

## Performance and Resources Scrutiny Programme 2021

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

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Crime Data Accuracy – Update</b>
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<b>Chief Officer:</b>	<b>DCC Mills</b>
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### 1.0 Purpose of Report

To provide a biannual update in relation to the progress of Crime Data Accuracy (CDA) by Essex Police.

### 2.0 Recommendations

For the board to consider and note the contents of this report.

### 3.0 Executive Summary

- The CDA Team has continued to operate effectively and efficiently having adapted to the new way of working as a result of the restrictions placed on them, due to the Coronavirus pandemic.
- Crime recording rates have been maintained at a high level, averaging 86% between August 2020 and February 2021.
- Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) informed all forces that they will carefully examine incidents of anti-social behaviour (ASB), to ensure that they are being effectively managed. They

reported that a substantial amount of unrecorded crime was discovered, during their recent inspections involving five forces.

- In order to enhance the service being provided to victims of crime, the CDA Audit Team now conducts daily audits in how the force deals with incidents closed under the <sup>1</sup>Anti-Social Behaviour - Personal (ASB-P) closing code. Early results have indicated that, in some instances officers are failing to recognise and record crimes.
- The daily audits of the Domestic Abuse Stalking and Harassment (DASH) Risk Assessments<sup>2</sup> conducted by the CDA Audit Team, are still identifying instances where officers are failing to recognise and record allegations of crimes at the scene of a Domestic Abuse Incident.
- CDA training remains a priority. The new CDA training package, which is now on track to commence on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021, has been designed to provide comprehensive guidance in a consistent and standardised format.
- The benefits for victims of crime, with the introduction of the new <sup>3</sup>Victim's Code which will be implemented on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021, are being communicated to all staff and police officers who are involved in Crime Recording.

## **Introduction / Background**

This report provides an overview of the Essex Police CDA strategy and the progress that has been made against the CDA Improvement Plan. It also sets out how the force intends to sustain its outstanding compliance rates and commitment to always put victims at the forefront of crime recording arrangements.

## **4.0 Current Work and Performance**

### **4.1 Performance**

#### **4.1.1 Internal Audit NCRS Support and Review Team (NSRT)**

The NSRT continue to provide frontline support and a quality assurance (QA) function to support the Force in improving CDA.

The results of the audits conducted by the NSRT are supplied to the Performance Analysis Unit (PAU). Their analysis helps inform senior managers of individuals and

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<sup>1</sup> 'Personal' is designed to identify ASB incidents that the caller, call-handler or anyone else perceives as either deliberately targeted at an individual or group having an impact on an individual or group rather than the community at large. It includes incidents that cause concern, stress, disquiet and or irritation through to incidents which have a serious adverse impact on people's quality of life. At one extreme of the spectrum it includes minor annoyance; at the other end it could result in the risk of harm, deterioration of health and disruption of mental or emotional well-being, resulting in an inability to carry out normal day-to-day activities through fear and intimidation.

<sup>2</sup> Domestic Abuse, Stalking, Harassment and Honour-based abuse risk identification, assessment and management model

<sup>3</sup> The new Victims' Code 2020 will be implemented on 1 April 2021. The Code lets victims know what information, support and services they can expect to receive from the police, courts and other criminal justice agencies.

teams responsible for errors during the crime recording process. It also allows managers to provide constructive feedback to individual officers and assist them to improve in this critical area of their business. The results are then included in the Force Balanced Scorecard.

Table 1 below, sets out the compliance results for each command up to and including Feb 2021.

<i>Monthly Results</i>							
Command	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	Feb-21
Contact Management	84.1%	86.6%	86.6%	87.9%	87.4%	87.5%	85.2%
Crime and Public Protection Command	76.2%	72.7%	100.0%	57.9%	89.5%	87.0%	88.9%
Local Policing Area North	82.0%	84.5%	84.4%	86.5%	84.1%	86.7%	83.7%
Local Policing Area South	80.9%	82.4%	83.5%	86.6%	86.9%	87.6%	81.0%
Local Policing Area West	80.9%	86.5%	82.8%	85.0%	86.1%	82.4%	83.4%
OPC Operational Policing Command	82.8%	83.3%	87.8%	86.2%	80.0%	82.4%	87.0%
Support Services (Probationers)	50.0%	100.0%	80.0%	80.0%	100.0%	84.0%	66.7%
Total	82.8%	85.6%	85.5%	87.1%	86.6%	86.8%	84.2%

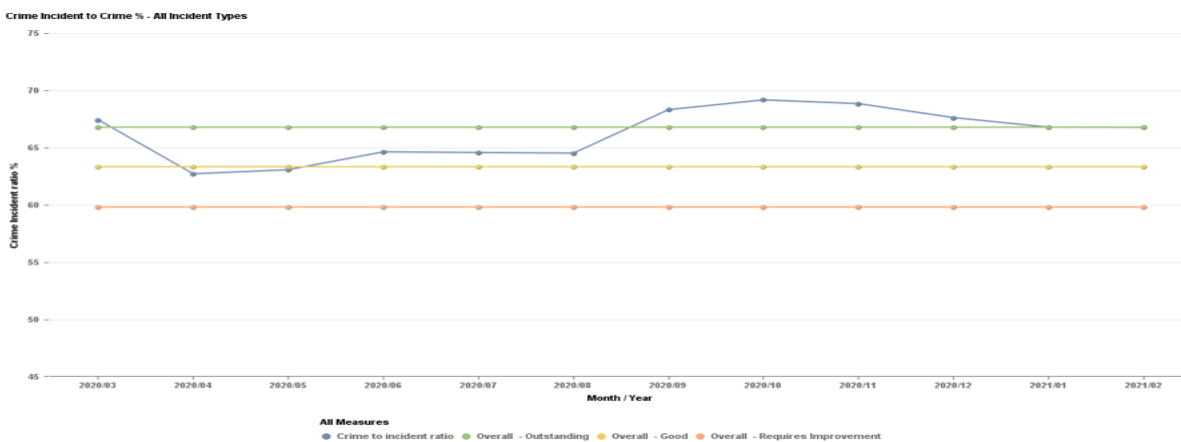
Table 1 – Overview of incident reviews undertaken by NSRT

In addition to the audits conducted by the NSRT, the force is continuing to track crime recording performance, by closely monitoring and analysing the percentage of crime incidents which subsequently result in the recording of a crime. This proxy measure tracks reports received by the Force Control Room (FCR) and entered as a crime incident onto the Command and Control system (STORM), which following the resolution of the incident, result in the formal recording of a crime.

Having a high incident to crime ratio provides us with a good indication that our crime recording compliance is being maintained to a very high standard.

The force will continue to ensure that officers get crime recording right at the first point of contact and the NSRT plays a significant part in ensuring crime recording compliance rate remains high. When the NSRT are able to complete a large proportion of allocated incidents, the crime recording compliance for the force rises.

The graph below demonstrates the proxy measure of the overall crime recording compliance rate of the force during this period of reporting.



**Table 3** Breakdown of the percentage of All Crime Incidents subsequently recorded as a crime and represented in the graph above.

Crime Incident to Crime - Overall Rate			
Year Month	All	C Disposal	%
2020Q09	6678	4562	68.31%
2020Q10	6684	4623	69.17%
2020Q11	5991	4124	68.84%
2020Q12	5842	3950	67.61%
2021Q01	5433	3628	66.78%
2021Q02	5301	3539	66.76%

#### 4.1.2 Accessibility and Visibility of CDA Team

Accessibility to senior leaders and all staff who are involved in crime recording has been maintained through the use of Microsoft Teams.

The DCC has been kept updated on all relevant CDA matters through a series of one-to-one meetings with the Strategic Force Crime and Incident Registrar.

During this period of reporting a number of key messages have been delivered through a variety of forums including:

- An input by both Deputy Force Crime and Incident Registrars to a number of North LPA Detective Inspectors. The delivery concentrated on ensuring that crimes associated to Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking are being properly recorded and that DASH Risk Assessments are properly supervised.
- Attendance at the Investigation Improvement Board to ensure that any learning from the internal audits conducted by the CDA Audit Team is shared and the clear links between the quality of investigations and the need for accurate crime recording can be reinforced.

#### 4.1.3 Support to Crime & Public Protection Command

As previously reported, the CDA Audit Team currently review all responses to Q19 that are made by victims of Domestic Abuse during the risk assessment process, which is completed by officers attending a Domestic Abuse incident.

During the course of the risk assessment process the victim is asked; ***Does (.....) do or say anything of a sexual nature that makes you feel bad or that physically hurt you or someone else? Please specify who and what ?***

Work has continued to improve the awareness of officers and their respective supervisors who attend a Domestic Abuse incident to ensure that any disclosures of crime, including rapes, are readily recognised and recorded at the first point of contact.

A new process has now been introduced which now means that DASH Risk Assessments completed by officers who attend a Domestic Abuse Incident are closely monitored by their first line supervisor before the assessment is forwarded on for a secondary assessment.

The introduction of this new process will be closely monitored and overseen by the Strategic Force Crime and Incident Registrar on a daily basis.

#### **4.1.4 Support to Force Control Room and Resolution Centre**

The Deputy Head of Contact Management has continued to place a strong emphasis on ensuring that staff are aware of the importance of accurate crime recording.

Crime recording compliance is closely monitored through a Contact Management CDA Board. The board is attended by the Strategic Force Crime and Incident Registrar, each of the LPA CDA SPOCs, Learning and Development staff, NSRT and other invited guests.

There has been a real drive to raise the awareness of staff within the Force Control Room on dealing with incidents of Anti-Social Behaviour and the importance of recognising when crimes need to be recorded in order to support victims of crime. This is being achieved by providing staff within the Force Control Room with the results of the daily ASB audits which are being conducted by the CDA Audit Team as described in the section of the report below.

#### **4.1.5 Anti-Social Behaviour**

Following on from an internal audit conducted by the CDA Audit Team, it was identified that in some instances front line officers and staff within the Force Control Room were failing to either recognise and or record crimes such as assaults, public order offences and harassments, when they were dealing with an Anti-Social Behaviour incident.

In order to ensure that victims of ASB are being afforded the best possible support and help, the CDA Audit Team now conduct daily audits on all incidents that are closed under the ASB Personal code.

The audits have identified that some officers and staff within the FCR are failing to record crimes, including harassments and assaults. Where a failure is identified, the results of the daily audits are forwarded to the Deputy Head of Contact Management, who in turn ensures that the issue is rectified, and the crime is recorded.

The Strategic Force Crime Registrar is working closely with the Head of Learning and Development, to ensure that guidance and advice in identifying Common Assaults, Public Order and Harassments when dealing with ASB incidents are incorporated into future training schedules.

The meetings ensure that there is a coordinated and consistent approach to the delivery of CDA training throughout the force.

News bulletins produced by the CDA Training Team have now been distributed to front line officers and FCR staff highlighting the importance of recording crimes associated to ASB incidents.

#### **4.1.6 HMICFRS Victim Service Assessment**

Following a briefing delivered by HMICFRS regarding how they intend to conduct their Victim Service Assessment, the Audit and Inspection Team are conducting a series of internal thematic reviews, following the VSA methodology. The themes of the reviews will mirror the planned investigation crime types of:

- Non-serious Injury
- Serious Injury
- Rape
- Other Sexual Offences
- Stalking and Harassment
- Burglary Dwelling

Some of the audits involve a collaborative effort between the CDA Audit Team and the Audit and Inspection Team. To date, joint inspections have been completed for **actual bodily harm** and other **sexual offences**. An audit on **Stalking and Harassment** is nearing completion.

Moving forward and having considered the results of the completed inspections to date, the Audit and Inspection team are proposing to focus future inspections on improving some of those repeated areas of risk including:

- Reviewing the quality and frequency of Supervisor reviews on a selection of Athena Investigations.
- Reviewing the content and accuracy of closing rationale's on Athena, to link in with the requirements around the Victim's Code.
- Reviewing the timeliness of Secondary Risk Assessments relating to a selection of Domestic Abuse investigations.
- Reviewing ASB incidents to ensure victims have received adequate safeguarding and support.

The recommendations from the respective audits will be managed and governed through the Victim and Witness Action Group, chaired by Temporary ACC Baldwin.

The learning from the above audits has also been forwarded to Learning and Development to ensure that the correct guidance and advice is delivered.

#### **4.1.7 Outcomes**

Home Office Counting Rules dictate that all recorded crimes must be assigned an outcome. It is essential that Essex Police follows the national guidance and the rules

for deciding which outcome it applies to individual crime reports. There are a whole range of options available, and in deciding the outcome, the force must ensure that they consider the nature of the crime, the offender's history and most importantly, the needs of the victim.

How the force uses and applies outcomes is constantly reviewed and audited. The results of the outcome audits are supplied to each of the LPA Commanders on a monthly basis, which gives them the opportunity to address any issues at a local level. The results are also presented to the CDA Board.

Furthermore, the results are presented to the CDA Board. Overall, there has been a noticeable improvement in the use and application of Outcomes. Much of the improvement can be attributed to work that is being undertaken by the respective LPA CDA SPOCs, who continue to provide personal feedback and guidance to individual officers.

#### **4.1.8 The Victims' Code**

The new Victims' Code will be implemented on 1 April 2021. The Code lets victims know what information, support and services they can expect to receive from the police, courts and other criminal justice agencies.

There are twelve rights included in the new code, which reinforces the need to ensure that reports of crime are recorded without any unjustified delay. Additionally, there is a requirement that victims are provided with details of the crime number, the officer in the case and other relevant information about the criminal justice system such as compensation and any other support mechanisms that are available to them.

Each of the LPA CDA SPOCs and the CDA Learning and Development Team, have been asked to reinforce the importance of the New Victims' Code.

#### **4.1.9 Learning and Development Team**

The delivery of CDA training continues to play a significant role in ensuring that all those involved in crime recording are aware of the importance and the correlation between accurate record keeping and victim care.

Several meetings have now taken place between the new Head of Learning and Development and the Strategic Force Crime and Incident Registrar.

The transition plan for the new single training product is progressing according to the timescales identified. It is anticipated that this will be launched on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021.

Work is currently underway, to finalise the exact numbers of students. However, it is estimated that the target audience for this course will be in the region of 2,400 police officers and police staff.

The CDA Sergeants' Course has had 390 active temporary and substantive sergeants complete the training, which equates to 87% of the target audience group.

The Resource Management Unit (RMU) are in the process of booking all the remaining target group audience on to their relevant courses. **See table below:**

Role	Target Audience Total	Total Audience group that have received training	Percentage completed the training	Number left to train	Number booked on course of those left to train
Sergeant	373	340	91%	33	12
T/Sergeant	60	50	83%	10	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>14</b>

Additionally, 489 Probationers and 110 Tutors have also been trained.

At present all CDA training has been moved to a remote delivery format via Microsoft Teams. This will be kept under constant review as the road map to Covid Recovery begins to take effect.

Additionally, learning points identified from the ASB audit have also been built into two additional slides of material that are being added to all of the relevant courses, including the Contact Management, Sergeants and Probationer packages. These will also be included within the future single training product, in line with the other updates.

The Strategic Force Crime and Incident Registrar continues to attend the regularly held CDA Training sub-group. This forum is chaired by the Head of Learning and Development. The meeting identifies gaps and weaknesses concerning Crime Data Accuracy and addresses these issues in the delivery of CDA training.

As of the 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021 eLearning completion rates are continuing to progress well, with completion rates continuing to rise month by month:

- NCRS and HOCR (**94.02%**)
- CDA Outcomes-Reclassifications -Cancel Crime (**91.52%**)
- CDA Rape Recording (**96%**)
- CDA Help us Help You (**89.92%**)

## **5.0 Implications (Issues)**

As described in the body of this report.

### **5.1 Links to Police and Crime Plan Priorities**

Crime Data Accuracy links directly to the priorities set out in the Police and Crime Plan, to ensure we accurately record crime, identify areas of under recording and ensure victims of crime have access to appropriate support services. It also allows the office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner to provide the public with accurate information about crime in Essex.



## **5.2 Demand**

Essex Police will continue to monitor the demand placed upon it; through the strong governance processes it has built. They will also closely monitor the impact that the Coronavirus pandemic may have with regards to crime recording compliance.

The past year has seen a reduction in the number of crimes recorded by Essex Police, largely as a result of restrictions on public movement and social interaction in response to the Coronavirus pandemic. This has resulted in less crimes being recorded, a reduction of 12.5% in 12 months to February 2021 compared to the same period last year.

The reduction in crime has not been evenly distributed. Theft offences have decreased by 39% and Criminal Damage by 31.3% in the three months to February 2021, compared to the same period last year. Sexual Offences and Violence have seen smaller decreases of 18.6% and 8.1% respectively. Within violence, Stalking and Harassment increased by 15.1%, but Violence with Injury fell by 26.8%. State based crime, often generated by Police activity, saw a decrease of 8.6% compared to three months to February 2021.

## **5.3 Risks/Mitigation**

There is a risk recorded on the Essex Police Strategic Risk Register relating to Crime Data Accuracy. This risk is reviewed regularly at the Crime Data Accuracy Board, chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable.

## **5.4 Equality and/or Human Rights Implications**

None.

## **5.5 Health and Safety Implications**

None.

## **6.0 Consultation/Engagement**

Crime Data Accuracy Board Members.

## **7.0 Actions for Improvement**

The internal audits conducted by the CDA Audit Team and the work now being conducted by the LPA, CDA SPOCs has continued to identify the force's strengths and weaknesses, with regards to CDA compliance.

Against this backdrop, a focused and determined effort will continue to ensure that:

- the force is dealing with incidents of ASB in an effective and proportionate way. A strong emphasis is being placed on ensuring that officers are accurately recording crimes such as, assaults, harassments and public order offences;

- supervisors and officers understand the need to ensure that victims of Domestic Abuse are listened to carefully, and where necessary crimes are accurately recorded;
- there is a strong supervisory footprint applied to both of the above.

## **8.0 Future Work/Development and Expected Outcome**

The Strategic Force Crime and Incident Registrar and his team are continuing to ensure that the needs of victims are fully understood, and any activity generated within the team is aligned to victim care.

Work is currently underway to ensure that the force is aware of their “routes in” with regards to potential reports of crime. As part of this process, daily ASB Audits will continue for the foreseeable future. This will ensure that all crimes connected to the ASB incident will be accurately recorded, victims will be readily identified and receive immediate support where necessary.

We will continue to reinforce the introduction of ‘The new Victim’s Code’ which will come into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021. The Code lets victims know what information, support and services they can expect to receive from the police, courts and other criminal justice agencies.

Work continues to focus on ensuring that the voices of victims of Domestic Abuse are being carefully listened to. Especially, those victims who have disclosed through the DASH Risk Assessment that they have been the victim of a crime, including rapes.