between white users and users from minority ethnic groups, the force has evidenced that it is taking action to understand and narrow the gap.

Context

The SPI statistics are obtained from the PPAFs to March 2008. These statistics are survey based and have been analysed for statistical significance, which can be explained in lay terms as follows: 'The difference in performance between the force and the average for its MSF is unlikely to have occurred by chance.'

Note: When comparing the force's performance with previous years, year-on-year statistical significance is explained as follows: 'the difference in the force performance between the years compared is unlikely to have occurred by chance.'

There is a summary of the statistical analysis methodology at Appendix 2 at the end of this report.

Victims of crime and users of police services are surveyed using Suffolk Constabulary's own user satisfaction surveys, which comply to national standards and thus allow comparison with other forces. Surveys are based on a sample size of 600 interviews per BCU.

SPI 1e – satisfaction with the overall service provided.

83.2% of people surveyed in the year ending March 2008 were satisfied with the overall service provided, which is not significantly different to the average for the MSF.

Force performance significantly improved in the year ending March 2008; 83.2% of people surveyed were satisfied with the overall service provided, compared with 79.9% in the year ending March 2006.

SPI 3b – comparison of satisfaction for white users and users from minority ethnic groups with the overall service provided.

Force performance was unchanged in the year ending March 2008; 77.6% of users from minority ethnic groups were satisfied with the overall service provided, compared with 78.8% in the year ending March 2006.

There is a satisfaction gap between white users and users from minority ethnic groups with the overall service provided. Users from minority ethnic groups are 6.3 percentage points less satisfied.

Strengths

- None identified.

Work in progress

- The force understands that there remains a gap in satisfaction levels among some BME groups and work is ongoing to understand the reason for this gap. The force is aiming for parity across both white and BME service user areas but acknowledges that it needs to understand why some community groups remain dissatisfied in order to achieve this.

Areas for improvement

- None identified.

Appendix 1: Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

A

ACC	assistant chief constable
ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
AIU	area intelligence unit
ASB	anti-social behaviour

B

BCU	basic command unit
BME	black and minority ethnic

C

CDRP	crime and disorder reduction partnership
CFPB	Citizen Focus programme board

D

DCC	deputy chief constable
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E

ERU	event resolution unit
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F

FOR	force operations room
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H

HMI	Her Majesty's Inspector
HMIC	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary

M

MSF most similar force(s)

N

NIM National Intelligence Model

NPJA National Policing Improvement Agency

NQoS National Quality of Service Commitment

O

OCD organised crime directorate

OCG organised crime group

P

PC police constable

PCSO police community support officer

PDR personal development review

PPSD policing and professional standards department

S

SARA scanning, analysis, response, assessment

SNT safer neighbourhood team

SPI statutory performance indicator

STABS Suffolk tasking and briefing database

T

TTCG tactical tasking and co-ordination group

V

VCoP Code of Practice for Victims of Crime

Appendix 2: Assessment of Outcomes Using Statutory Performance Indicator Data

Context

The HMIC grading of Neighbourhood Policing and Citizen Focus for each force takes performance on the key SPIs as a starting point. These are derived from the PPAF and are survey based.

The survey results come from two different sources:

- **Neighbourhood Policing**
Results come from the BCS, which questions the general population. The annual sample size for the BCS is usually 1,000 interviews per force.
- **Developing Citizen Focus Policing**
Results come from forces' own user satisfaction surveys. The annual sample size for these user satisfaction surveys is 600 interviews per BCU.

Understanding survey results

The percentage shown for each force represents an estimate of the result if the whole relevant population had been surveyed. Around the estimate there is a margin of error based on the size of the sample surveyed (not on the size of the population).

This margin is known as a **confidence interval** and it will narrow or widen depending on how confident we want to be that the estimate reflects the views of the whole population (a common standard is 95% confident) and therefore how many people have to be interviewed. For example, if we have a survey estimate of 81% from a sample of approximately 1,000 people, the confidence interval would be plus or minus 3 and the appropriate statement would be that we can be 95% confident that the real figure in the population lies between 78% and 84%.

Having more interviewees – a larger sample – means that the estimate will be more precise and the confidence interval will be correspondingly narrower. Generally, user satisfaction surveys will provide a greater degree of precision in their answers than the BCS because the sample size is greater (1,000 for the **whole force** for the BCS, as opposed to 600 **for each BCU** for user satisfaction).

HMIC grading using survey results

In order to **meet the standard**, forces need to show no 'significant' difference between their score and the average for their MSF or against their own data from previous years. Consequently, force performance could be considered to be 'exceeding the standard' or 'failing to meet the standard' if it shows a 'significant' difference from the MSF average or from previous years' data.

HMIC would not consider force performance as 'exceeding the standard' if SPI data were travelling in the wrong direction, ie deteriorating. Likewise, credit has been given for an upward direction in SPI data even if performance falls below the MSF average.

Understanding significant difference

The calculation that determines whether a difference is statistically significant takes into account the force's confidence interval and the confidence interval of its MSF.¹ The results of the calculation indicate, with a specified degree of certainty, whether the result shows a real difference or could have been achieved by chance.

This greater level of precision is the reason why a difference of approximately two percentage points is statistically significant² in the case of the user satisfaction indicator, whereas a difference of around four percentage points is required for the BCS indicators. If the sample size is small, the calculation is still able to show a statistically significant difference but the gap will have to be larger.

[Produced by HMIC based on guidance from the NPIA Research, Analysis and Information Unit, Victoria Street, London.]

¹ The BCS results are also corrected to take account of intentional 'under-sampling' or 'over-sampling' of different groups in the force area.

² It is likely that there is a real, underlying difference between data taken at two different times or between two populations. If sufficient data is collected, the difference may not have to be large to be statistically significant.