LEICESTERSHIRE POLICE

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DEPARTMENT: Criminal Justice.

DATE: 13th October 2026

Subject: **Disproportionality in use of Voluntary Interviews**

1. Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to investigate whether there are any variations in the manner that Voluntary Interviews are used according to the demographics of the suspect.

2. Findings

During the period 1st April 2026 to 30th September 2026, 8,310 individuals were dealt with within one of the Custody Suites within Leicestershire (some on more than one occasion). Over the same time period Niche recorded that 1,612 persons were dealt with by means of a Voluntary Interview, the details of 1,177 which are recorded on Pronto. It might be of some concern that this only represents 73% of the total VAs recorded on Niche.

The demographics of those arrested opposed to VAd have been examined according to Age, Gender and Ethnicity.

The table below summarises the comparison.

	VAs	Arrests	% VA	% Arrests	Assessment (Arrests v VAs)
All Arrivals	1,612	8,310			
10-13 Years of Age	79	46	**5.8%**	0.6%	No Significant Difference
14-15 Years of Age	119	238	**8.7%**	2.9%	No Significant Difference
16-17 Years of Age	93	286	**6.8%**	3.5%	No Significant Difference
18-30 Years	376	2,680	**27.6%**	32.5%	No Significant Difference
31-40 Years	347	2,374	**25.5%**	28.7%	No Significant Difference
41-50 Years	260	1,730	**19.1%**	20.9%	No Significant Difference
51-60 Years	150	630	**11.0%**	7.6%	No Significant Difference
61+ Years	144	274	**10.6%**	3.3%	No Significant Difference
Female	382	1,170	**28.1%**	14.2%	Lower

White	777	5,232	**63.7%**	70.2%	No Significant Difference
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	29	259	**2.4%**	3.5%	No Significant Difference
Asian/Asian British	195	1,052	**16.0%**	14.1%	No Significant Difference
Black/African/Caribbean/ Black British	74	645	**6.1%**	8.6%	No Significant Difference
Other ethnic group	15	270	**1.2%**	3.6%	No Significant Difference

Whilst the summary would suggest that female suspects are more likely to be VAd than arrested, further analysis suggests that this may be a product of the criminality that the individuals are suspected of involvement in.

Another factor could be the location of the events as a disproportionate amount of crime takes place in the city where all of the Custody Suites are located and hence one of the benefits of utilising a VA to alleviate the need to travel a significant distance would not be relevant.

The next table shows the likelihood of persons of BMEs being arrested / VA compared to a person of White ethnicity.

	Compared to Persons of White ethnicity	
	Arrested	VAs
White	Base	Base
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	1.3 x	1.3 x
Asian/Asian British	0.8 x	1.1 x
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	2.7 x	2.7 x
Other ethnic group	1.4 x	1.2 x

Whilst the data might suggest that there are numerical differences in the ethnicities of persons being suspected of offences and then either arrested or VAd, the differences are within the bounds of statistical error and hence the data does not provide any evidence that there are genuine differences as opposed to being merely “statistical noise”. It needs to be noted that these ratios are compared to the population and not to the ethnicity of all persons suspected of an offence.

3. Conclusion

Notwithstanding numerical variations, it would appear that Voluntary Interviews are being utilised as a tactic more often amongst female suspects.

It is probable that this is as result of both the nature of the crimes that this gender are suspected of having committed coupled with the location of the offending in relation to the location of the Custody Suites.