

Performance and Resources Scrutiny Meeting Programme 2019

Police and Crime Plan Priority Deep Dive Reporting

Report to: the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex

Deep Dive Title:	Police and Crime Plan Priority Deep Dive: Protecting children and vulnerable people from harm
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Date of Approval:	12th September 2019

1.0 **Purpose of Report**

This paper is a deep-dive assessment of protecting children and vulnerable people from harm. It sets out resource investment, key initiatives and activities, demand, performance and future work.

2.0 **Recommendations**

The board are invited to note the contents of this report and that the following priority actions are being progressed by the force:

1. To review resourcing levels of CAIT and ASAIT against current workloads.
2. To review resources available to effectively monitor and manage Registered Sex Offenders (RSOs) within the MOSOVO teams.
3. To build capacity alongside or within the POLIT structure regarding grooming of children.

4. Creation of an ATHENA marker to identify reports received from Online Child Abuse Activist Groups (OCAAGs) so a full picture of their involvement within Essex is available.
5. A full set of KPI's and Redline Measures for C&PP will be finalised by 9th October 2019.

3.0 Executive Summary

For the purpose of this paper, 'Protecting children and vulnerable people from harm' will focus on seven key areas:

- Sexual offending (adults and children)
- Domestic rape
- Management of Sexual Offenders and Violent Offenders
- Online Investigations
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and criminal exploitation
- Mental Health
- Fraud and vulnerability of the elderly

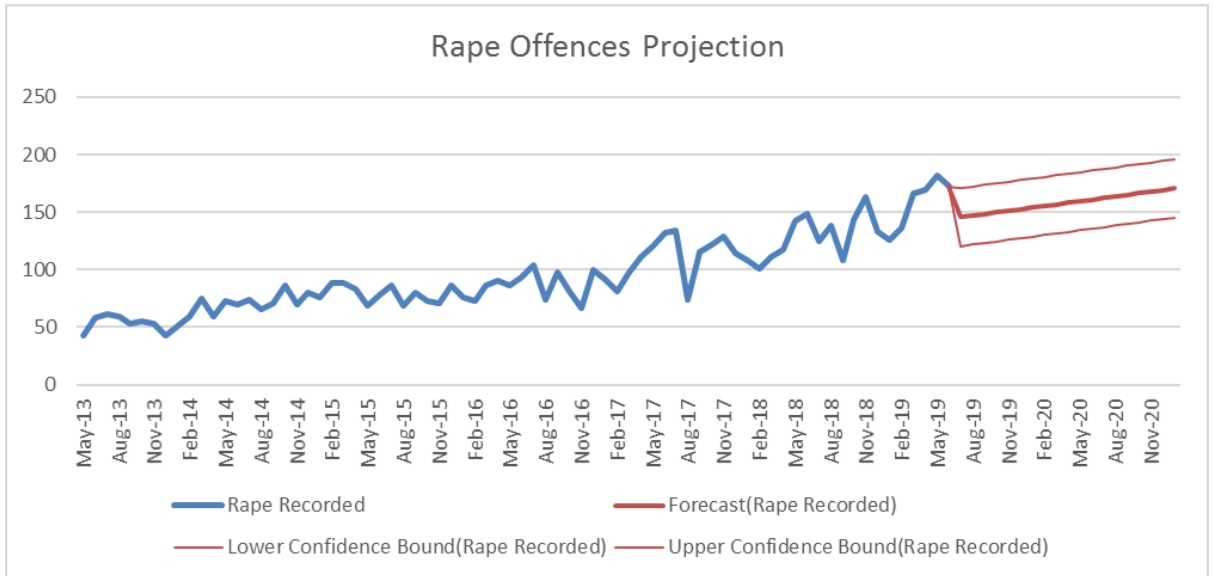
The responsibility for responding to, investigating and safeguarding these offences rests with a number of teams within Crime and Public Protection (C&PP), Local Policing Areas (LPAs), Operational Policing Command (OPC) and the Serious Crime Directorate (SCD).

Over the last 3 years record crime of this nature in Essex, and nationally, has increased significantly. The resources dedicated to these areas has remained relatively static although technological and partnership efficiencies have been prioritised to create some capacity. However, without significant additional investment this is not sustainable due to anticipated continued increases in demand.

These pressures are clearly identified in the Force Management Statement / relevant risk registers and will be central to the force's planning for additional resources (proportion of the 20,000 uplift) over the next three years.

In addition to and supporting the resourcing considerations set out at recommendations 1 to 3 the force will undertake a post implementation review of the Crime and Public Protection Command as it is four years since this was last formally completed.

The graph below highlights the very significant increases in rape offences recorded over the past 5 years. These sustained increases are broadly representative of the increases seen in other crime types highlighted in this report. The red lines are a statistical projection of likely future offending. Although not an exact science the projections are based on a large data set and the upward trend appears to be clear.



4.0 Deep Dive

4.1 Sexual offending (adults and children)

Resources

Sexual offending against adults and children is investigated by Public Protection Investigation Units (PPIU). There are three PPIUs aligned to the Local Policing Areas of Essex Police; North, South and West. Each PPIU is overseen by a DCI and includes Adult Sexual Abuse Investigation Teams (ASAIT) and Child Abuse Investigation Teams (CAIT). The total number of staff for the PPIUs is currently 11 DIs, 29 DS' and 113 DCs. The three PPIUs are supported by 41 police staff.

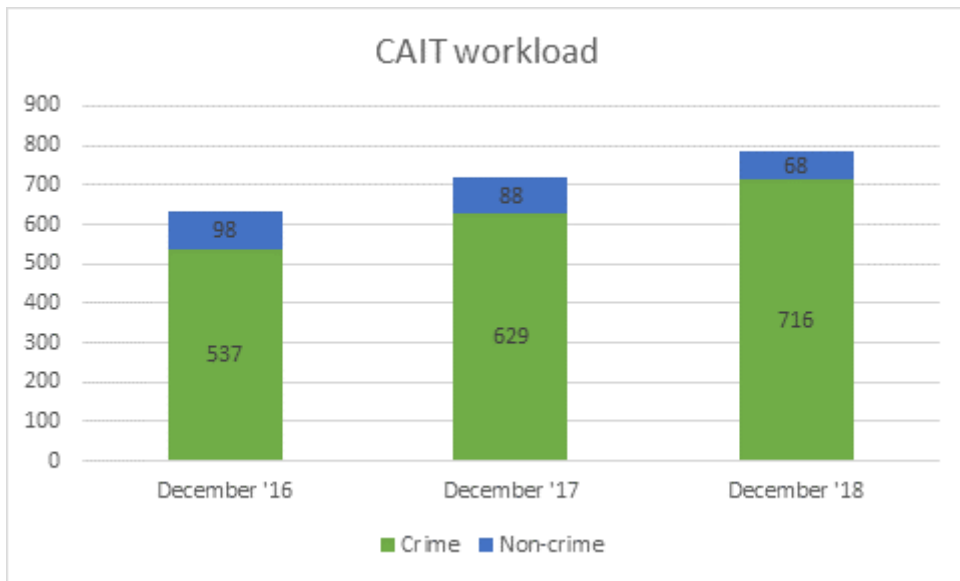
ASAIT investigate any rape or sexual assault by penetration offences against adults or any serious sexual offence deemed appropriate by the PPIU DI. Due to an increase in recorded offences the overall ASAIT workload has increased by 49.5% since 2016/17, with each officer currently carrying 11.5 crimes compared to 7.7 crimes in 2016¹.

CAIT deal with internal and external referrals and with a wide range of offences, from physical abuse and neglect through to sexual abuse and child death. Since 2016/17 the overall CAIT workload has increased by 4.6%, however officers are currently carrying 9.9 criminal investigations each compared to 6.9 in 2016², an increase of 43.3%. This should improve with the additional staff arriving in September 2019. The following graph displays a

¹ Snapshot demand figures on 07 Dec 2016

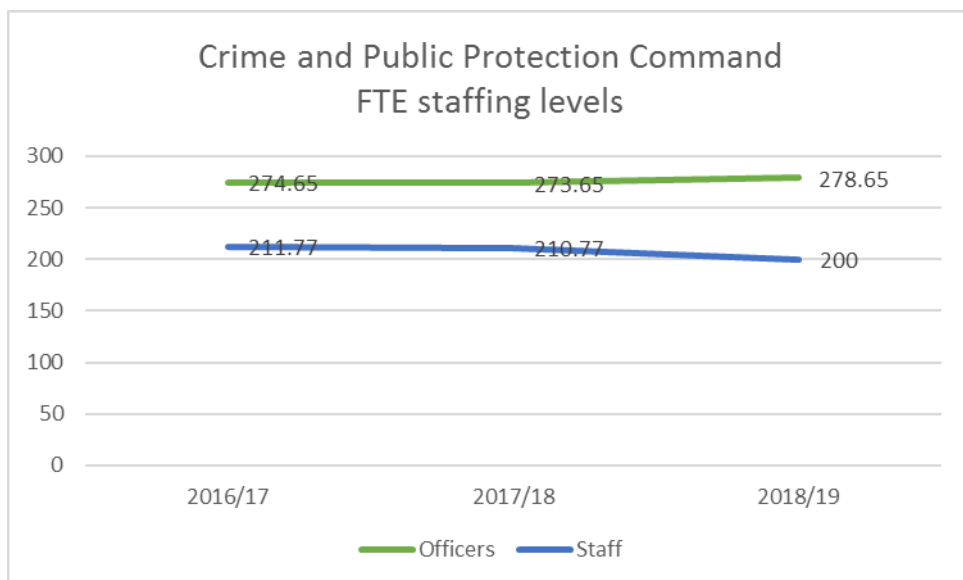
² Snapshot demand figures on 07 Dec 2016

breakdown of crimes and non-crimes within CAIT workloads since December 2016.



In addition to the PPIUs, The QUEST team, which investigates non-recent child sexual abuse (penetrative) within agreed terms, became operational on 18th February 2019. They are currently staffed by a police staff SIO, a DS and four investigators. Three further officers are expected to be in post by September 2019. Once the new officers are in post the team will be able to take on more work including non-recent abuse that is non-penetrative.

Despite the increase in demand, Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staffing levels have remained almost static across the Crime and Public Protection Command:



In January 2018, a risk was raised around staff recruitment and retention challenges in the C&PPC (see 7.0).

Key initiatives and activities

In order to identify barriers to improved performance across agencies, an independent multi-agency Rape Scrutiny Panel is in the process of being implemented. Terms of Reference (TOR) were agreed with CPS in August 2019. The panel will be quarterly and chaired by Essex Police for the first year to aid implementation. Panels will be themed with partner agencies invited to identify cases within the theme they believe should be scrutinised. The initial meeting of the panel to agree TOR with wider membership and set out roles and expectations is planned for October 2019. The first full Panel review is expected scheduled for November 2019.

To increase victim engagement and support for rape investigations, the Synergy Essex First Responder Project was launched as a pilot in January 2019. The project ensures that every victim of rape in Essex will speak to an Independent Sexual Violence Advocate (ISVA) within 24 hours of reporting. The project now continues in an official capacity. Essex was the first force in the UK to offer this level of service with the ambition that this will decrease the number of victims that disengage and provide enhanced support for victims through the Criminal Justice System. Between January and June 2019 there were 425 referrals altogether. Of the referrals around 90% were female and around 80% were adults. 329 of the referrals were viable and breakdown as follows: 38% were active, 8% awaiting contact, 24% declined service, 27% did not engage, 1% disengaged and 2% were planned/unplanned closure. As the project is in its early stages it is too soon to measure its impact from report to court.

To increase evidential opportunities and victim support, a joint training package aimed at the voluntary sector has been developed between Essex Police and CARA (Centre for Action on Rape and Abuse in Essex). It covers what to do if a person has been the victim of a sexual offence. CARA deliver the training to any organisation that requests it. To date they have trained 37 volunteers of the SOS bus in Colchester and Chelmsford. The delivery of the training is an ongoing service they provide to agencies along with their other functions.

To enable more collaborative working between agencies around child safeguarding, a joint Essex Police and Social Care Forum is in place and is held quarterly, alternating between venues in the North and Mid quadrants. The purpose is to support and enable local organisations and agencies to work collaboratively in a system where children are safeguarded and their welfare promoted. The forum's functions include early identification and analysis of new safeguarding issues and emerging threats. It also facilitates effective information sharing, a shared understanding of everyone's roles and challenges, which enhances joint working. The forum provides dedicated points of contact to whom enquiries can be directed in order to secure information or guidance expeditiously and explores joint training opportunities. The forum is chaired by the North CAIT DI and the Local Service manager for the Assessment & Investigation team for Children and Young People with

Disabilities. Other attendees include DAIT, LPT and Ops Centre Inspectors, Hub Service Manager and managers from Children's Social Care.

Key internal/external influencers

The case of R v Allan, a rape trial that was dropped by the CPS at Croydon Crown Court in December 2017, made national headlines and brought attention to digital disclosure and the examination of victim's phones. Essex Police introduced a Disclosure Management Document (DMD) for investigations and updated Standard Operating Procedures to include a new case action plan (CAP), which is completed by the OIC and ratified by the DS. The new CAP includes digital forensics and considerations.

In January 2019 The Office for National Statistics (ONS) released its latest data on crime in England and Wales, which covered the year ending September 2018. The figures confirmed that sexual offences reported to the police were still on the increase, continuing a trend that has lasted over four years. The statistics revealed reported rapes increased by 16% over the year, and sexual assaults by 13%. This amounts to an overall 14% increase in police-recorded sexual offences. The ONS suggests this increase is most likely a result of both better recording practices on the part of many police forces, which had previously been found inadequate by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS), and increased willingness of victims and survivors of these offences to report, rather than a rise in the number of sexual offences being perpetrated. The latest Crime Survey for England & Wales (CSEW) figures, to March 2018, reflected a 0.7% rise in sexual offences taking place.

4.2 Domestic rape

Resources

A domestic rape is the offence of rape, where the suspect and victim are aged 16 or over, who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality.

Domestic abuse cases involving allegations of adult rape or serious sexual offences are investigated by the Adult Sexual Abuse Investigation Team (ASAIT) unless a more serious crime has occurred that is not a sexual offence in which case the Domestic Abuse Investigation Teams (DAIT) will investigate.

Key initiatives and activities & Key internal/external influencers

For the purpose of this report, domestic rape is largely undifferentiated from adult rape. The Deep Dive – 'Breaking the cycle of domestic abuse', will

provide detail about the investigation of domestic abuse and support available to victims.

4.3 Management of sexual offenders and violent offenders

Resources

Management of Sexual Offenders and Violent Offenders (MOSOVO) is carried out at five locations across the county with responsibility for Managing Registered Sex Offenders, Managing Violent Offenders, and Multi-agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA). MOSOVO current staffing levels are two DI's, five DS' and 16 DCs. MOSOVO are also supported by 17 police staff.

The work of the MOSOVO team is by its very nature preventative. The work is designed to minimise harm from those convicted of sexual offences.

MOSOVO staffing levels have not increased since 2016 (see 4.1). Over this period of time the number of RSOs in the community has increased by 15.9%. In August 2019 there were 100 pending visits (6.3% of RSOs in the community). Importantly, in August 2019, there were no very high or high outstanding visits or ARMS risk assessments for Police Led Offenders.

Key initiatives and activities

MOSOVO have introduced Intelligence Led Management (ILM) for a cohort of low risk RSOs that are deemed to pose the lowest risk to the public. This cohort are risk assessed using approved methods and managed separately from other RSOs. A dedicated team use police computer systems to monitor the activity of these offenders and dynamically risk manage them. As a number of this cohort are also subject to Sexual Harm Prevention Orders (SHPOs), there are enhanced enforcement opportunities available for their management. The introduction of ILM and the specialist MOSOVO support team has enabled other MOSOVO officers to intensify their focus on the higher risk RSOs whilst ensuring Essex has a robust system for managing all RSOs proportionately.

MOSOVO are operating to the latest NPCC guidance in relation to creating bespoke risk assessments based intelligence for all its offenders. This steps away from the set MAPP guidelines from 2009, which saw Very High and High risk offenders visited quarterly, medium risk visited twice a year and low risk visited yearly. The bespoke visit regime allows MOSOVO teams to provide a more flexible response to monitoring RSOs who are led by probation. The South Teams are also running a pilot scheme which has embedded a police officer into probation to improve the early management of RSOs. Early indications suggest that joint visits are ensuring that ARMS (Active Risk Management System) assessments are being completed and bespoke visit regimes can be implemented at the earliest opportunity. This will create more effective management and efficiencies longer term. If this proves successful it will be rolled out in the North and West of the county.

Key internal/external influencers

The number of RSOs managed by MOSOVO has increased on average by 100 every year for the last three years. However, there has been an increase of 78 sex offenders registered in Essex within the last 10 weeks. If this continues this would result in a significantly greater increase (circa 400 more RSOs in a year). The Force are working to understand whether this rate of increase will continue.

The increase in the number of Registered Sex Offenders is influenced by sentencing trends. The number of people convicted of sexual offences who were required to register as a RSO increased steadily until 2017/18. The rate then stabilised but in recent months courts have started imposing greater sentences on offenders and work to assess whether this is an on-going trend is underway.

Additionally, many sex offenders have to register for long periods of time, with some registering for life (although they do have a right of appeal after completing a specified period of time subject to the notification requirements). This has a cumulative effect on the total number of offenders required to register at any one time.³

4.4 Online investigations

Resources

The Police Online Investigation Team (POLIT) has responsibility for investigations across the county into offences involving indecent images of children and paedophilia material held on a computer. This unit respond to referrals from other agencies (most significantly the National Crime Agency) and provide a proactive capability utilising systems to detect those people in Essex viewing and distributing indecent images of children via the internet. Current POLIT staffing levels are one DI, three DS' and 21 constables who are a mixture of DCs and PCs. There are also nine police staff supporting POLIT. POLIT will also receive a further five proactive DCs from this year's precept uplift. POLIT have also requested a growth post through the budget setting process for a Victim Identification Officer (VID) to assist officers across the force identify victims of live abuse online.

³ MAPPA Annual Report 2017/2018 – Ministry of Justice

The Force continues to review dealing with grooming offences within POLIT but this will require an increase in the establishment. The ambition is for them to work alongside POLIT to investigate offences of grooming children online, undercover investigations instigated by the Regional Organised Crime Units and reports received from Online Child Abuse Activist Groups (OCAAGs). Offences of grooming children online and reports from OCAAGs are being retained and investigated in LPAs until the formation of this team.

Key initiatives and activities

All of the POLIT team are now fully accredited having passed the National Grading Training. This now ensures that POLIT staff uploading indecent images to CAID (Child Abuse Image Database) are fully compliant with the national requirements.

POLIT piloted additional work with the NCA, which led to some high priority investigations as a result of continued use of covert policing systems identifying offenders. POLIT have assisted public protection colleagues on a number of live abuse and high priority cases where the victim ID officer was used to good effect. This has resulted in comments from the judiciary about the professionalism of POLIT.

Breck's Last Game (an educational tool for schools based on the online grooming of Breck Bednar via gaming resulting in his murder in Grays) was launched in April 2019. Following this, Essex County Council's Youth Service, in partnership with Essex Police, held a number of events across April. These five events reached 401 year-eight students and a number of schools have opted to take up additional training with Essex County Youth Service (the delivery partner). This is an ongoing initiative that will continue in the new academic year.

In July 2019 POLIT issued a press release and conducted a radio interview to highlight their work and identify demand issues.

The Dot.com project launched in Essex in June and will be subject to a National Launch in Early 2020. The force has worked with Dot.com Digital to support the development of an online platform⁴ designed to teach primary school age children about online grooming, exploitation, and bullying. An, IT Company, 2Simple, are assisting in developing the platform which will launch nationally in the New Year. Dot Com Digital are seeking assistance from 2Simple in creating a mobile App version of the platform. Essex Police are maintaining a relationship with both parties in order to observe development of this new App and any benefits it might provide in tackling CSE.

Key internal/external influencers

⁴ The Dot Com platform has been cited as a resource in the Department for Education guidance for teaching online safety in schools 2019.

The increase in funding for Regional Organised Crime Units (ROCU) and the uplift in staffing on these teams has impacted on the work coming from these departments into POLIT. The investigations are not indecent images of children (IIOC) but online contact offences which are complex and resource intensive involving some of the most dangerous offenders to children. Most if not all that have travelled to meet a child this year have been remanded in custody.

4.5 Child Sexual and criminal exploitation

Resources

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. CSE happens when a young person is encouraged – or forced – to take part in sexual activity.

Child criminal exploitation is where a child is coerced into committing a crime. This type of exploitation is strongly linked with gangs and county lines, which is outside the scope of this report.

At present there is no specific team to deal with CSE investigations and it falls to other units dependent on offence type. The Operations Centre, based at headquarters, triage all reported CSE incidents as well as processing and responding to referrals from other agencies. The CSE Triage Team consists of one DI, one DS, two DC and three police staff. In January 2020, a complex and organised CSE team will form, staffed by one DS and nine DCs.

Key initiatives and activities

CSE Triage have a dedicated CSE hotline for the public to call and discuss concerns. Since July 2018 five crime and 12 non-crime calls have been received.

The rise in child exploitation, particularly relating to gangs and trafficking, has led to the CSE Triage becoming focussed around the high risk children identified, with more streamlined approaches taken to standard risk.

Operation Tuna (formerly known as Makesafe) is an initiative aimed at training staff in hotels to recognise CSEA (Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse) and how their premises might be utilised to commit offences. Since May 2018, 80% of hotels in Essex have been offered CSEA training. LPAs are looking at problem premises to target for enforcement and further training.

The force has started to utilise the 'SET⁵ CSE Toolbox' which has replaced 'The SET CSE Risk Assessment Toolkit'. This has been created in consultation with the national CSE Response Unit contains improved guidance for professionals in order that they can better understand the vulnerabilities in young people's lives.

The Catalyst project is a collaboration between the force and the University of Essex. Data extracted from Athena around CSEA has been provided and the university are in the process of mapping where patterns and trends occur relating to teenage rape offences. The anonymised data is inputted into a secure online platform which provides useful mapping, charts, graphs and key findings from that data. The platform will also overlay other external data bases which will provide extra value. The platform is due for completion on 17th September 2019 once handed over to Essex police the force will continue to add data to the platform. Data from the platform will be analysed and made available to commands.

CSEA is a broad area of policing, as technology develops the methods of offending change and investigative methods need to evolve. There is work underway to further develop the detective career pathway within Essex Police. The focus is to ensure candidates with the right skill set are identified for placement in Investigation Hub Posts particularly CAIT vacancies. The force also seeks to prioritise delivery of SCADIP⁶ following its redevelopment through the college of policing. An increased programme of CPD⁷ days is in progress across the command to further enhance the abilities of officers and staff.

Key internal/external influencers

Online CSEA offences are increasing, particularly the number of indecent image and child communication offences. Currently, online offences amount to 11% of the force case load for CSEA offences but less than 2% of the forces case load for sexual offences.

Developments in technology mean that online CSE is constantly evolving. According to Europol, mobile connectivity, growing internet coverage in developing countries and the development of pay-as-you-go streaming solutions are furthering the trend in the commercial live streaming of child sexual abuse. The NPCC has highlighted that criminals are exploiting evolving technology which provides tools to preserve their anonymity online more quickly than law enforcement are able to respond to these changes.

Although no child or young person is immune from CSEA certain life experiences may indicate an increased vulnerability. Recognising these

⁵ Southend, Essex and Thurrock

⁶ Specialist Child Abuse Investigation Development Programme

⁷ Continuing Professional Development

characteristics will assist police in identifying victims of CSEA. Heightened vulnerability factors include⁸:

- Having a learning disability
- Being in care (particularly those in residential care or those with interrupted care histories)
- Previous experience of neglect and abuse
- Substance misuse issues
- Economic vulnerability

POLIT work with a number of charities that support suspects and their families after they have been arrested for IIOC offences; however, it was identified that there was no support for those who have been voluntarily interviewed. POLIT have been working closely with Phoenix Futures and this gap has now been reduced.

4.6 Mental Health

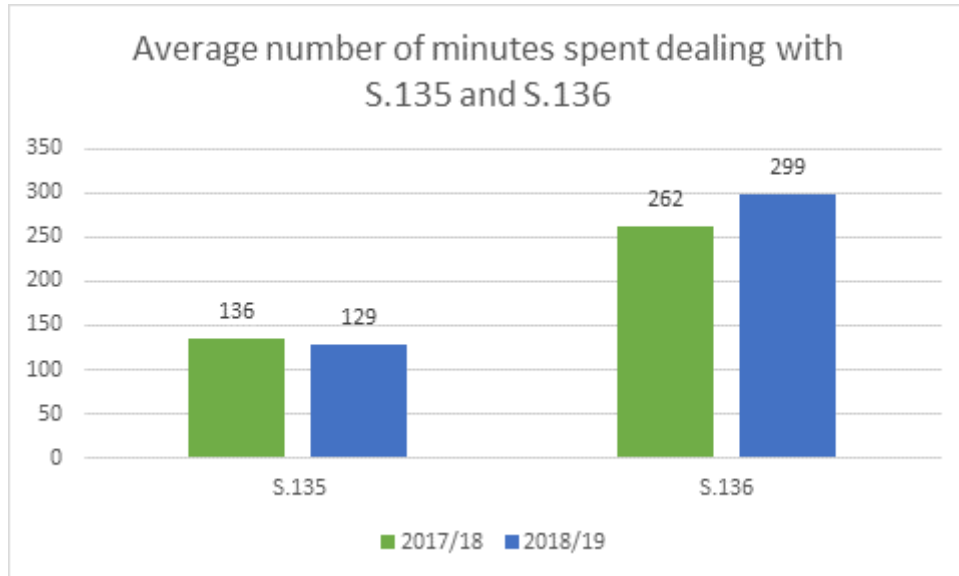
Resources

Mental Health incidents across Essex are mainly dealt with by Local Policing Teams (LPT), who will respond to them as part of their core business. These incidents could include S.136 detentions or any incident involving a person with mental health issues. The time police spend dealing with a detention under S.136 power can vary but is often lengthy and dependent on factors such as the medical condition of the patient and the availability of a place at a secure mental health facility. In 2017/2018 the longest time Essex officers spent dealing with a S.136 patient was just over 60 hours, in 2018/2019 this figure was 47 hours and 33 minutes. On both occasions the patients required treatment in A&E and there would have been risks if police had left prior to the patient being deemed medically fit.

The graph below illustrates the average number of minutes officers spent dealing with S.135 and S.136 in the period 2017/2018 and 2018/2019. ⁹

⁸ Based on certain cohorts of children possessing these characteristics being over represented on CSEA statistics [Source: CSEA Guide for Professionals University of Bedfordshire 2018]

⁹ Data was not recorded prior to these years and the data is reliant upon the completion of form A287



The Operational Support Group (OSG) action all non-urgent requests from mental health professionals to execute Section 135 Mental Health Act warrants. If the matter is urgent it is referred to the LPA Inspector to allocate resources. In general a S.135 warrant will take up an entire shift for a double crewed unit. The ambulance waiting times are currently around 60 minutes. In 2019 YTD there have been 150 requests compared to 82 for the same period in 2018.

Across the force there are seven Mental Health SPOCs, who are aligned geographically with their LPAs. There are 14 Mental Health in-patient establishments, which are a mixture of public and private units.

In addition there is a Mental Health Street Triage Team, which provides an immediate joint screening assessment and support to those who may be experiencing a major mental health crisis. This team consists of a police staff supervisor, six PCs, 25 SCs (Special Constables), one clinical lead nurse, three and a half clinical nurses and ten clinical bank nurses. The team supply two response vehicles, one north and one south, between 1000 hours – 0200 hours, jointly staffed by a police officer and a clinical nurse. They provide an improved response to people in crisis and help reduce demand on resources by avoiding S.136 (where possible) by providing an alternative framework of treatment and care.

Key initiatives and activities

The SIM (Serenity Integrated Mentoring) project, in which a police officer is embedded in an NHS mental health team, continues in the North and Mid CCG area of the county. This team has been in place just over a year and is already showing positive results. By the end of the first year the eight service users on the project have saved £111,000 on mental health in-patient stays and £43,700 on missing person searches¹⁰. The service now has ten users and the project is looking at running a tier two system taking on people who

¹⁰ Figures provided by Street Triage Team

are not quite active enough for SIM, with the aim of preventing them getting to the level of the SIM service users by working with them from early on to try to slow / prevent their escalation.

The restraint protocol is now live for Essex police. This is a multi-agency protocol governing the use of restraint in mental health settings.

A problem profile on mental health has been completed (July 2019) and has been shared with partners. A meeting is scheduled in September 2019 to further discuss.

The NPCC lead and College of Policing have agreed a new national definition of mental ill health for all forces to adopt. A working group are devising a media/training strategy to inform staff, which will need to be supported by guidance.

By August 2019, all forces should review their existing partnership mental health triage services to assess their effectiveness, and the environment they are operating in. The College of Policing will provide a template to help forces benchmark their triage activity. Essex has applied to the College of Policing for them to conduct an independent review and are awaiting confirmation that they will conduct the review or the template they will provide forces. This is likely to be after September and the National Mental Health Conference lead by the College of Policing.

HMICFRS have stated that all officers will receive a College of Policing mental health package. This will be completed within Essex Police by December 2019.

Essex Police have developed a 'Strategic Aims for Mental Health' document, which is currently out for consultation with partners.

Key internal/external influencers

Police officers are increasingly being used as the service of default in responding to people with mental health problems. The HMICFRS report 'Picking up the pieces'¹¹, identified that police are forced to deal with tens of thousands of mental health incidents that should be handled by the NHS including suicide attempts, self-harming incidents and public disturbances involving seriously ill patients. Officers were also taking patients to hospital due to ambulance shortages and waiting hours for a place in a secure mental health facility to be found. The report also identified that social care teams and GPs were transferring their risk and shunting their demand by asking police to conduct safety checks out of hours.

4.7 Fraud and vulnerability of the elderly

¹¹ <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publications/policing-and-mental-health-picking-up-the-pieces/>

Resources

Fraud is predominantly investigated by the fraud teams of the Serious Economic Crime Unit (SECU), a department within the Serious Crime Directorate (SCD). The fraud teams have two arms: Complex Fraud and Volume Fraud. In general, fraud relating to elderly victims is dealt with by the Volume Fraud Teams. These are based at Rayleigh and cover the whole county. They are staffed by one DI, two DS', six DCs, four PCs and two police staff investigating officers (IOs). They investigate all reports referred to Essex Police by Action Fraud. Fraud may also be reported as a call for service via STORM as a live incident. These are dealt with initially by LPA officers and depending on the complexity of the case they may retain the investigation.

There are two main types of fraud that the elderly are susceptible to:

- Courier fraud – a victim will receive a call from someone pretending to be from their bank or building society who convinces them to disclose card details over the phone. A courier then attends to collect the card to take it away for evidence or to have it destroyed. In reality, the card is collected by the fraudsters to withdraw money from the victim's account.
- Rogue Traders – a victim may receive contact from a cold-caller for a service they don't really need. The trader may claim to have noticed something about the victim's property that needs work or improvement, such as the roof, and offer to fix it for cash or an inflated price. They have no real intention of carrying out anything in return for the money or they may provide a service of poor quality.

By October 2019 three police staff Fraud Coordinators will be in post. They will sit under LPA and posted geographically in the North, South and West areas of the county. Their role is to engage with vulnerable victims of fraud and support them via signposting, safeguarding and crime prevention work. The Fraud Coordinator will provide a strategic and tactical partnership response in relation to the National Operation Signature campaign (see below) to identify and support vulnerable victims of fraud within Essex. The appointment of the Fraud Coordinators will reduce the demand on the SECU staff around victim support, enabling them to focus their time on investigations.

Key initiatives and activities

Operation Signature (Think Fraud, Think Vulnerability, Think Prevention) is a countrywide campaign to identify and support vulnerable victims of fraud. It originated in Sussex as a result of the case of a 94yr old man who, over a three year period, had sent in excess of £100,000 to criminal gangs abroad in response to scam mail regarding lottery wins. This operation is seen nationally by HMIC as best practice in protecting vulnerable victims from fraud following a Home Office pilot. It is a standardised reporting and recording

process. Operation Signature work focuses on the protection of the vulnerable members of the community, preventing them from becoming victims of such fraud and subject to further financial loss. Much of the Essex Op Signature work is carried out by SECU. Once the Fraud Coordinators are in place they will continue this good work and have the capacity for further outreach.

The Banking Protocol is an industry-wide initiative, developed by UK Finance in partnership with National Trading Standards, which trains bank branch staff to identify when someone is about to fall victim to a scam and try to prevent them from withdrawing cash to give to a fraudster. After this the staff can request an immediate police response to the branch to investigate the suspected fraud and catch those responsible. Nationally, in 2018 the scheme generated 4,240 emergency calls, 231 arrests and prevented potential fraud victims from being scammed out of £38 million¹². The SECU Volume Fraud Team review all Essex Banking Protocol reports and fill any identified safeguarding gaps.

As fraud can be devastating psychologically as well as financially, both SECU and LPA officers provide safeguarding, signposting and crime prevention advice to the victims they deal with. If appropriate they will refer the victim to Social Services via the Adult Triage Team, based in the Ops Centre at Chelmsford HQ.

SECU receive victim data for all Essex victims from Action Fraud. Irrespective of whether the victims' reports have been disseminated to Essex Police, another force or filed, all victims who have provided an email address receive information signposting to Victim Support and the Victims Code of Practice. For those victims who are aged 65 or over and are individuals as opposed to business reps, victim to a stranger fraud (i.e. not position of trust/by a family member) and are at risk of becoming repeat victims, a volunteer visit is offered/conducted. Turning Tides, a community project of Southend Association of Voluntary Services (SAVS) for the over 65s, carry out the visits in the Castle Point and Southend council areas. All other victims across the county are visited by police Op Signature volunteers. The volunteers are co-located with the Volume Fraud Team and feedback any concerns that need managing.

SECU receive sensitive intelligence from financial institutions where they have a concern for a vulnerable customers who are potentially being financially exploited and possibly victims of fraud. Even if no crime/Action Fraud report has been recorded or it is unknown if a fraud has been reported, SECU will organise volunteer or police visits.

To raise awareness SECU staff regularly attend fraud prevention events at banks. Community engagement at these events has led to further fraud prevention presentations at other organisations such as church community groups and the British Legion. SECU have also conducted other outreach at community events for the over 65s and provided training/crime prevention

¹² Figures from UK Finance

advice to SAVS volunteers as well as partner agencies like the Citizen's Advice Bureau and community nursing.

Key internal/external influencers

According to the National Crime Agency, fraud is the most commonly experienced crime in the UK. Fraud against individuals is typically targeted at elderly and other vulnerable people.

Courier Fraud in Essex appears to be linked to County Lines and Organised Criminal Groups (OCGs) from the Metropolitan Police District along the arterial routes of the A12, A13 and A127.

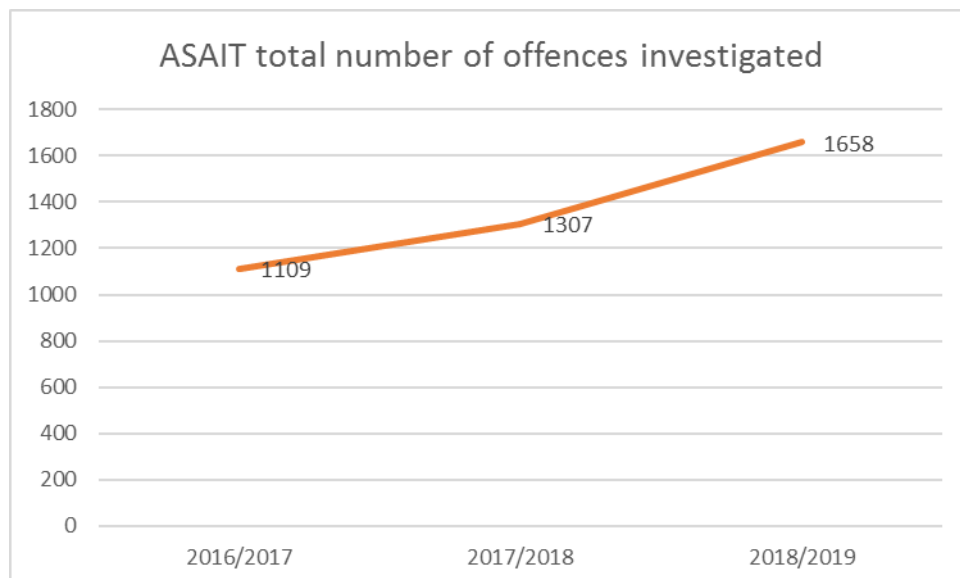
Rogue trading usually sees a seasonal increase in summer in relation to tree/garden work.

5.0 Performance

In considering the data that follows it should be borne in mind that the recent HMICFRS Crime Data Accuracy inspection identified outstanding levels of compliance for crime recording in Essex. Any comparison with the performance of other forces should consider the variance in grading by the HMICFRS.

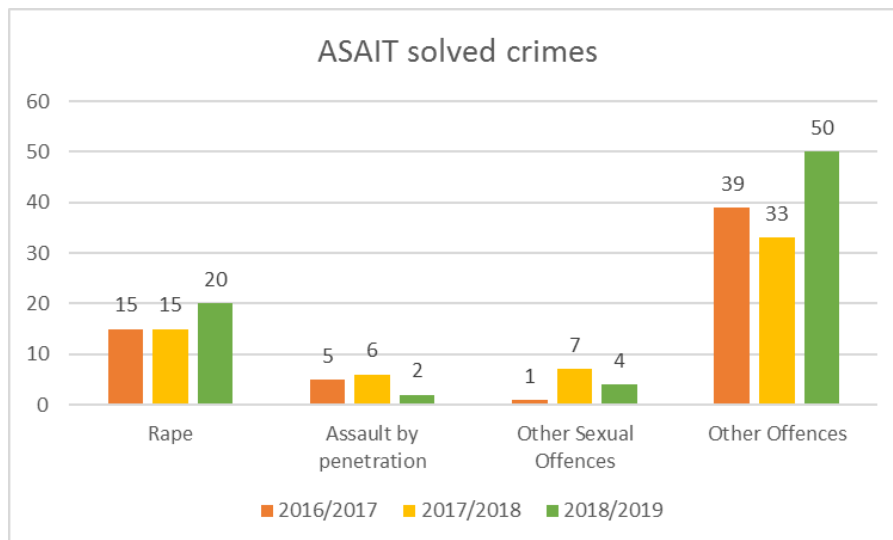
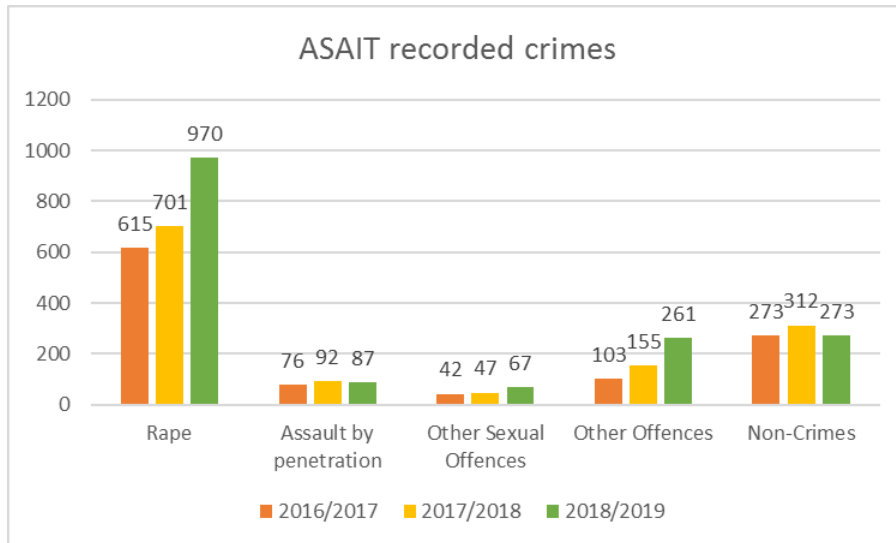
5.1 Sexual offending (adults and children)

The total number of offences investigated by ASAIT has increased by 49.5% since 2016/2017:



Adult rape offences have increased by 57.7% since 2016/17. Rape remains the most numerically acute investigation type accounting for 58.5% of all ASAIT investigations combined in 2018/19. Whilst the number of solved cases

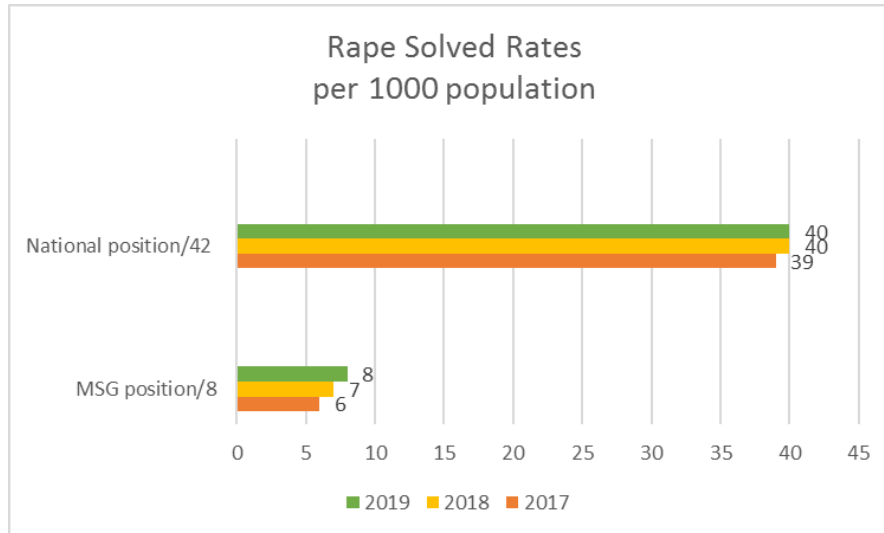
has increased by 33% overall, in 2016/17 there was a 2.4% solve rate compared to 2% in 2018/19. Since 2017 the emphasis in Essex Police has shifted from reducing recorded offences and increasing solved rates, to navigating the investigation in line with the wishes of the victim. There has been a steady increase in the number of investigations that record an outcome where the victim either refuses to support the investigation or withdraws their support. Conversely, the amount of investigations where the victim supports the investigation (but there are evidential difficulties) are declining.



Data collated for the rape and sexual abuse partnership from frontline Rape Crisis practitioners regarding victims who had contact with Rape Crisis between January 2016 and June 2019 looked at the reasons why victims withdrew support or cooperation in 521 cases. It was identified that delays in police processes was cited in 1% of cases as the primary reason for the victim

not progressing the matter. The most prevalent reason given by victims was their concern about criminal justice system processes. Over one in four complaints were withdrawn by victims because they felt that the criminal justice system process would be too distressing.¹³

Essex Police has one of the lowest solved rates in the country for rape and the lowest in most similar group:

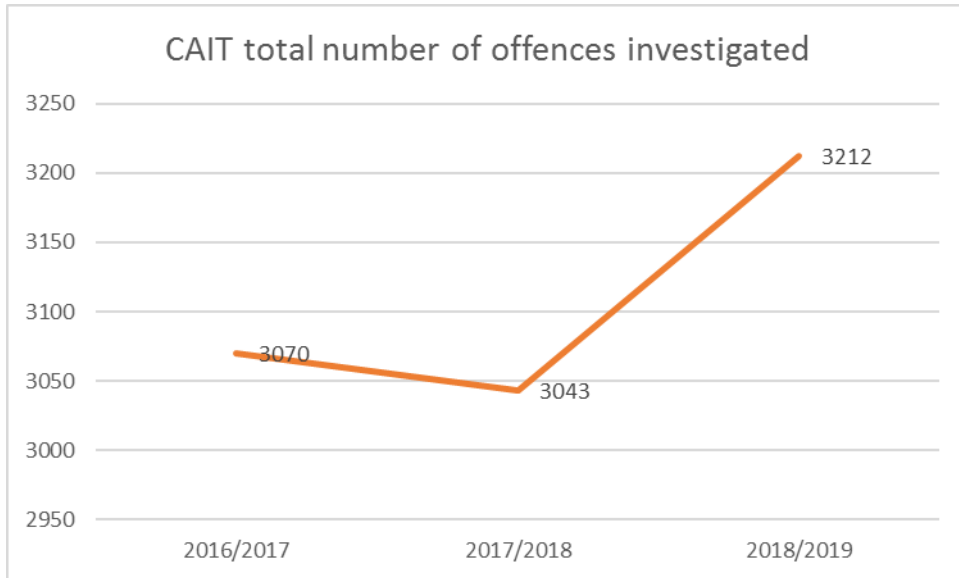


Essex MSG: Avon & Somerset, Derbyshire, Hampshire, Hertfordshire, Leicestershire, Staffordshire and Sussex. National positions are for 42 forces (excludes City of London)

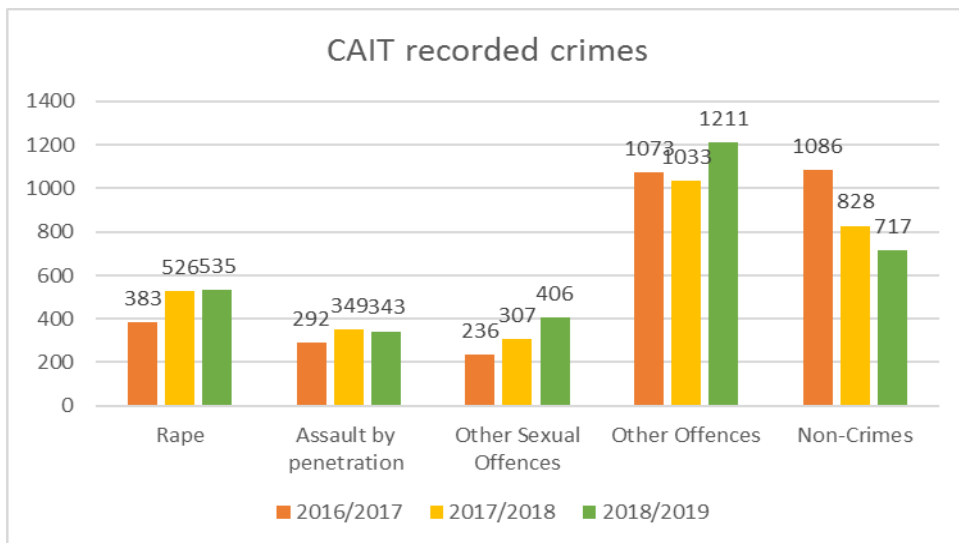
All four police forces within the East of England CPS region (Cambridgeshire, Essex, Suffolk and Norfolk) are in the bottom eight forces in the country for solved rates, and each has a solved rate below 3% (the national average is 4.7%). The East of England CPS have the lowest solved rate of any region, joint with the South of England.

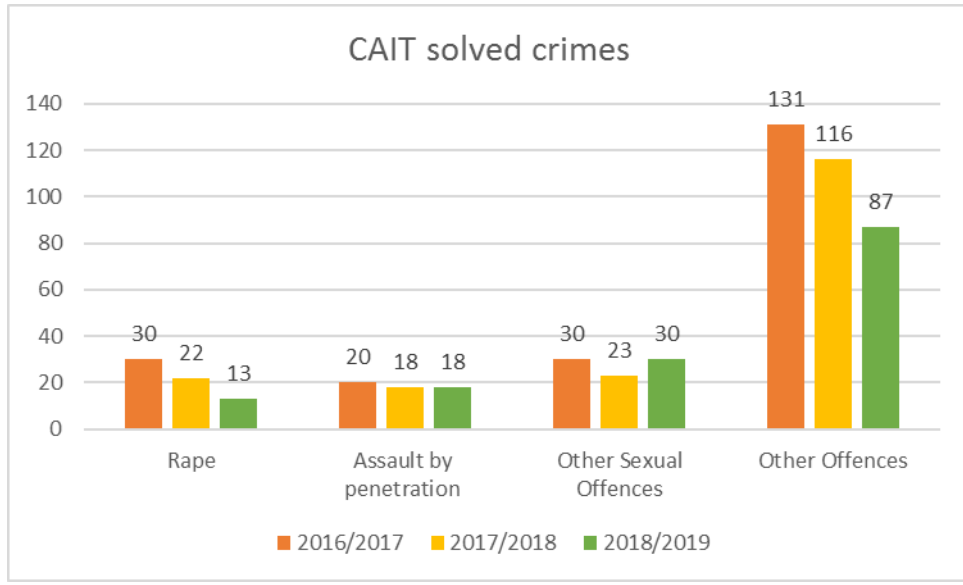
The total number of offences investigated by CAIT has increased by 4.6% since 2016/2017:

¹³ <https://victimscommissioner.org.uk/news/the-reasons-why-victims-of-rape-and-sexual-violence-withdraw-from-the-criminal-process-without-seeking-justice>



Child rape offences have increased by 39.6% since 2016/17. Combined child sexual offences accounted for 40% of the CAIT workload in 2018/19 compared to 29.6% in 2016/17. Since 2016/17 the number of solved crimes has decreased by 23.75% overall from 211 to 148, in 2016/17 there was an 8.8% solve rate compared to 4.75% in 2018/19.



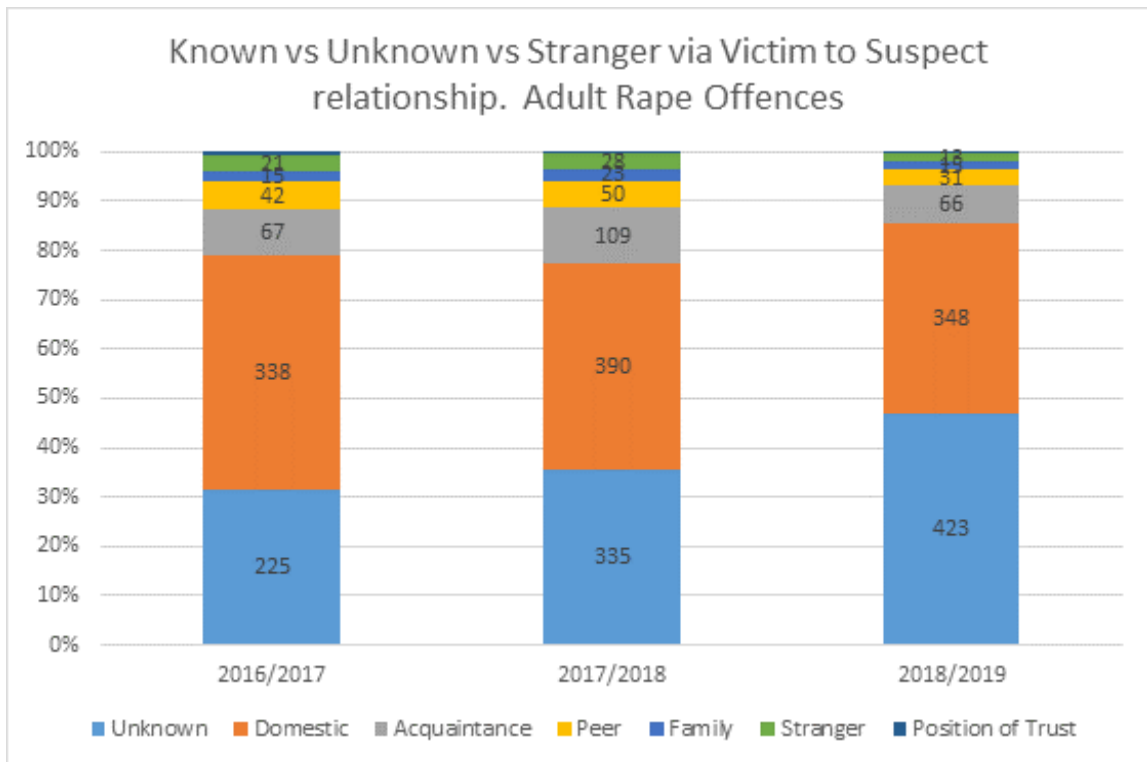
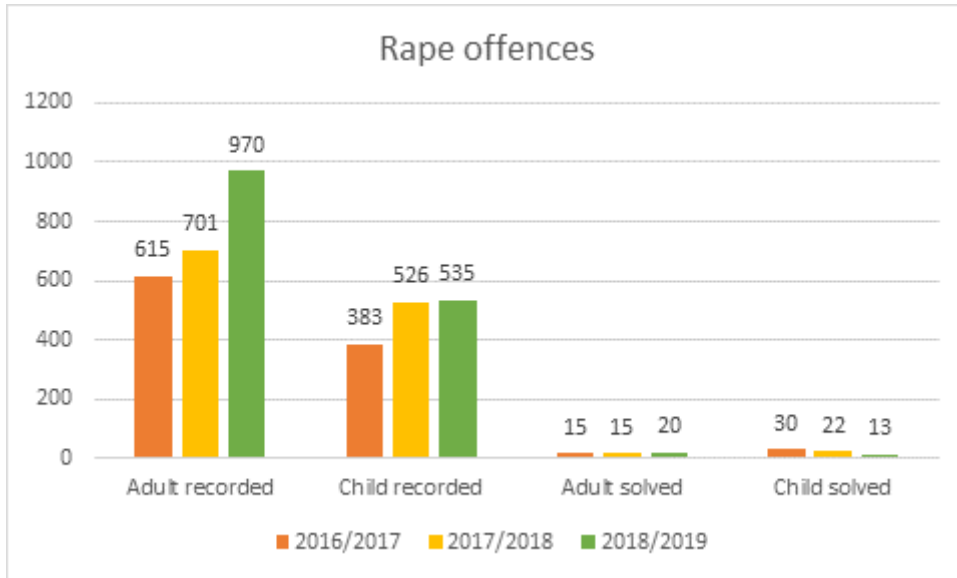


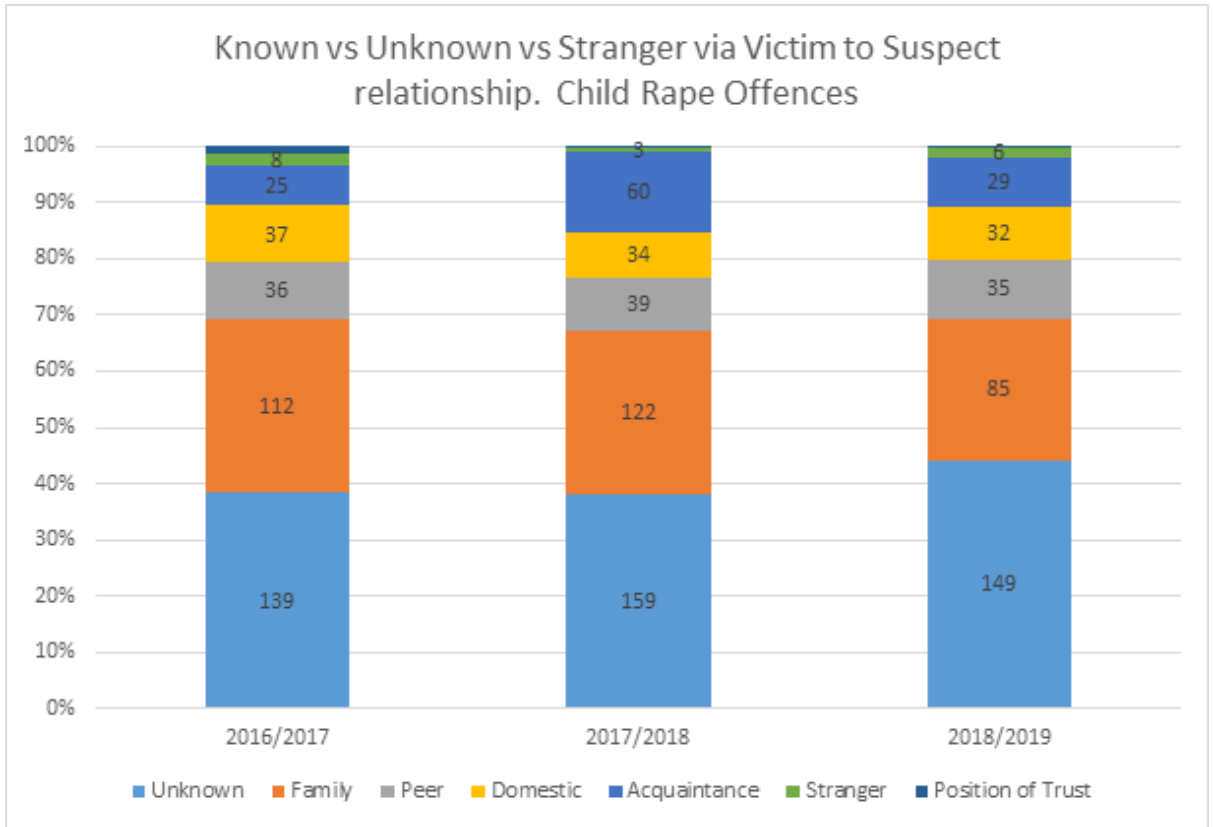
In addition to CAIT, the QUEST team (non-recent penetrative child sexual abuse) have 50 ongoing investigations. In dealing with their investigations, officers have travelled around the country to Inverness, Berwick-Upon-Tweed, Blackpool and Cornwall to execute warrants, deal with suspects and gather statements from victims. The team currently have five cases with the CPS for early investigative advice with a further four likely to lead to charges. They are very close to obtaining their first set of charges for an investigation, estimated to be in the next three months. Each case with the CPS will result in a single solved crime but will include charges for multiple rapes over an extended period with same offender harming the victim. Without the QUEST team these investigations would have been allocated to frontline CAIT staff, competing for time against current child risk/abuse. Once the extra staff are in post the workload of CAIT staff will further be eased. The QUEST team has enabled a better quality and speed of service for victims of non-recent abuse.

The following graphs show the comparisons between adult and child offences.

14

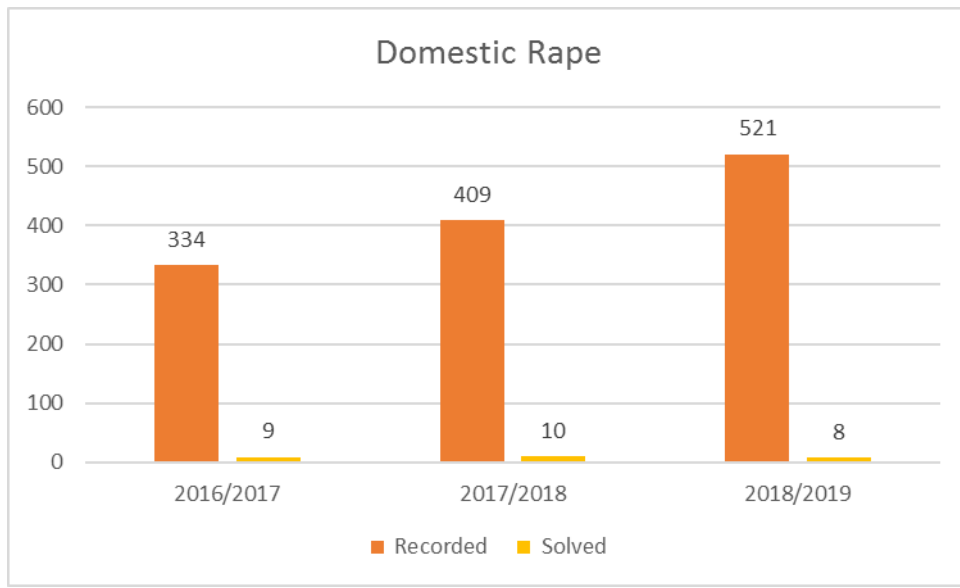
¹⁴ This is reliant on victim to suspect relationship being used accurately.





5.2 Domestic rape

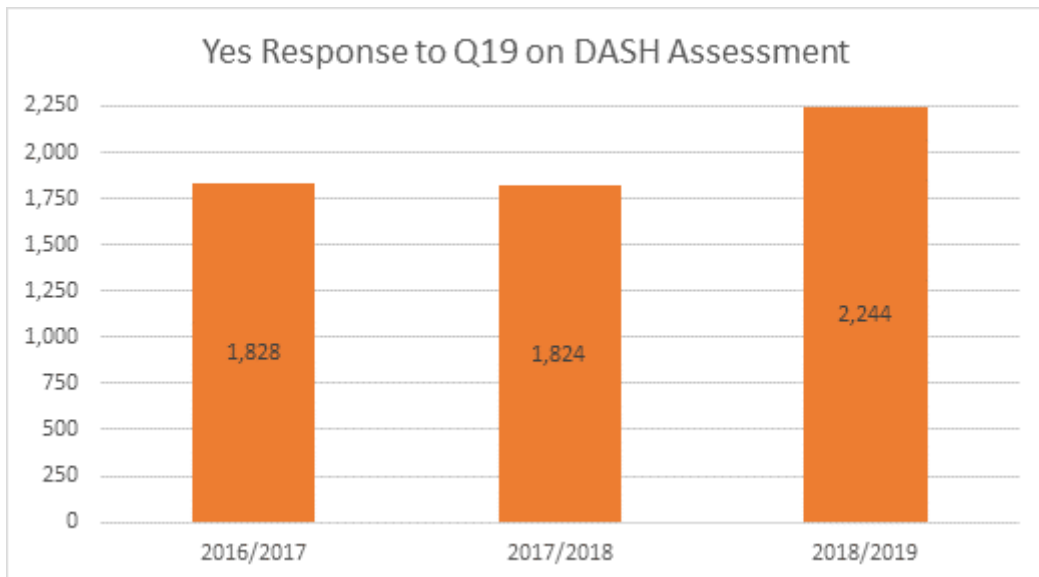
Domestic rape offences have increased by 56% since 2016/17. Despite the increase in number of rapes the number of solved crimes remains almost the same. In 2016/17 there was a 2.7% solve rate, in 2018/19 this was 1.5%



Reasons for low solve rates in domestic cases are the same reasons for low solve rates in adult rape. In addition, domestic abuse victims are particularly

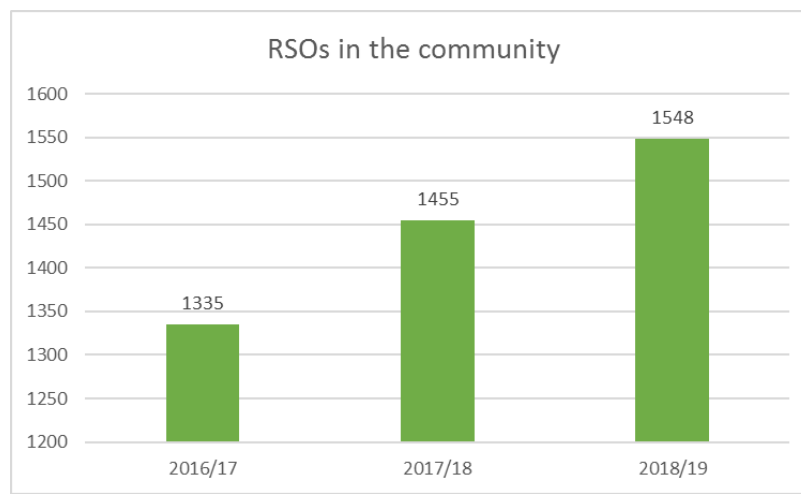
vulnerable and may not report such offences or support prosecutions. This is due to reasons such as fear of future violence, not wanting their partner to go to prison, or preservation of a family. These figures also represent repeat victims.

The following graph displays victims response to question 19 on the DASH risk assessment '*Does (.....) do or say things of a sexual nature that makes you feel bad or that physically hurt you or someone else?*'

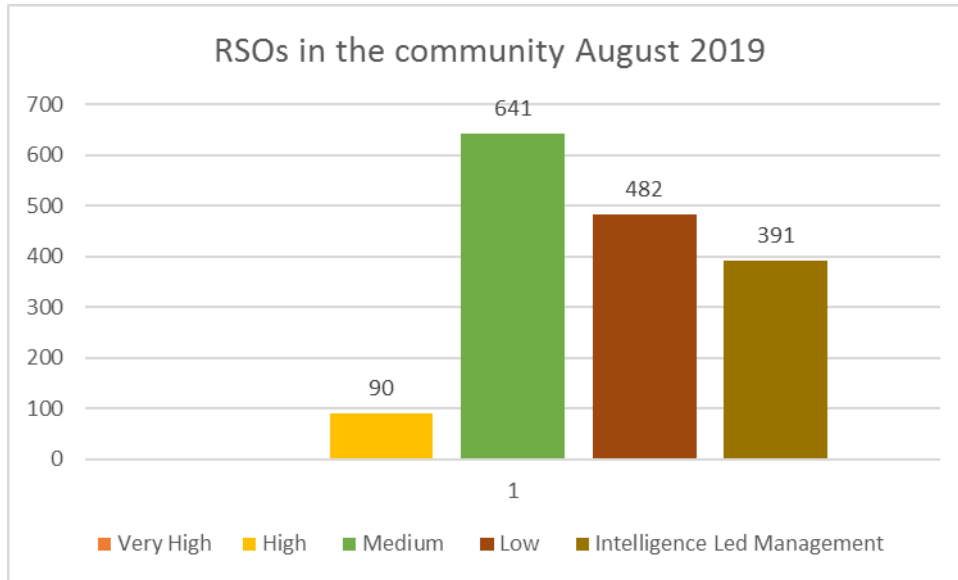


5.3 Management of sexual offenders and violent offenders

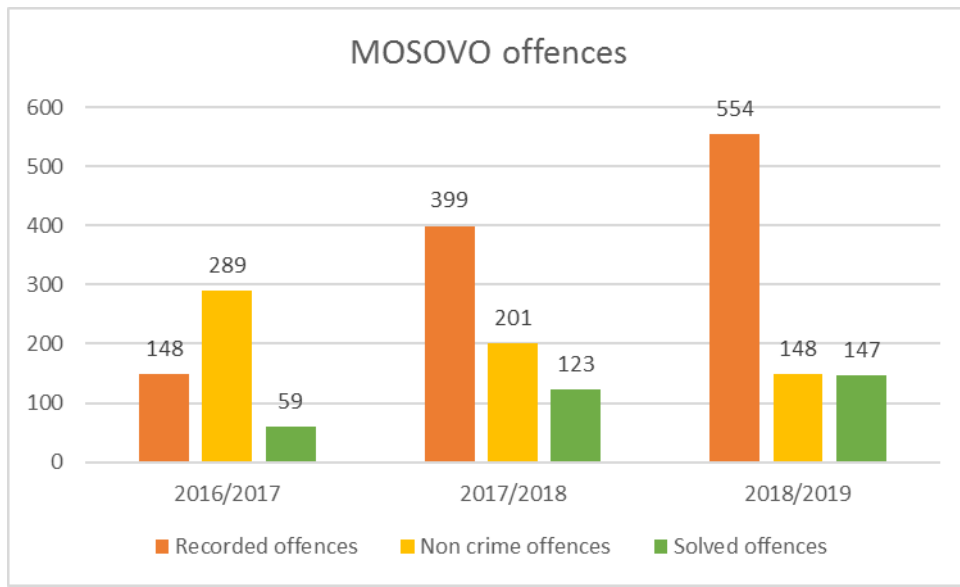
The number of RSOs managed by MOSOVO has increased by 15.9% since the launch of the Police and Crime Plan 2016. This reflects the increase in reporting of sexual offences and the investment in proactive targeting of those that commit sex offences.



Currently, in August 2019, there are 1604 RSOs in the community:



MOSOVO offences have increased by 274.3% since 2016/17. The increase in offences is in line with increasing numbers of RSOs and greater capacity for proactivity in this area.



5.4 Online investigations

The remit of POLIT has changed over time, as has the type of performance data recorded. Available data shows:

	2016	2017	2018	2019 YTD
No. of external referrals	223	171*	203	110

OFFICIAL

No. of warrants executed	-	-	172	132
No. of children safeguarded	-	-	175	157

* In 2017 (exact dates unknown) POLIT no longer took the low risk investigations and they went out to LPAs. POLIT then started taking the low risk investigations back in 2018 which explains the lower figure in 2017

The POLIT workload has increased by 74.6% since 2016/17. The solved rate has decreased in the last three years. In 2016/17 there was a higher number of offences solved than reported. This is because many of the offences were recorded in 2015 but not assigned an outcome code until 2016/17. One example is a linked case with 37 charges for causing or inciting sexual exploitation.

Analysis of the current performance indicates that the filed solved rate for Indecent Images of Children offences for the last 12 months is 62.4%.

Reports from Online Child Abuse Activist Groups (OCAAGs) have been monitored in force since 2017¹⁵. In 2017 the force received 35 cases. This dropped slightly by 4 cases (or 11.4%) in 2018 and current Year to Date (YTD) for 2019 is 13 cases. In 2017 outcomes where 17 cases charged (or 48%) all the remaining cases resulted in unresolved outcomes. In 2018 there were 14 cases charged (or 45%). Currently in 2019 no cases have been charged. During the period 2017/19 only one case has been refused charge due to the manner in which an OCAAG has collected their evidence. With no specific marker on Athena to identify OCAAG involvement the number of reports linked to them may be higher.

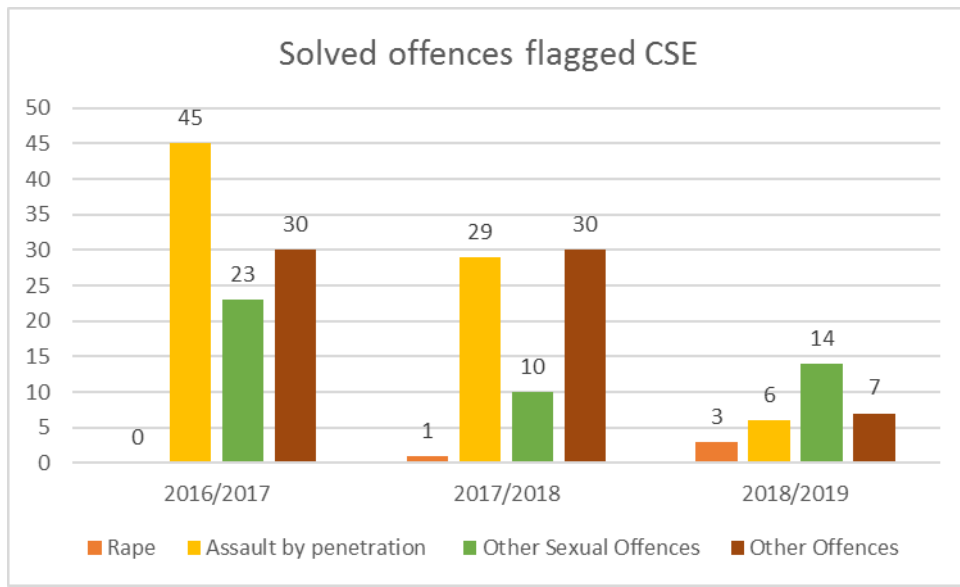
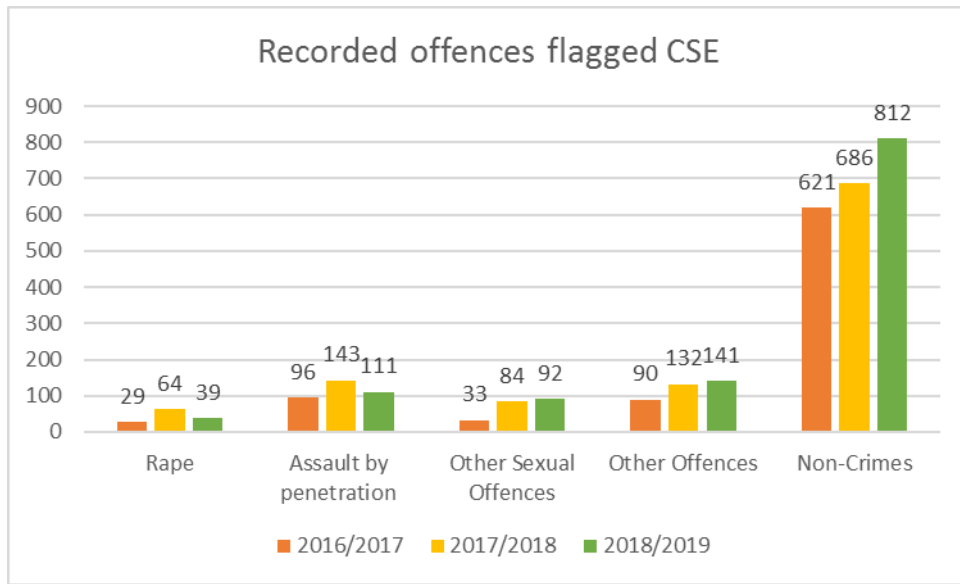
5.5 Child Sexual Exploitation

Figures for CSE Triage are only available for 2018/2019. In this time 257 meetings were requested by other agencies with 244 attended by police (95%).

The number of offences flagged CSE has increased by 37.5% since 2016/17. Of those figures, the amount recorded as crimes has increased by 54.4%. Increased rates could be linked to greater awareness in officers recognising CSE. The most numerically acute CSE offences are non-crimes accounting for 67.9% of CSE offences in 2018/19. CSE figures are likely to continue rising. As technology develops more online offence opportunities occur. Assault by penetration is the most numerically acute sexual offence type for offences flagged CSE.

An account for the high number of non-crimes shown in the table below is increased referrals received from partner agencies or concerns by members of the public. Athena allows for a non-crime incident to be recorded on a searchable database. This information is readily available for policing purposes and supports sound decision making in the future.

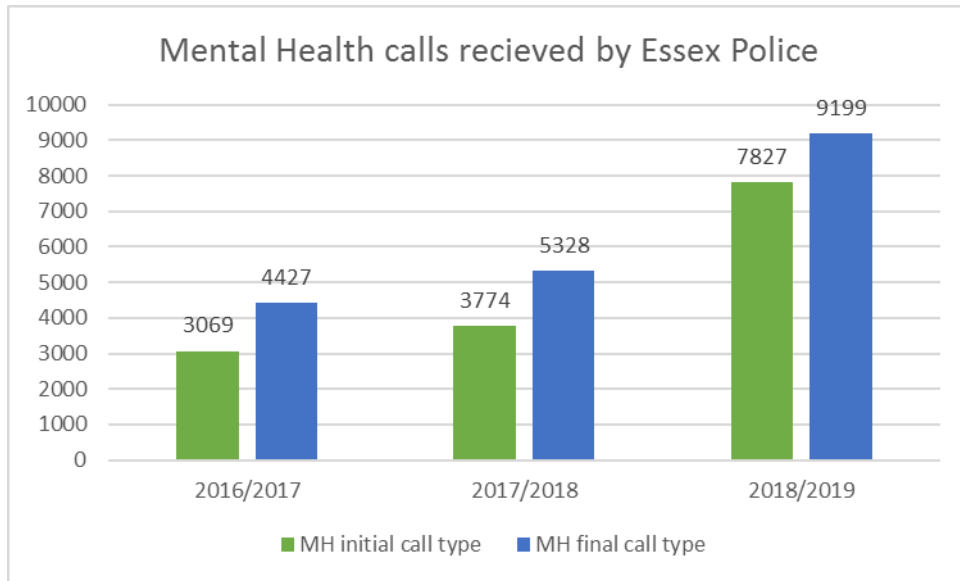
¹⁵ Based on keyword search and night book entries



5.6 Mental Health

The number of mental health calls received by Essex Police is increasing yearly, which reflects what is happening nationally. The extent and nature of demand is hard to evidence, which has been recognised by the College of Policing. In October 2019 the 24 hour mental health snapshot across all forces aims to fill this evidence gap (see 6.6). The number of calls received that are classed as mental health incidents can be measured, however upon attendance police may find that the call is unrelated. Likewise, a call may be despatched as a different incident type but is ultimately dealt with as mental health. The next graph represents call that were received as mental health

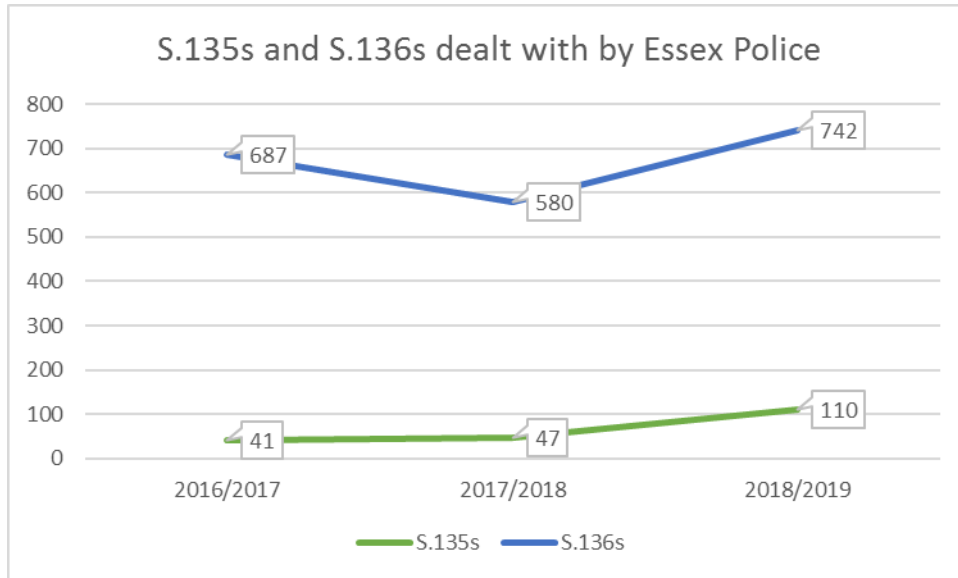
incidents and those that were finalised at mental health incidents¹⁶. Both have increased in line with the national picture:



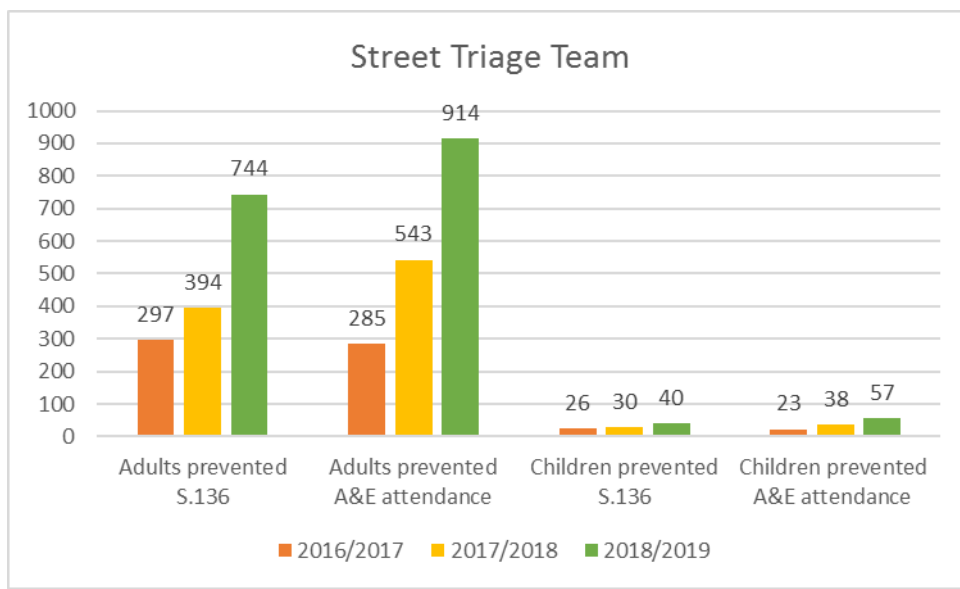
The number of people detained by police in Essex under Section 136 Mental Health Act has seen an 8% increase in the last three financial years. In 2017/2018 there was a slight dip, which may be linked to the utilisation of the Street Triage Team. The increase in the S.136's is being explored through the Essex Partnership Boards. It has been accepted nationally that mental health demand is under recorded. Essex Police currently record that approximately 4% of demand is linked to mental health. This percentage is consistent with many Forces and Essex Police are taking part in a national 24 snapshot of demands to gain a better understanding of what mental health demand looks like for Essex Police.

Warrants executed under Section 135 Mental Health Act have increased by 168% since 2016/2017. Reasons may include increased awareness and de-stigmatisation around mental health (with campaigns such as 'Rethink Mental Illness') as well as greater engagement with partner agencies.

¹⁶ Does not include restricted STORM incidents



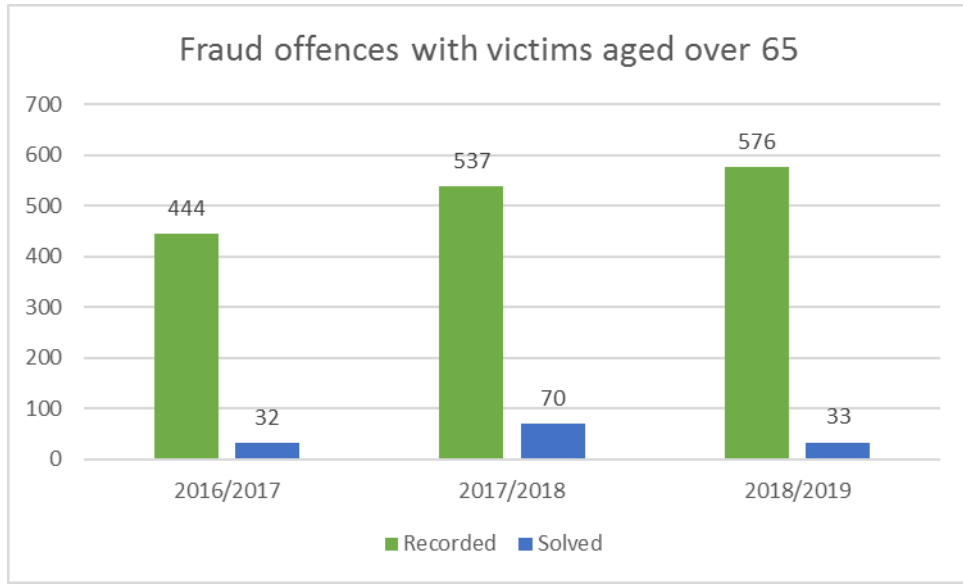
The Street Triage Team continues to be an effective use of resources in Essex, reducing demand on police and NHS by preventing Section 136 detentions as well as A&E attendance. In 2018/19 the numbers of prevented S.136s (744) almost equal the number of S.136s that were carried out (742). When considering the length of time that police officers spend dealing with S.136s, taking them away from other demand, the Street Triage Team are an invaluable resource that support front line policing.



Looking forward, the collated data indicates that the demand in dealing with mental health will continue to increase. Essex Police are one of two Forces working with the College of Policing and Nottingham University to devise a template for all Forces to self-evaluate their Street Triage function.

5.7 Fraud and vulnerability of the elderly

According to the Office for National Statistics, the Crime Survey for England and Wales 2018/19 reports an increase in fraud offences of 17% from the previous survey year. Fraud offences with victims aged 65 and older have increased in Essex by 29.7% since 2016/17 (a breakdown of the different types of fraud is not available):



It is expected that fraud will continue to rise in line with the national picture. Prosecution of these offences is difficult possible due to vulnerable victims, links with OCGs and offenders based abroad who use technology to remain anonymous.

6.0 Future Work/Development, Expected Outcome and Actions for Improvement

6.1 Sexual offending (adults and children) and Domestic Rape

The Drink Aware project, working with Night Time Economy venues to deliver vulnerability awareness training to staff and implement Drink Aware Crews in identified venues, will commence in October 2019.

A training event will take place in October delivered to ASAIT staff by the National Ugly Mugs (NUM) charity who specialise in supporting sex workers. The training will seek to explore barriers to sex workers reporting crimes, how NUM and the police can work more closely together to support sex workers who have been victimized and how legislation and current guidelines impact on such cases.

A training event is also being planned in Southend through the local authority partnership which will focus on “normal” sexual development in children/teenagers and what may amount to more concerning behaviour. This

training is hoped to be extended to Community Policing Teams (CPT) as well as staff in public protection.

An initiative led by PPUI North will commence at the start of the new academic year at the University of Essex. Presentations covering sexual offending, consent and options for reporting will be delivered to staff and resident life students for them to cascade to the 6000 new students starting in September. C&PP staff will also engage with the students as part of Fresher's Week and along with Colchester CPT, who will have a crime prevention stall. Posters around safeguarding and preventative advice for sexual offences will be displayed throughout the university. Presentations by C&PP officers will also take place at other events throughout the academic year. Staff from PPUI South will also deliver a presentation to the Southend campus.

6.2 Management of sexual offenders and violent offenders

A review has been conducted of MOSOVO and proposals are being developed to support a realignment of teams, providing greater efficiencies and better resilience. This falls in line with the work being carried out to improve the effectiveness of working practices both internally and with partners in probation.

Work has started regarding targeting repeat sexual offenders. Force analysts are reviewing the data from the last five years with a view to PPU staff taking a pro-active Achilles' heel approach to target them. The initiative hopes to tackle offenders that are not managed by MOSOVO or other departments, and are not in prison i.e. those that 'slip through the net'.

6.3 Online investigations

POLIT (and MOSOVO) have become involved with the Policing Institute for the Eastern Region at Anglia Ruskin University and Chief Constable Simon Bailey's office (Norfolk Police) as the lead for child protection. They are working with ARU to put develop training workshops, conferences and technological opportunities both locally and nationally for policing of this type. A pilot of a grading tool is being negotiated with the Home Office which will assist officers' automated grading of indecent images. This should assist in reducing staff and officer exposure to imagery and potentially reduce trauma related welfare issues.

Further work to build on the current success of the POLIT Proactive Team (PPT) will be achieved by utilising an active citizen/volunteer to assist with the POLIT engagement strategy and further engagement/preventative work with communities. POLIT have in the last year recruited 10 dedicated Special Constables to the team.

POLIT are currently working with the Essex Police media team to launch POLIT pages on the Essex Police website with information and signposting for children, families and offenders.

6.4 Child Sexual Exploitation

The pilot of Operation Goldcrest, which will enable young people who are victims of CSE to take forensic samples without having to come to police, will go live as a pilot in Thurrock in October 2019. Data from OP Goldcrest will form part of the means of measuring the ability of police to interact with children and act upon their concerns. Op Goldcrest will make available SAFE¹⁷ Kits so that individuals can take their own forensic samples independent of the police. Completed kits will be retained for 25 yrs. If a victim subsequently comes forward with an account the kits can be utilised evidentially.

CSE Triage remit and structure is to be reviewed in the context of wider force functions, particularly with the formation of the new complex and organised CSE team in early 2020.

Ambitions remain to co-locate the Triage teams (Adult, Child and CSE) with social care colleagues, however real estate and the vast estate programme has limited the options for this. In 2018, it was agreed by Chief Officers that co-locating Adult Triage with Essex Adult Social Care should happen. The Child and CSE Triage teams were scoped to co-locate at Colchester Children & Families Hub however this was postponed due to the programme of work having higher priorities across the force.

6.5 Mental Health

Essex Police holds a bi-monthly Mental Health Steering Group which is attended by all commands within the Force. This feeds into the Mental Health Emergency Response and Crisis Steering Group whereby data is shared and analysed and issues raised. A subgroup of this group, that Essex Police is a part of, is in the process of attempting to implement a 24/7 telephone service for anyone in Essex that requires mental health support.

The Adult Triage Team (Ops Centre) and East of England Ambulance Service are working together to conduct three safeguarding events across Essex over September 2019. A number of different agencies will attend and liaison has taken place within different departments within Essex Police to encourage further representation. The events will take place at Basildon, Colchester and Southend hospitals. representatives from Essex Police, Ambulance Service, Social Care, Independent Age, Fire Service and Mental Health. The aim for the days is to engage with the public and staff within the hospital, highlighting areas of safeguarding, ensuring they are aware of support services that are available to them and advising them of appropriate actions around safeguarding referrals.

¹⁷ Self-Administered Forensic Evidence (SAFE) Kit.

On Tuesday 8th October 2019 from 00:00 to 23:59 all forces will undertake a 24-hour snapshot of their mental health demand, as recommended by HMICFRS in their 'Picking Up The Pieces' report. To support this recommendation, the Problem Solving and Demand Reduction Programme, in conjunction with the NPCC and the College of Policing, will be facilitating a joint response from policing nationally. The snapshot is taking place because mental health is one area where police are reportedly seeing an increase in demand. The exact extent and nature of that demand however, is not well evidenced. Without a more accurate picture, it is difficult to properly understand the problems police forces are having to deal with, for them to have informed discussions with other agencies and to make a strong case to the Government around spending decisions. To help fill the current evidence gap, the Problem Solving and Demand Reduction Programme are working with the University of Nottingham and 'Get the Data' to support the HMICFRS recommendation for a national 24 hour snapshot exercise. This work is being carried out in conjunction with the NPCC, HMICFRS and the College of Policing. The overall aim of the work is to understand the nature and extent of mental health related policing demand in England and Wales with a view to informing discussions at both a national and local level.

6.6 Fraud and vulnerability of the elderly

The Banking Protocol will extend from October 2019 allowing telephone banking staff to make an email referral to the police without the customer needing to be in the branch.

A number of fraud prevention events, attended by SECU, have been scheduled throughout 2019 at branches of Barclays countywide.

7.0 Risks/Mitigation

There are three risks currently being managed in relation to C& PP Command:

Risk 1634

Online Child Sexual Abuse and Online CSE are both increasing. Crime and Public Protection need to identify/understand the current capacity and develop an approach to meet and deal with this emerging demand.

Risk 1635

Crime and Public Protection are currently suffering from recruitment challenges including. It has been agreed that 15 officers will transfer to Public Protection on 8th July 2019 from LPAs and a further 15 will transfer in September 2019.

Risk 1823

Insufficient rape investigations result in injustice for victims. The quality and consistency of rape investigations and the development of the relationship with the CPS need to be improved to address the relatively low levels of charges for rape.

8.0 Equality and/or Human Rights Implications

There are no identified impacts on equality, diversity or human rights

9.0 Health and Safety Implications

None