

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

Meeting date: Thursday 4 December 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, rescind or alter individual decisions already made.

Panel business

The panel met on 4 December 2025 and nine 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 (four) and youth (four) 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. However, further explanation was sought in relation to one case.

An additional explanation was provided in relation to a youth disposal which was initially recorded as attempted burglary but completed as a criminal damage matter. The additional explanation was accepted by the panel, and the Outcome 22 deferred prosecution was judged as appropriate.

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.

An additional explanation was provided in relation to a conditional caution relating to a drug offence which was incorrectly allocated to the Norfolk support charity instead of Suffolk. It was confirmed that the offender still paid and attended an online rehabilitation course which was agreed as appropriate by the panel.

An additional explanation was offered for a youth caution matter where there was reference given to the offender refusing to engage with the Youth Justice Services. Further information was provided which confirmed that the appropriate referrals were made to partner agencies to ensure the required support could be provided. This was agreed by the panel as appropriate.

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 July 2025 to September 2025. Please see the data broken down by type of Out of Court Disposals for each force below:

Norfolk Constabulary data

Norfolk Constabulary				
Outcome	July	August	September	Total
Type 2 - Caution Youth	3	2	3	8
Type 2A – Caution Youth – alternate offence.	0	0	1	1
Youth Conditional Caution	0	1	0	1
Type 3 - Caution Adult	59	54	64	177
Type 3A - Caution Adult - alternate offence.	2	7	6	15
Adult Caution - conditional	3	0	2	5
Type 4 - TIC - Taken into Consideration	50	14	12	76
Type 5 – Offender has died	5	0	0	5
Type 7 - Cannabis/Khat Warning	0	1	0	1
Type 8 - Community resolution (Crime)	221	218	268	707
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.	28	16	18	62
Grand Total	371	313	374	1,058

Suffolk Constabulary data

Suffolk Constabulary				
Outcome	July	August	September	Total
Type 2 - Caution Youth	3	0	5	8
Type 2A – Caution Youth – alternate offence.	1	0	0	1
Type 3 - Caution Adult	47	52	36	135
Type 3A - Caution Adult - alternate offence.	3	2	5	10
Adult Caution - conditional	4	2	3	9
Type 4 - TIC - Taken into Consideration	18	13	18	49
Type 5 – Offender has died	2	1	2	5
Type 7 - Cannabis/Khat Warning	0	1	0	1
Type 8 - Community resolution (Crime)	182	193	144	519
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.	27	11	14	52
Grand Total	287	275	227	789

Next meeting:

Thursday 5 March 2026