

Report to Police and Crime Commissioners on Norfolk and Suffolk's Out of Court Disposal Scrutiny Panel

Meeting date: 5 June 2025

About the Panel

Norfolk and Suffolk Constabulary's Out of Court Disposal Scrutiny Panel has been set up to independently scrutinise the use of Out of Court Disposals in response to national recommendations, following concerns about their appropriate use.

The role of the panel is to ensure that the use of Out of Court Disposals is appropriate and proportionate, consistent with national and local policy, and considers the victims' wishes where appropriate.

The panel membership comprises a range of criminal justice services professionals including representatives from the police, Criminal Justice Service, Youth Justice Service, Magistrates and Police and Crime Commissioner offices who aim to bring transparency to the use of Out of Court Disposals to increase public understanding and confidence in their use. Findings of the panel, together with responses to recommendations made, are to be reported publicly by the two Offices of the Police and Crime Commissioners to support this aim.

How the Panel operates

The panel independently review and discuss a selection of anonymised case files that have been resolved by use of an Out of Court Disposal within Norfolk or Suffolk and conclude whether the method of disposal fits one of three categories:

- Appropriate and consistent with national and local guidelines
- Appropriate but with comments/observations from the panel
- Inappropriate use of Out of Court Disposal

Decisions reached by the panel on each case file are recorded, together with observations and recommendations, to inform changes of policy or practice. The panel also consider performance information regarding levels and use of Out of Court Disposals, changes to legislation, and policies and practice to support them in their role. The panel cannot endorse, resend or alter individual decisions already made.

Panel business

The panel met on 5 June 2025 and seven panel members were present. The panel discussed:

- Scrutiny of case files
- Rationale and file selection

The Panel findings

Eight cases were scrutinised: four Norfolk and four Suffolk cases. These cases were selected at random and included both adult (six) and youth (two) disposals. No individual group of people were specifically selected based solely on characteristics (such as perceived race) on this occasion, however the cases scrutinised represented a wide range of members of our communities.

Norfolk cases

The four Norfolk cases scrutinised by the panel were deemed to have met the evidential standard and were concluded to be appropriate and consistent with national and local guidelines.

Suffolk cases

The four Suffolk cases scrutinised by the panel were also deemed to have met the evidential standard and were concluded to be appropriate and consistent with national and local guidelines. However, further explanation was sought in relation to two cases.

Further discussion took place around an Outcome 22 disposal on the Suffolk Youth matter in view of the number of investigations that were linked to the defendant. It was confirmed that since the engagement with Youth Justice Services (YJS) and partner agencies has taken place, the rate of offending has dropped.

It was also confirmed that the individual is continuing to engage with YJS and partner agencies in an attempt to decriminalise matters as much as possible and therefore the disposal was accepted as appropriate by the panel.

Further discussion took place around an Adult Community Resolution which was the result of the offender committing multiple offences which were all captured on CCTV. It was confirmed to the panel that none of the victims were prepared to support the police and therefore a Community Resolution was deemed the most appropriate way of dealing with the incident. This was accepted as appropriate by the panel.

Performance data

Data was provided by Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies on the number of Out of Court Disposals for each force for the Period of January 2025 to March 2025. Please see the data broken down by type of Out of Court Disposals for each force below:

Norfolk Constabulary data

Norfolk Constabulary				
Outcome	January	February	March	Total
Type 2 - Caution Youth	2	2	15	19
Type 3 - Caution Adult	72	49	60	181
Type 3A - Caution Adult - alternate offence.	8	7	2	17
Adult Caution - conditional	3	1	8	12
Type 4 - TIC - Taken into Consideration	35	33	45	113
Type 5 - Offender has died	3	0	2	5
Type 7 - Cannabis/Khat Warning	0	1	0	1
Type 8 - Community resolution (Crime)	235	211	233	679
Type 22 - Diversionary, educational or intervention activity, resulting from the crime report, has been undertaken and it is not in the public interest to take any further action.	15	11	21	47
Grand Total	373	315	386	1074

Suffolk Constabulary data

Suffolk Constabulary				
Outcome	January	February	March	Total
Type 2 - Caution Youth	6	1	4	11
Type 3 - Caution Adult	69	41	46	156
Type 3A - Caution Adult - alternate offence.	1	2	1	4
Adult Caution - conditional	1	2	9	12
Type 4 - TIC - Taken into Consideration	4	1	9	14
Type 5 - Offender has died	1	0	0	1
Type 7 - Cannabis/Khat Warning	3	1	0	4
Type 8 - Community resolution (Crime)	150	123	149	422
Type 22 - Diversionary, educational or intervention activity, resulting from the crime report, has been undertaken and it is not in the public interest to take any further action.	15	7	4	26
Grand Total	250	178	222	650

Next meeting:

Thursday 4 September 2025.