

POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR NORTHUMBRIA**JOINT INDEPENDENT AUDIT COMMITTEE****23 FEBRUARY 2015**

Summary of Recent External Inspection Reports**Report of Paul Godden, Corporate Development Department**

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 Criminal Justice Joint Inspection reports in the last quarter. These are national thematic reports, where Northumbria Police was inspected as part of the inspection process. The recommendations are national findings and not specific to Northumbria. An assessment of the relevant recommendations has been completed, with many of the recommendations relating to other public sector organisations.

- Achieving Best Evidence in Child Sexual Abuse
- Girls in the Criminal Justice System
- The Contribution of Youth Offending Teams to the work of the Troubled Families Programme

- 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. A project lead is appointed 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 Inspections**Achieving Best Evidence in Child Sexual Abuse Cases**

- 4.1 This joint inspection report published was on 18 December 2014 and follows a joint inspection by HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate and HMIC.
- 4.2 The aim of the inspection was to assess the use of achieving best evidence (ABE) interviews in cases where a child victim has made an allegation of rape or child sexual exploitation.

- 4.3 The inspection found that the ABE guidance is not achieving what it set out to do. Recommendations are made for the Ministry of Justice, CPS and the Police Service. Police recommendations focus on ensuring adherence to the ABE guidance, training, the provision, capacity and accessibility of suites, and the use of intermediaries.
- 4.4 In response to the informal feedback provided by HMIC following the visit to Northumbria Police in February 2014, a number of work streams are already underway. A review of the recommendations made in the national thematic report will also be completed and incorporated with the work already started.

Girls in the Criminal Justice System

- 4.5 The report published on 19 December 2014 follows a joint inspection by HMI Inspectorate of Probation, Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales, Care Quality Commission, HMIC, HM Inspectorate of Prisons and Ofsted. Sunderland Area Command was visited in November 2013; one of six areas visited across England and Wales.
- 4.6 The aim of the inspection was to assess how effective youth offending services, in conjunction with other organisations, are in helping to stop girls offending and in reducing the risk of harm girls present to other people.
- 4.7 Overall, the inspection found that youth offending teams were working hard to try and make a difference to the lives of girls for whom they were responsible. However, more effective joined-up work between agencies needed to take place to reduce the number who go on to become adult offenders, and to protect them from sexual exploitation.
- 4.9 A number of recommendations are made for the Chairs of the YOT Management Boards, YOT Managers and Local Authorities. One recommendation is directed at police forces *'Forces should ensure that early intervention schemes, commissioned, provided or used by the police, take account of the needs and interests of girls'* and has been shared with strategic leads.

The Contribution of Youth Offending Teams to the Work of the Troubled Families Programme in England

- 4.10 The report published on 15 January 2015 follows a joint inspection by HM Inspectorate of Probation, Care Quality Commission, HMIC and Ofsted. Gateshead Area Command was visited in January 2014; one of six areas visited across England.
- 4.11 This inspection examined the policy and practice of Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) and assessed the effectiveness of their work towards achieving the objectives of the Troubled Families Programme. The inspection found that YOTs played an important role in preventing and reducing re-offending and tackling anti-social behaviour by children and young people.
- 4.12 A number of recommendations are made for the Department for Communities and Local Government, the Youth Justice Board and YOT Managers. Recommendations for the Police Service are incorporated within those for Local Troubled Families Teams and their partner agencies which focus on ensuring that all relevant partners work together in the delivery of Troubled Families services.
- 4.13 Meetings are currently taking place with the local authority leads for troubled families in preparation for phase 2 of the Troubled Families Programme. The recommendations from the thematic report will be considered as part of this work supporting phase 2 of this programme.

5. Financial Considerations

5.1 There are no additional financial considerations arising from this report.

6 Legal Considerations

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

7. Equality Considerations

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

8. Risk Management Considerations

8.1 HMIC expects that progress is made in response to the recommendations and uses progress against previous recommendations to assess risk when considering future inspection activity.

8.2 The Force prepares action plans in response to HMIC findings, as appropriate, and delivery is monitored at the Force's Strategic Management Board.

9. Recommendation

9.1 The Committee is asked to note the recent joint inspection reports.