



POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

14th JANUARY 2020

REPORT OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

Delivery of the Police and Crime Plan - July - September 2019: Targets and Performance

I have continued to hold the Chief Constable to account for delivery of an effective and efficient police service for the people of Northumbria. Attached is a report outlining key performance areas for the period July to September 2019 together with the crime tables at force and local authority level. In addition to this highlight report further performance data providing context for this is available at <http://www.northumbria-pcc.gov.uk/police-crime-plan/performance-monitoring/quarterly-performance-reports/2019-2020/>

This report also provides a high level overview of additional scrutiny activity carried out between September and December 2019, including an overview of the findings of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Inspections received during that period.

1. Scrutiny Meetings

I hold the Chief Constable and his Chief Officer team to account through monthly Scrutiny meetings. There is an annual rolling programme of business in place with a view to ensuring key parts of policing business are scrutinised in a timely way, providing me with assurance that Northumbria Police are responding to communities and providing the most efficient and effective service that they can.

Key areas of business considered during September-December 2019 include:

- Police and Crime Plan performance
- HMICFRS action plans
- Community engagement and media campaigns
- Professional standards
- Stop and search and use of force
- Civil claims
- Domestic Abuse and Rape and Serious Sexual Offences (RASSO) action plans
- Domestic homicide reviews, serious case reviews and safeguarding adult reviews

2. Joint Business Meetings

Joint Business meetings between myself and the Chief Constable are monthly with key areas of business brought for discussion and decision making.

Key areas of business considered in this period include:

- Development of the Violence Reduction Unit
- Capital and Revenue monitoring
- Findings from the joint targeted area inspection of the multi-agency response to child exploitation in Northumberland
- PEEL effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy 2018-19
- PEEL spotlight report: Shining a Light on Betrayal
- Findings from 'Cyber: Keep the light on; An Inspection of the police response to cyber-dependent crime'
- Joint Strategic Risk Register
- Operation Uplift and police recruitment

3. HMICFRS Inspections Update

A number of HMICFRS reports were reported to me at the Joint Business Meeting and Northumbria Police and in response to this regular updates on progress against recommendations made by the inspectors and areas identified for improvement are reported to my Scrutiny Committee on a quarterly basis.

Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) of the Multi-agency Response to Child Exploitation in Northumberland

HMICFRS, Care Quality Commissioner (CQC) and HMI Probation (HMIP) inspected the multi-agency (including Northumbria Police and the Local Authority) response to children experiencing, or at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) within Northumberland in June 2019. This inspection further evaluated the multi-agency 'front door' focussing on children at risk, along with the effectiveness of the multi-agency leadership and management of this work, including the role played by Northumberland Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB).

Key strengths were identified:

- The effective systems the Multi-agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH) have in place to ensure concerns are responded to in a timely manner.
- Child protection enquiries are prompt, workers engage with young people in a sensitive way.
- The Missing, Slavery, Exploitation and Trafficking (MSET) group has had a positive impact on reducing the number of missing children.

Additional areas were identified for improvement, including:

- The need to further develop the CSE Strategy and Action Plan which is to be informed by an up to date intelligence profile.
- Improved understanding of CCE amongst practitioners.
- Strategy discussions are not always held when risks have been identified and outcomes of meetings are not always clear or visible on children's records.
- The report highlights a general improvement in the early identification of risk factors that may potentially result in exploitation. Whilst the MASH referral process is being reviewed, HMICFRS identified that there is no consistent approach to referrals being received.

Although various improvements have been documented, this inspection recognised that safeguarding agencies in Northumberland continue to demonstrate a strong commitment to working together to safeguard children and have made the necessary changes highlighted in previous inspections. Northumbria Police will work with partners to address these issues.

HMICFRS Spotlight Report: Shining a light on betrayal

HMICFRS nationally inspected how forces were tackling abuse of position for a sexual purpose between 2015 and 2017 and found that forces were slowly rooting out this form of corruption. Whilst this report focuses upon the national response, it should be noted that in the recent Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy (PEEL) inspection (2018/19), Northumbria Police was assessed as 'Good'. Four main areas are identified that forces need to focus on, prevention, understanding the threat, uncovering corruption, and taking action.

Prevention:

HMICFRS found that all forces have made determined efforts to create the right ethical environment for the workforce to operate in, with force leaders making good efforts to promote both the code of ethics, their own force values and expected standards of professional behaviour. Concerns were raised by HMICFRS regarding the proportion of people working in forces who do not have the correct vetting.

Recommendations –

- All forces that are not yet doing so should immediately comply with all elements of the national guidance on vetting, ensuring that there is a clear understanding of the level of vetting required for all posts and the level of vetting held by all officers and staff.

Northumbria Position

- The Vetting Unit has restructured and is proportionately resourced.
- Additional temporary resources are focusing on retrospective vetting applications, recruitment vetting renewals, change of circumstances and designated post applications.

Understanding the Threat:

HMICFRS have found that forces must categorise corruption intelligence accurately to enable forces to understand the true extent of corruption and threat posed. Counter Corruption Units (CCU) are expected to produce annual strategic counter-corruption threat assessments and the National Crime Agency (NCA) has agreed to produce national threat assessments which will be informed by forces assessments.

Recommendations –

- All forces to produce a comprehensive annual counter-corruption strategic threat assessment.

Northumbria Position

- The force will produce a refreshed document.

Corruption

HMICFRS have found that all forces have internal reporting lines in which confidential and anonymous information can be passed. Inspectors identified that there is still scope for improving the links with those agencies supporting vulnerable people to identify the warning signs of inappropriate behaviour.

Recommendations –

- The NPCC Lead for counter corruption and the home Office should work together with software suppliers to provide a solution to enable all forces to implement proactive ICT monitoring.

Northumbria Position

- The force's Counter Corruption Unit recording processes are compliant with best practice guidance and are mapped to the National Corruption categories.

Taking Action:

HMICFRS acknowledged that forces need enough dedicated resources in their CCU's to proactively look for warning signs of misconduct.

Recommendations –

- All forces should have enough people with the right skills to look proactively for intelligence about those abusing their position for a sexual purpose.

Northumbria Position

- Northumbria Police have committed dedicated resources to the CCU to look for warning signs, develop intelligence and carry out any necessary investigations.

HMICFRS Spotlight Report: Keep the light on; an inspection of the police response to cyber-dependent crime

Between April and June 2019, HMICFRS inspected ten police forces (including Northumbria Police) alongside all nine Regional Organised Crime Units, the National Crime Agency, Action Fraud and the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau. There were six key areas of focus within the inspection, strategy, structure, protect, investigation, victims and learning.

HMICFRS reported that a lack of cyber related education amongst professionals, limited sharing of good practice, poor gathering of evidence and information along with a lack of individual cyber-criminals being profiled by forces impacts upon local responses to a national threat. HMICFRS identified that there was a general need for reform in relation to recent funding to assist with forces ability to respond to cyber-dependent crime, along with the fact that 43 forces are operating independently; therefore, this does not provide an effective response to tackling cyber-dependent crime. In addition, the total number of dedicated cyber-dependent staff in each of the forces varies and there were inconsistencies found in the use of cyber specials and cyber volunteers.

Locally HMICFRS were overall positive about the current position across the force. The force was considered to have a clear strategy in relation to cyber-dependent crime (which staff understood), and the inspectors applauded all the staff they

encountered and how they positively demonstrated towards the subject matter. In addition, the inspectors were equally impressed at the use of the cyber volunteers and their good practice, which is recognised nationally along with how the force have a strong focus on vulnerability.

There were some areas identified by the inspectors in which improvements could be progressed. Whilst the force has evidenced some partnership working, further collaborative opportunities and an improved structure, a regional approach should be considered. Improved reporting of such crimes would assist with understanding the level of threat posed and further training provided to staff would prove beneficial.

PEEL ANNUAL INSPECTION - Police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy 2018/19 – Northumbria Police

Northumbria Police was subject of a fieldwork visit for two weeks in February 2019 and the inspector's overall assessment provided below. Key areas of activity, concerns, recommendations and areas for improvement are highlighted against each PEEL pillar below. HMICFRS combined the three pillars of PEEL into a single inspection and applied a risk-based approach.

Effectiveness (requires improvement)

- Inspectors recognised the force's investment in neighbourhood policing and the new approaches in place to tackle the causes of local problems and good examples of work completed with vulnerable people. The force was assessed as investigating crime effectively and undertaking a lot of positive work around domestic abuse.
- Concerns were raised about ability to respond appropriately to vulnerable victims highlighting availability of officers and incident supervision and attendance times.

In response to the inspection key areas of activity include:

- Further embedding problem solving work across the force with improved sharing of problem solving plans
- Review of the risk assessment process for domestic abuse.
- Training for response team and control room supervisors to ensure a consistent understanding and approach to risk assessment and incidents prioritisation.
- Process to review domestic abuse incidents which have not been graded for immediate or priority response.
- Introduction of an escalation process for emergency and priority vulnerability flagged calls
- Development of the new Force Operating Model (FOM) to improve call allocation and attendance times

Efficiency (requires improvement)

- HMICFRS have praised the force for its good understanding of service costs of and how it shows flexibility resource allocation. Inspectors also recognised the positive work completed such as the early intervention programme for domestic abuse and the investments in schools' liaison officers.
- In addition, whilst HMICFRS have identified the need to improve its understanding of demand; the force has completed considerable work to build upon their understanding of demand for the service which has been further

praised by the Chair of the National Police Chief's Council for the projections of demand.

- The force needs to improve its understanding of demand for service and what the public wants from its police force, plan better for the future and improve its understanding of its capacity and capability.

In response to the inspection key areas of activity include:

- Extensive planning and preparation to implement and in time understand the benefits and impact of the new FOM, now completed, to further improve the quality of the service.
- Comprehensive audit of all operational skills and competencies.
- Development of a digital strategy and significant programme of system changes.

Legitimacy (good)

- HMICFRS assessed the force as good at treating the public and its workforce with legitimacy. Inspectors recognised that community engagement is good as relationships are built with local community groups, good policies are in place and records are kept regarding the use of force and great improvements have been made regarding vetting in the workforce. HMICFRS further applauded the force's proactive approach to counter corruption and their findings surrounding stop and search were also positive.
- With regard to use of force, policies are in place and good records are kept. However insufficient analysis of the information is carried out to ensure that it is being used appropriately and effectively.
- Similarly Stop and Search findings were generally positive, but more analysis was needed around find rates of different types of stop and searches.

In response to the inspection key areas of activity include:

- Formation of an internal scrutiny panel to consider Use of Force to further identify trends, issues and disparities.
- The use of firearms, Taser and dog bites are already subjected to a review process by Operations Department. It should be noted that this review will be broadened to incorporate the use of force involving batons and CS.
- Commencement of external scrutiny of Use of Force by the Strategic Independent Advisory Group.

4. Northumbria Police Internal Governance

As part of my wider scrutiny programme there are a range of strategic meetings that provide a closer insight into the work of Northumbria Police. This helps to ensure that public views and priorities are considered as part of their work, provides an opportunity for joint working and also an opportunity for additional challenge and scrutiny.

- **Transformation 2025** – a regular update is provided to me at the monthly business meeting around the many strands of work that Northumbria Police are undertaking to drive forward the vision for policing over the next five years.
- **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Board** – this group is responsible for overseeing the forces response to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion

both internally within the organisation and within communities. In this period the group have scoped the consultation plan for the development of the new joint PCC/force equality objectives and have looked at organisational learning in this business area and also plans for area command community engagement.

- **Knife Crime and Serious Violence Strategic Group** – the group meet monthly to consider Northumbria Police's response to knife crime and serious violence and closely oversee the additional SURGE funding provided by the Home Office this year to ensure the police's operational response to serious violence is strengthened. Some of the key issues explored is the relationship between this group and the newly formed Violence Reduction Unit and the need for synergy between both work streams to ensure we maximise possible impact. Northumbria Police have also worked in partnership with my office to use SURGE funding to support local solutions to emerging local issues.
- **Confidence and Standards Board** – this group was established to ensure maximum integrity and transparency in the work of Northumbria Police, adhering to and driving up standards across the workplace. In this period the group have considered the Stop and Search Annual Report, victim satisfaction trends and the link to high levels of confidence, and customer complaints and triage.

5. Engaging with the workforce

I have met with frontline police officers and staff across all area commands and a range of staff associations, to understand the challenges that they face and to ensure their wellbeing is considered when holding the Chief Constable to account.

Some of the key issues raised include:

- Increasing pressure on police teams due to lack of police numbers – something that Operation Uplift and the new force operating model should start to alleviate.
- The desire from police officers to provide a greater service to victims of domestic abuse in follow-up to a crime. Officers are hopeful that the new operating model will provide victims of domestic abuse with a better service as specialist investigators will take a lead on the case.
- The extent to which police officers spend their time supporting patients with mental health needs is causing concern and further understanding to quantify what this demand looks like is required.