

Police and Crime Panel – 15th March 2016

HMIC Inspections of Staffordshire Police

Report of the Police & Crime Commissioner

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 Through the oversight arrangements that the Police and Crime Commissioner has in place, this report further updates the Panel on the progress of Staffordshire Police in responding to the HMIC Vulnerability inspection, which was reported on at the last meeting in February 2016 and the outcome of the current PEEL (Police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy) inspections for Staffordshire Police.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Panel take note of the Commissioner's updates on both the progress being made in respect of the HMIC Vulnerability inspection of Staffordshire Police and the overall PEEL outcome for Staffordshire Police.

3. Background

- 3.1 Annual inspections into police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy (PEEL), take place through HMIC and the period from November 2014 to December 2015 is the first full cycle of these inspections. The PEEL analysis from HMIC is one tool that the police and crime commissioner uses to hold the force to account for their performance.
- 3.2 Within each of the three themed areas of effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy HMIC ask and answer a number of questions to make overall judgements of each force. At the last Police and Crime Panel in February 2016, both the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable attended to discuss the Inadequate rating with regard to one question within the Effectiveness theme area, that being 'How effective is the force at protecting those who are vulnerable from harm and supporting victims?'. The Panel scrutinised the Commissioner as to how he was overseeing improvement activity and was satisfied that the arrangements in place were sufficiently robust. These performance management arrangements are also used more widely to oversee other areas of Staffordshire Polices' work.
- 3.3 Over the three themed areas there were in total ten questions asked, supported by inspection activity that took place over the 14 month period from November 2014 to December 2015. Of these: -
 - One received an Outstanding rating
 - Seven received a Good rating

- One received a Requires Improvement rating
- One received an Inadequate rating

3.4 The overall ratings by themed area were; Effectiveness: Requires Improvement, Efficiency: Good and Legitimacy: Good. The overall Effectiveness rating has been heavily influenced by the vulnerability inspection outcome debated at the last Panel meeting. Staffordshire Police's performance within the Legitimacy themed area was one of the top three in the country with the three questions asked within this area being graded Good, Outstanding and Good.

3.5 Whilst 80% of all the questions asked by HMIC received a Good or Outstanding rating and good progress is being made on those areas where improvement is necessary, the commissioner ensures through his office that oversight on both specific areas and more generally is robust; detail of how he does this was provided to panel members at the their February meeting.

4. HMIC Vulnerability Update

4.1 The commissioner provided a detailed report at the Panel's meeting in February 2016 on his oversight of the inspection outcome on vulnerability. The Chief Constable also attended this meeting and answered questions from panel members on the improvement work progressing under the commissioner's oversight.

4.2 The oversight applied by the commissioner is focussed on the action plan that has been developed to respond to the inspection and a requirement for regular operational updates on progress. The Force has in place a very detailed plan for improvement that addresses the 'Causes for Concern' and the 'Areas for Improvement' reported to the panel at the last meeting. The action plan is updated on a monthly basis and scrutiny applied between updates so that particular issues can be investigated further by the commissioner. At present, all improvement actions are on track or complete.

4.3 Discussions with HMIC continue to take place on a regular basis and progress explored with them in an open and transparent manner. A team of inspectors will carry out a re-inspection in the first week of April 2016.

4.4 Given the wider responsibility for addressing vulnerability across the statutory and non-statutory sectors, partner relationships are key to progress. All partners have been supportive of the improvements required and been heavily involved in ensuring that systems and processes that have needed improvement are thought through and implemented in a 'whole system' end-to-end manner.

4.5 Specific progress that has been made to address key issues highlighted in the inspection report include: -

- Structural change to provide specific leadership to this work area together with strong strategic leadership through the forces' executive;
- Ensuring mandatory compliance on the use of risk assessments for domestic abuse incidents and crimes and that appropriate action takes place as a result of risk assessments;

- New systems and processes that ensure consistency of approach e.g. local vulnerability hubs, stronger management and supervision at the local level, robust performance management activity (real time and regular monitoring);
- Training, action learning and cultural awareness activity so that all officers and staff are supported to do the right thing and be aware of the impact that their activity has;
- New tools to enable officers to deliver improved service, including the completion of DIAL risk assessments via mobile devices at the scene and a Domestic Abuse Reference Tool (DART);
- Addressing the categorising of missing and absent children (complete);
- Improving systems, processes and training / development so that the risks associated with missing and absent children are managed appropriately;
- Developing the Partnership Hub model with partners so that the wider management of vulnerability supported by effective information sharing is more consistent across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. This is a multi-agency undertaking.

4.6 The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner is working closely with Staffordshire Police and providing oversight to the work being carried out, as summarised above. At this stage, commissioner is confident that the force is putting in place the improvements required.

5. Inspection Regime

5.1 As detailed to the panel at their last meeting, the police service is not solely responsible for addressing the needs of vulnerable people and whilst the HMIC report focuses on policing, other partners will have responsibilities and will need to act if vulnerable people are to receive the support that they need.

5.2 The commissioner continues to discuss with government ministers and officials the need to rely more on multi-agency approaches to inspection activity, which is more rounded in scope and outlook, more responsive and better able to target specific areas of interest and concern.

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