

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

Meeting date: 10 September 2026

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 10 September 2026. 12 panel members were present. The panel discussed:

- Scrutiny of case files
- Rationale and file selection

The Panel findings

24 cases were scrutinised: 12 Norfolk and 12 Suffolk cases. These cases were selected at random and included both adult (16) and youth (8) 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 12 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 two cases.

Further discussion took place regarding an Adult Conditional Caution relating to the amount of compensation due to the victim and why this had been deferred. Compensation was under £250 and is due at the end of October 2026 and was deferred as the offender had lost their job after the Caution was issued. The panel also queried as to why a Conditional Caution was issued as this seemed a serious offence (ABH to a minor). It was confirmed that the offender had no previous adult cautions and the victim and their mother were also fearful of going through court proceedings. Norfolk Constabulary therefore took a victim focused approach. The Constabulary is to look at the previous Youth Caution history of the perpetrator and provide details to the panel.

Further discussions took place regarding an Adult Community Resolution where the offender was found to have cocaine on their possession. The Community Resolution suggested that the offender attend a Drug Awareness Course, however, this was not completed. As this was a Community Resolution there was no follow up as to the breach, but such will be held against them if further offences are committed.

Comments were made by the panel as to the ongoing positive work going on between Norfolk Constabulary and the Youth Justice Service (YJS) as to guide youths in the right direction and those working on such cases should be commended.

Suffolk cases

The 12 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 as to an Adult Community Resolution relating to a failure to comply with a Sexual Offences Notification Order. The Defendant suggested they were not aware of the guidelines of their Notification Order due to a language barrier. The panel were sceptical of such reason given by the Defendant as it is the panels understanding that the Defendant would not have left court without being provided with the proper guidelines and requirements as to their Notification Order. The court would also require assurance from the Defendant that they understood said guidelines and requirements as to their Sexual Offences Notification Order.

Further discussion took place on a Youth Caution pertaining to a youth having a knife on their possession at a football match. The offender is known by the police for previous similar incidents and has subsequently come to police attention since the Youth Caution. The Panel wanted to know the support that is being provided and any next steps. The YJS provided the panel with a comprehensive schedule of the work that has happened to support the offender, such as weekly appointments focusing on consistency, predictability and reliability, whilst also helping them produce a manageable daily routine. The offender has also been referred to an Education, Training and Employment co-ordinator to identify future goals.

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 April 2026 to June 2026. Please see the data broken down by type of Out of Court Disposals for each force below:

Norfolk Constabulary data

Norfolk Constabulary				
Outcome	April	May	June	Total
Type 2 - Caution Youth	5	3	4	12
Type 3 - Caution Adult	64	43	55	162
Type 3A - Caution Adult - alternate offence.	3	2	2	7
Adult Caution - Conditional	2	9	8	19
Type 4 - TIC - Taken into Consideration	49	37	16	102
Type 7 - Cannabis/Khat Warning	0	0	1	1
Type 8 - Community resolution (Crime)	201	221	255	677
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.	18	3	4	25
Grand Total	342	318	345	1,005

Suffolk Constabulary data

Suffolk Constabulary				
Outcome	April	May	June	Total
Type 2 - Caution Youth	6	3	4	13
Type 2A - Caution Youth - alternate offence.	1	0	0	1
Youth Conditional Caution	0	0	1	1
Type 3 - Caution Adult	35	31	24	90
Type 3A - Caution Adult - alternate offence.	0	1	1	2
Adult Caution – Conditional	5	10	10	25
Type 4 - TIC - Taken into Consideration	8	15	7	30
Type 5 - Offender has died	2	4	2	8
Type 8 - Community resolution (Crime)	154	165	171	490
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.	4	15	8	27
Grand Total	215	244	228	687

Next meeting:

Thursday 3 December 2026.