Suffolk Constabulary

Police Headquarters
Martlesham Heath
Ipswich, Suffolk
IP5 3QS

9th August 2024

Dear Colleague

Following the awful events that took place in Southport a week ago and the subsequent disorder which has occurred across the country, I thought it appropriate for me to make contact with stakeholders across Suffolk to update you on the situation here in the county.

Thankfully, we are yet to experience protest or disorder in Suffolk, but we remain alert to the risk that this situation might change. We are closely monitoring social media channels, but the sheer volume of messaging and the unreliable nature of the content posted makes such monitoring a challenge. Other sources of police intelligence are being utilised to better enhance our understanding of local risk. Disinformation is driving much of the appalling violence that we have seen elsewhere in the country, and we urge those accessing social media to treat the content with scepticism and refer to reputable news agencies for an accurate understanding of what has occurred.

All police forces have deployed additional public order trained officers throughout the week, and we will be continuing these deployments into next week. These additional officers are of course abstracted from other duties to carry out these patrols which does inevitably cause disruption to other parts of the constabulary. Additionally, we have just made decisions on extending shifts and embargo on officers' holiday to enable us to meet local and national policing at the weekend in Suffolk. We have managed not to cancel rest days at this stage (except on voluntary basis for overtime). Our officers are working incredibly hard, with many of them working extended shifts, to ensure that we can meet emergency calls for service. Anyone who considers engaging in disorder in our county can expect a robust response from a constabulary who will work tirelessly to bring offenders to justice and protect our communities. We are ready to step forward and deal with whatever faces us, and we ask for your support should we be called to do so.

The nature of the disorder that has occurred will inevitably cause particular anxiety for our Muslim communities and other faith groups. Our neighbourhood officers are in contact with relevant community leaders and will continue that support in the days ahead. I firmly believe that we will best support all our communities if we are careful and limited in our communications so to not embolden those carrying out criminal acts or encourage counter-protest which itself might turn disorderly or exacerbate tensions.

The Constabulary is also dealing with two murder investigations. Tragically, on July 24th, 2024, a lady walking in Brantham was murdered and on August 6th, 2024, a female in her 20's was also tragically murdered in Ipswich – a local man known to the victim has been arrested for the offence in Ipswich. These incidents have absolutely no links to Southport or the subsequent disorder and we will continue to have a presence in these areas for increased patrols by our Community Policing Teams. We will keep the public and media updated on the investigation this week as our enquiries progress. I would be grateful if you and your organisations or communities could help us ensure that any reporting or public comments about these incidents are made responsibly so as not to cause distress to those affected or heighten community concerns.

I trust this letter is helpful and please do not hesitate to contact me or your Area Superintendent should you wish to discuss the issues set out in this letter. We are committed to working closely with leaders across the county as we respond to these terrible events.

Yours sincerely



Rachel Kearton BSc MPhil FCIPD CF
Chief Constable