

Agenda Item 5

POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR NORTHUMBRIA

JOINT INDEPENDENT AUDIT COMMITTEE

15 SEPTEMBER 2014

Summary of Recent Inspection Reports from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC)

Report of the Chief Constable

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To provide members with a short summary of recent external inspection reports and an overview of the process in place to manage the Force's response to inspection recommendations and findings.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Force has received the following HMIC inspection reports in the last quarter:
- Strategic Policing Requirement: An inspection of how police forces in England and Wales deal with threats to public order
 - Strategic Policing Requirement: An inspection of how police forces in England and Wales deal with threats of a large-scale cyber incident (including criminal attack)
 - Policing in Austerity – Meeting the Challenge
 - Northumbria – Joint Inspection of police custody suites

3. Financial Considerations

- 3.1 There are no additional financial considerations arising from this report.

4. Legal Considerations

- 4.1 There are no legal considerations arising from the content of this report.

5. Equality Considerations

- 5.1 There are no equality implications arising from the content of this report.

6. Risk Management Considerations

- 6.1 HMIC expects that progress is made in response to its recommendations and uses progress against previous recommendations to assess risk when considering future inspection activity.
- 6.2 The Force prepares action plans in response to HMIC findings, as appropriate, and delivery is monitored at the Force's Strategic Management Board.

7. Recommendation

- 7.1 The Committee is asked to note the recent inspection reports published by HMIC.

Summary of Recent Inspection Reports from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC)

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To provide members with a short summary of recent external inspection reports and an overview of the process in place to manage the Force's response to inspection recommendations and findings.

2. Background

- 2.1. Since the last Joint Independent Audit Committee, the following external reports have been published:
- Strategic Policing Requirement: An inspection of how police forces in England and Wales deal with threats to public order (published 12 June 2014).
 - Strategic Policing Requirement: An inspection of how police forces in England and Wales deal with threats of a large-scale cyber incident (including criminal attack) (published 12 June 2014).
 - Policing in Austerity – Meeting the Challenge (published 22 July 2014).
 - Northumbria – Joint Inspection of police custody suites (published 28 July 2014).
- 2.2 Corporate Development Department acts as the central liaison point for all HMIC related matters. On a monthly basis, a summary of HMIC activity is presented to the Force's Strategic Management Board.

3. Governance Process

- 3.1 All HMIC inspection reports and other external inspection reports are considered by Chief Officers. An officer/staff member is identified as project lead to consider inspection findings and prepare an action plan in response to any recommendations and areas for improvement identified. These action plans are agreed by the Chief Officer Team and by the Police and Crime Commissioner.
- 3.2 Project teams are appointed to support implementation of the action plan, as appropriate. Progress against agreed action plans is considered at a weekly Chief Officer Team meeting and reported to the Strategic Management Board.

4. Summary of Findings from Inspections

Strategic Policing Requirement: An inspection of how police forces in England and Wales deal with threats of a large-scale cyber incident (including criminal attack).

Strategic Policing Requirement: An inspection of how police forces in England and Wales deal with threats to public order.

- 4.1 Following the publication of HMIC's report into forces' arrangements for the Strategic Policing Requirement, HMIC published two further national reports in June 2014, into how forces deal with threats of a large-scale cyber incident and threats from public order.
- 4.2 Overall, the inspection of public order found that chief constables understood their role to provide sufficient trained officers to respond to the national threat

to public order, although some forces were either not using the threat assessment process to its full effect or not using it at all.

- 4.3 Police forces understand the capabilities that they are required to have in relation to public order, with an improved public order command capability compared to that which was in place at the time of the disorder in August 2011.
- 4.4 The inspection into threats of a large-scale cyber incident found that the police response to cyber-related threats needs to develop further. HMIC found that police forces are not yet able to effectively identify or understand the threat, risk and harm posed by cyber-crime, and there is much more to be done to understand it across all of the agencies involved.
- 4.5 An assessment of both reports has been completed to determine the Force's current position against the comments made and areas for improvement incorporated within the action plan prepared in response to the earlier national report.
- 4.6 This action plan has been approved by the Chief Officer Team and the Police and Crime Commissioner and progress is being monitored regularly at the Chief Officer Team meetings and the Strategic Management Board. Assistant Chief Constable, Winton Keenen is the lead officer for the action plan.
- 4.7 A Force specific report is also expected to be received.

5. Policing in Austerity – Meeting the Challenge

- 5.1 HMIC's Valuing the Police Programme has tracked how forces are planning to make savings to meet the budget demand each year since summer 2011. This inspection focused on how well forces are achieving value for money and the report reflects its findings in the fourth year.
- 5.2 HMIC acknowledged that Northumbria Police faces a particularly difficult challenge. However, plans are in place to achieve all savings required, including the use of reserves.
- 5.3 The inspection found that overall, the force understands the issues facing it, and has a comprehensive and well-managed change programme in place to achieve the savings required and to protect frontline and visible roles. HMIC was reassured by the level of detail that underpins Northumbria's saving plans and by the leadership's ability and determination to make changes while fighting crime and keeping its communities safe. HMIC's assessment is that the force is achieving the required savings today while planning for the future.
- 5.4 The force received GOOD judgements for all three areas:
 - Is the force maximising the efficiency of its operational resources?
 - Does the force have a secure financial position for the short and long terms?
 - Does the force have a sustainable workforce model for the comprehensive spending review period and beyond?

6. Northumbria – Joint Inspection of police custody suites

6.1 This report follows an unannounced visit to Northumbria Police custody suites in February 2014.

6.2 The inspection found that:

- The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) was involved in the training and development of an active Independent Custody Visitor scheme.
- The police service was in the process of opening a new custody suite while closing existing buildings, but continued to maintain those buildings to a good standard.
- Individual detainee and officer interaction was respectful and sensitive and there were cases of exceptional individual attention.
- Police officers made efforts to keep children out of custody; however when cases were more complex, staff did not pursue other options, such as the local authority, to provide alternative accommodation.
- There were examples of good multi-agency working to support detainees with a history of substance misuse.
- The force, with help from partner agencies, had provided an improved scheme to help keep mentally ill people out of police cells.

6.3 However, there were a number of areas for improvement identified:

- Custody recording systems involved a mix of paper and computer records, allowing opportunities for human error and omission in recording strategic and individual detainee information.
- The Force did not have sufficient focus on learning from adverse incidents, which included learning from four IPCC investigations, nor did it have robust quality assurance systems in place.
- In most cases, risk assessments were routine and mechanistic.
- Handovers could be subject to incorrect recording of risk information.
- Clinical governance of health care had not improved since the 2011 inspection, and medical rooms varied in levels of cleanliness.

6.3 Overall, the report contains five main recommendations, 27 further recommendations and 26 housekeeping points relating to Strategy, Treatment and Conditions, Individual Rights and Healthcare.

6.4 A detailed action plan has been prepared in response, which will be submitted to the joint inspection team in October 2014, together with an update on progress made in addressing the recommendations.

6.5 Assistant Chief Constable, Winton Keenen is the strategic lead officer for the action plan, with the Head of Custody the project lead. A working group is in place to manage delivery of the action plan, and implementation is monitored regularly at Chief Officer Team meetings and the Strategic Management Board. Oversight of the action plan also takes place at the Force's Critical Incident Review Board.