



Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg yn ogystal â Saesneg.

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Police and Crime Commissioner for Dyfed-Powys

Scrutiny Panel

Dip Sampling Exercise

Review of Violence Against Women and Girls Cases

Panel Members' Findings & Feedback

April 2022

Contents

1. Overview

On the 25th April 2022 Members attended the meeting of the Dyfed-Powys Out of Court Disposal Scrutiny Panel. Members reviewed a selection of violence against women and girls, which had been dealt with by way of an Out of Court Disposal. The Panel considered a total of 16 cases, 8 involving youth suspects and 8 involving adults.

This meeting was conducted virtually via Microsoft Teams.

1. Background, purpose and methodology

Panel Members collectively agree an area of focus for each meeting. They receive relevant case files two weeks prior to each meeting which have been randomly selected by the Panel Chair. The Panel then meets to discuss each case and where possible reach a conclusion as to the appropriateness of the disposal. In deciding this, the Panel considers the following criteria:

- The views and feedback from the victim and the offender.**
- Compliance with force policy.**
- Rationale for the decision and outcome.**
- Potential community impact.**
- Circumstances and seriousness of the offence.**
- Potential alternative options that may have been available.**

The Panel discuss each case and categorise them as one of the following:

- Appropriate use consistent with policy.**
- Appropriate use with Panel Members' reservations.**
- Inappropriate use or inconsistent with policy.**
- Panel fails to reach a conclusion.**

1. Approval by Panel Chair

I D.L Evans (print name) can confirm that I have read the report, and that it fully represents the views expressed by the Panel during our dip sampling exercise dated 25th April 2022.

Signed: David Evans

Date: 01/08/2022

1. Actions taken following previous panel meeting

As a result of the Out of Court Disposal Scrutiny Panel's work, the following actions have been completed since the last meeting:

- **As a result of discussions within the last meeting the Youth Offending Team (YOT) and the force have met to review cases where inconsistencies regarding gravity matrix scores had been identified. Issues have been identified and are now being addressed.**
- **Case 4 from the last meeting has been reviewed by the force and it was found that the case had gone through bureau and YOT. The force was satisfied that the child would still get the level of support and intervention they would expect to address their behaviour and offending even though the case was dealt with by a Youth Community Resolution.**
- **Feedback has been given to the force as a reminder that all hate crime cases are to be sent to the CPS for a charging decision as per policy.**

1. Good practice

The following good practice was identified as a result of the Panel's work this quarter:

- **The Panel highlighted in case 1 that the officer in the case had given safeguarding advice to the victim and that this was recorded within the documentation. The Panel felt that this was very good practice and should be shared.**
- **Positive feedback was given from members of the Panel in relation to the way that the Dyfed-Powys OOC Panel runs and the documentation that the Panel receive.**

6.0 Areas for improvement

The following area for improvement was identified as a result of the Panel's work this quarter:

- **It was found that for two of the Youth cases there was insufficient detail included in the case file for the Panel to make an informed decision on the appropriateness of the outcome. It was found that some of the YOT reports were missing and therefore key information was not known.**

7.0 Consideration of violence against women and girls' cases - youth suspects

Eight violence against women and girl's youth cases were considered, the cases were dealt with via: one Youth Caution, six Youth Community Resolutions and one Youth Restorative Disposal.

Members' assessment	Number of cases
Appropriate	5
Appropriate with reservations	2
Panel Fail to reach conclusion	1

Panel Members' observations are detailed below.

Case 1

This case was in relation to the suspect pushing and punching the victim causing bruising. Members noted positively that the officer in the case had given the victim safeguarding advice and this was highlighted as good practice. The Panel felt that a Youth Caution outcome was consistent with policy and appropriate.

Panel's Assessment: Appropriate

Case 2

The suspect in this case had sent threats to rape and to kill via WhatsApp to the victim. The Panel had some reservations about the outcome of a Youth Community Resolution. Members felt that although the individual was only 13 years old, they had demonstrated a pattern of escalating behaviour. It was felt that this case was serious due to the threats to kill and the individual not offering any apology. It was also noted that the individual had received a previous Youth Restorative Disposal. Due to the case file not containing the Youth Offending Team assessment, the Panel were unable to fully assess the appropriateness of the outcome.

Panel's Assessment: Appropriate with Reservations

Case 3

The suspect in this case was given a Youth Community Resolution for pushing the victim. The Panel felt that there was not enough information included in the case and therefore failed to reach conclusion on whether this case was dealt with appropriately. It was noted that there were gaps in the information provided in

relation to the assault and criminal damage aspects of the case and there was no further information noted in relation to their previous offences. The Panel also felt concerned that the individual did not receive any intervention due to the case taking place during the pandemic. The Panel felt that the individual needed support for their escalating behaviour.

Panel's Assessment: Panel fail to reach conclusion

Case 4

Members were satisfied with the actions taken within the investigation of this case. The suspect was given a Youth Community Resolution for hitting their mother and causing damage to their house. The individual in this case was only 11 years old, had admitted to the offence and their mum did not wish to take the complaint further. The Panel felt that this was a very thorough and detailed case file and had followed policy.

Panel's Assessment: Appropriate

Case 5

This case was in relation to the suspect punching a fellow pupil at school causing reddening. Members felt that a Youth Community Resolution was appropriate and that it was positive to note that the suspect had a positive attitude towards their intervention plan. Members also wished to highlight that this was a thorough and detailed case file.

Panel's Assessment: Appropriate

Case 6

The suspect in this case had shoved the victim into a chair causing bruising and was given a Youth Community Resolution. Members noted again that this was a thorough case file with a detailed Bureau assessment and intervention plan. Members had no concerns in relation to this case and felt it was consistent with policy.

Panel's Assessment: Appropriate

Case 7

Members felt that this case had been appropriately disposed via a Youth Community Resolution. The suspect in this case had slapped and pulled the hair of the victim. The Panel had no issue with the outcome; however, they did note that there was no reference to the Hate Crime aspect being addressed and that there was no YOT

assessment report available. The Panel also noted that this offence was very similar to case 1 and unlike case 1, there was no safeguarding advice given to this victim which would have been useful.

Panel's Assessment: Appropriate

Case 8

This was in relation to the suspect punching and pulling the hair of the victim causing swelling to the mouth area. Members had reservations on the case being dealt with via Youth Restorative Disposal due to the injuries caused to the victim. Members considered that in comparison to some of the previous cases where a Youth Community Resolution was given, this case could have been escalated. It was however noted that positively the individual was engaging well with support.

Panel's Assessment: Appropriate with Reservations

8.0 Consideration of violence against women and girls - adult suspects

Panel Members reviewed eight cases. Three had been dealt with by way of a Caution, one via a Conditional Caution and four via Community Resolution.

Members' assessments were as follows:

Members' assessment	Number of cases
Appropriate	6
Inappropriate	2

Panel Members' observations on each case are detailed below:

Case 9

The suspect in this case was given a Caution for assaulting and threatening to kill the victim. The suspect was 86 years-old and was unfit for detention. It was noted that the suspect had mental health concerns and that the victim did not wish to make a complaint. Although the Panel felt that this outcome was appropriate due to the age of the suspect. The vulnerability of the victim was noted, as this was a domestic abuse incident, the suspect had a history of offences and there was no further protection for the victim. It was found that support agencies had been sighted and had tried to give support.

Panel's Assessment: Appropriate

Case 10

This suspect was given a Caution for coercive and controlling behaviour towards their partner. Due to the victim withdrawing the complaint the Panel felt that this outcome was appropriate. It was noted that the police did all they could and that a thorough rationale for the decision was recorded.

Panel's Assessment: Appropriate

Case 11

Members were satisfied with a Caution outcome relating to an incident where the suspect had damaged the victims' home and threatened to kill them. The Panel felt that a Caution was appropriate to the level of the offence. It was noted that a referral to an alcohol support service would have been beneficial.

Panel's Assessment: Appropriate

Case 12

The victim in this case had received several unwanted messages over the years and recently a photo of where they were residing. The suspect in this case was given a Conditional Caution and had since not complied with the diversionary scheme. The Panel were unsatisfied with this outcome and felt that due to the seriousness of the offence, demonstrating repeated stalking behaviour this case should have been taken to court. It was felt that this victim was very vulnerable.

Panel's Assessment: Inappropriate

Case 13

Members felt that the outcome of a Community Resolution was appropriate for this case where the suspect had pulled the victim's hair and punched her causing reddening to the face. The suspect had given an apology and it was felt that this outcome was in line with policy.

Panel's Assessment: Appropriate

Case 14

The suspect in this case had hit the victim to the head causing no visible injuries and was given the outcome of Community Resolution. The Panel Members felt that although this case was similar to case 14 in offence, there were some reservations due to the suspect assaulting an officer during the arrest process. The suspect had no remorse or acceptance of the assault or offence.

Panel's Assessment: Appropriate with reservations

Case 15

The suspect in this case was given a Community Resolution for threatening to rape the victim by phoning her business of work. The Panel felt that this case had been inappropriately disposed and should have been escalated. It was felt that the suspect had not given an acceptable apology and had not accepted the offence, showing no remorse. The Panel felt that this case should have been taken to court due to the vulnerability and fear of the victim.

Panel's Assessment: Inappropriate

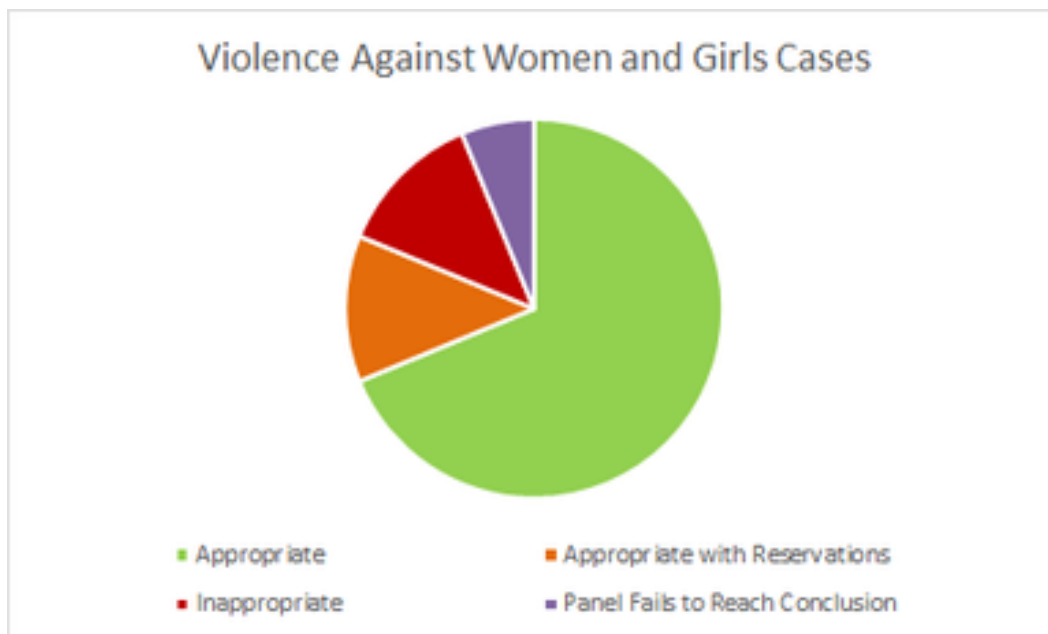
Case 16

The suspect in this case was given a Community Resolution for hitting the victim's head against the floor and causing bruising. The Panel noted that although this individual had a history and this was a serious offence, there was evidence within the case that this was a provoked attack. The Panel therefore felt that this outcome was appropriate. It was also noted that the individual was engaging well with the diversionary scheme.

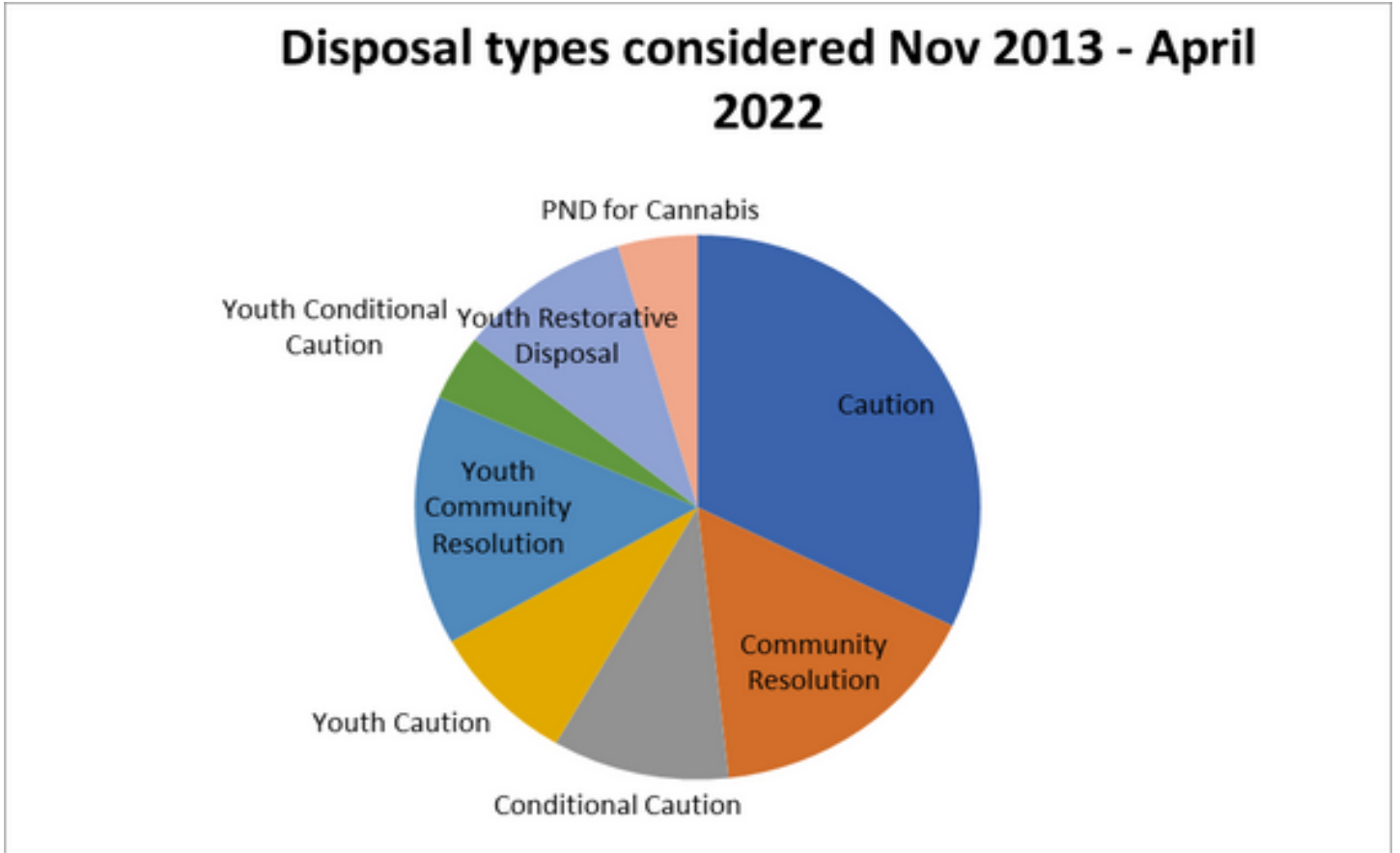
Panel's Assessment: Appropriate

9.0 Panel's assessments to date

The chart below demonstrates the Panel's assessment of the violence against women and girls' cases considered at the most recent meeting:

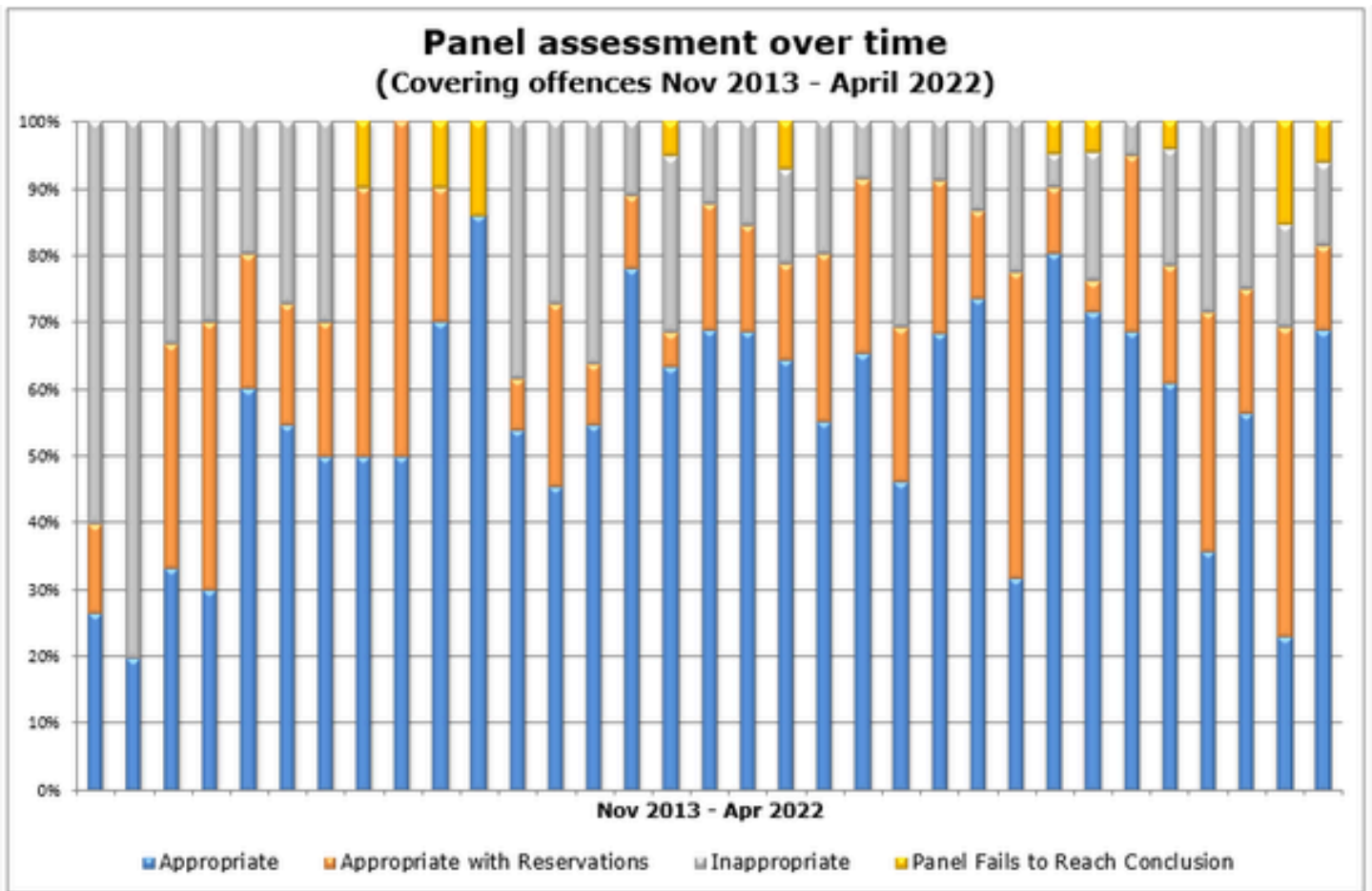


Since November 2013 the Panel has considered a range of disposals, as displayed in the graph below.

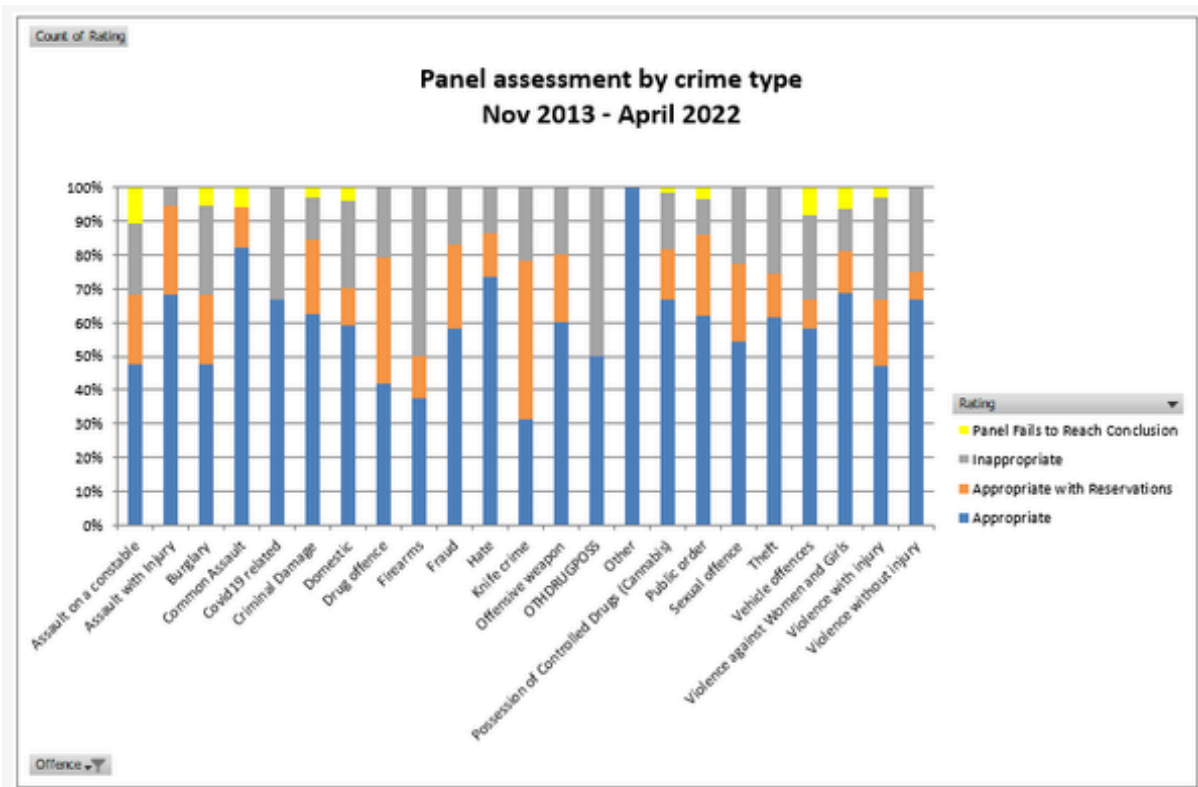


Of the 476 cases examined between April 2013 and April 2022, 57% were assessed as appropriate, 20% as inappropriate, 21% as appropriate with reservations and the panel failed to reach a conclusion in 2% of cases.

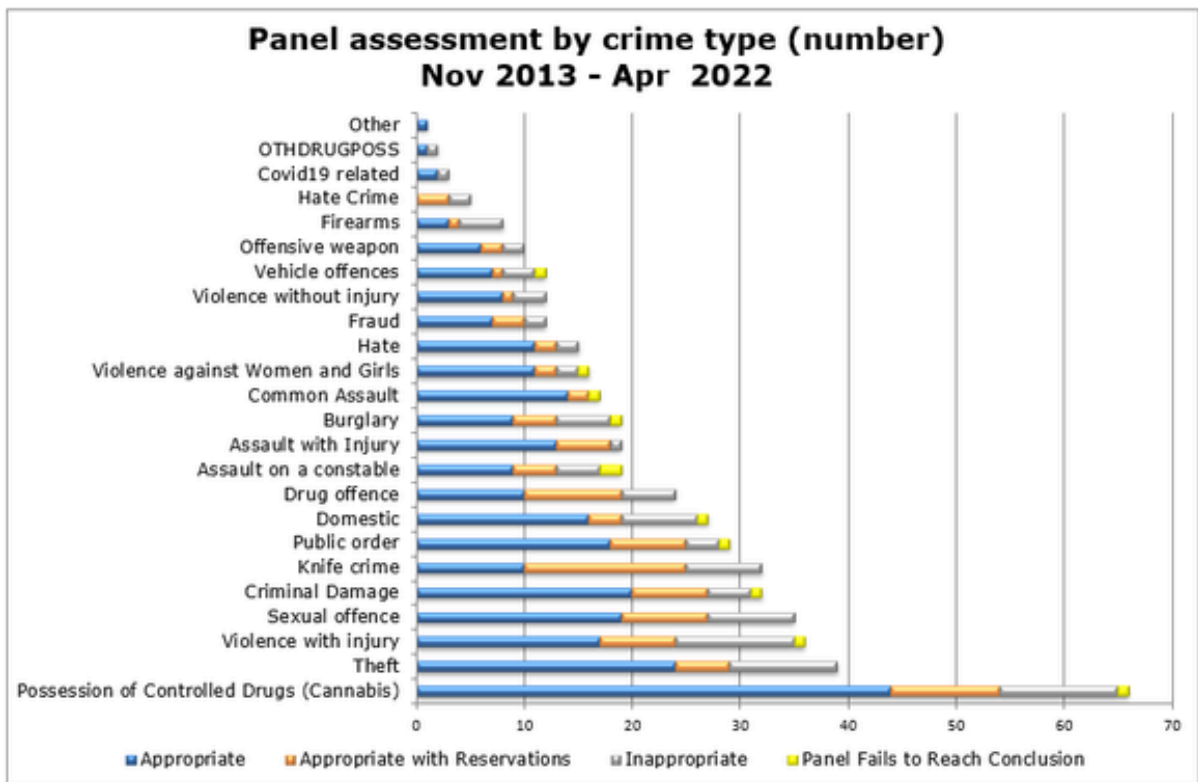
The change in conclusions reached over time can be seen in the graph below:



The graph below shows the breakdown by crime type as a percentage of cases considered between November 2013 and April 2022.

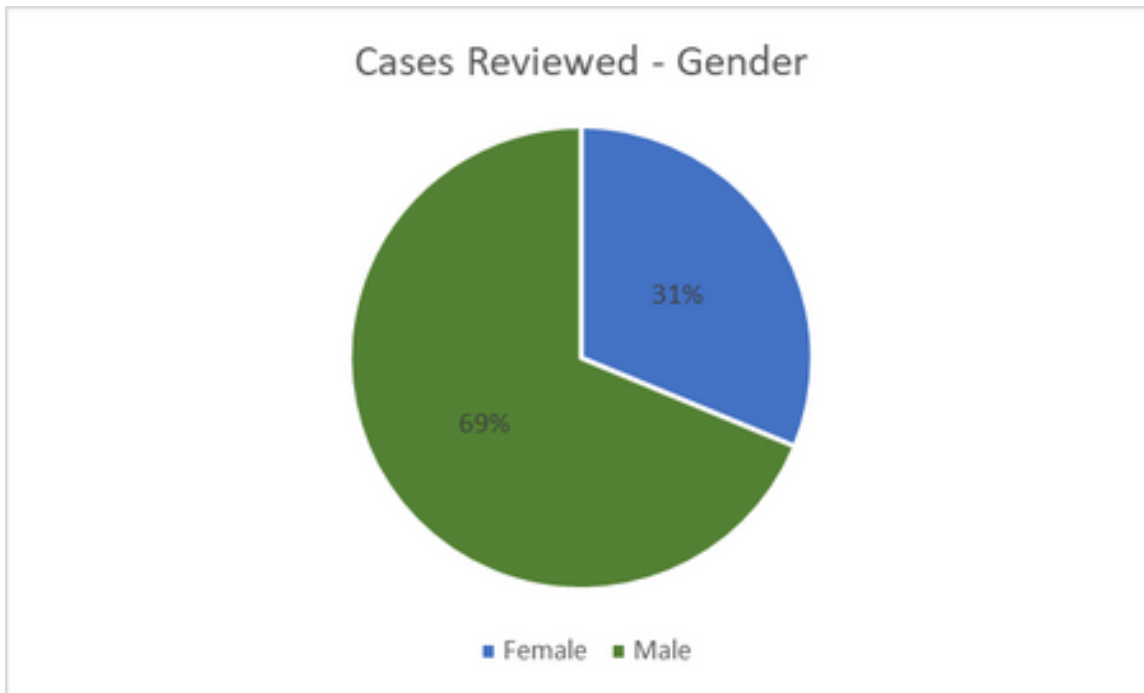


The following graph displays the actual number of cases assessed within each crime type and the resulting Panel opinions at their meetings between November 2013 and April 2022.



10.0 Ethnicity and Gender

The following chart shows the breakdown of cases reviewed within this meeting in terms of their gender:



The following table shows the breakdown of cases reviewed within this meeting in terms of ethnicity.

Ethnicity Noted	Suspect's	Officer's Assessment
	Self - Assessment	
White British	14	0
White - North European	0	15
Not noted	2	1

It was identified that where ethnicity had been recorded, all suspects identified as White - British but officers identified them as White - North European. It was queried again whether these fields were being recorded accurately.

There were no race or gender equality issues identified as part of the Panel's review.

11.0 Future Panel focus

Following a discussion, it was decided by the Panel that they would like to focus on malicious communication and harassment cases.

Action 1: It was felt that the PCC should raise the awareness of the OOCB Panel to Magistrates and raise the profile of the work of the Panel on an All-Wales level.

Action 2: For the positive feedback in relation to the officer providing the victim with safeguarding advice to be shared.

Action 3: YOT to liaise with their teams to ensure all available YOT documentation is added to the OOCB case files.