

JOINT INDEPENDENT AUDIT COMMITTEE**22 February 2016****Summary of Recent External Inspection Reports****Paul Godden, Corporate Development Department****1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide members with a 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 following national inspection reports have been published by HMIC since the last Joint Independent Audit Committee:

- Regional Organised Crime Units (ROCU) – a review of capability and effectiveness
- PEEL – Effectiveness (Vulnerability)
- Increasingly everyone's business: A progress report on the police response to domestic abuse
- The depths of dishonour: Hidden voices and shameful crime, an inspection of the police response to honour-based violence, forced marriage and female genital mutilation
- CJI – Meeting the needs of victims in the criminal justice system
- PEEL – Legitimacy

- 2.2 Corporate Development Department acts as the central liaison point for all HMIC related matters.

- 2.3 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 Executive Board and by the Police and Crime Commissioner.

- 2.4 Project teams are appointed to support implementation of the action plan, as appropriate.

- 2.5 Progress against agreed action plans is reported to the Strategic Management Board. The following exceptions were reported in the last period:

Inspection of Undercover Policing in England and Wales – A number of actions have not been completed within the expected timeframe as national standards, guidance and inspection regimes are not yet in place.

Unannounced inspection of Police Custody Suites – There are several actions which have not been implemented within expected timescales:

- Appropriate adults for vulnerable adults – Further meetings have been held with the six local authorities and Clinical Commissioning Groups regarding the

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availability of appropriate adults. There is no statutory responsibility; however, options for a voluntary scheme are being considered.

- Data from custody – The new Electronic Custody Recording system went live in August 2015 and enables custody staff to manage detainees more efficiently, accurately and safely. Further IT work is required to deliver performance information to support the management of the custody function.
- Cell capacity at the courts – There is ongoing engagement with HM Courts and Tribunal Service to ensure that detainees are not held in police custody for longer than necessary because of limited cell capacity at the courts.

Inspection of Achieving Best Evidence in Child Abuse Cases – The following actions have not been implemented within expected timescales:

- Use of intermediaries – Intermediaries are considered and used where appropriate; however, there is a lack of intermediaries in the North East. Further work has been commissioned by the PCC to identify their use or where they should be utilised but were not available.
- Review of suite provision, capacity and accessibility with children in mind – At present there are no facilities for children to watch their videos before attending court. This facility is to be made available in one location. A review of all ABE suites has been carried out, which identified that the equipment differs in each suite and in one instance does not comply with court requirements. Work is underway by ICT to provide an estimate of costs and suitability.

3. SUMMARY

Regional Organised Crime Units (ROCU) – a review of capability and effectiveness

- 3.1 This inspection forms part of HMIC's annual police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy (PEEL) inspection programme. HMIC inspected all ten ROCUs focusing on the capabilities which they provide to their constituent forces, and the effectiveness of those capabilities. The North East Regional Special Operations Unit was visited in May 2015.
- 3.2 Overall, HMIC found that ROCUs need to build on their strong foundation to increase regional collaboration and build a greater consistency in the provision of services to the police forces they work for.
- 3.3 HMIC found that some ROCUs have not yet implemented all of the 13 specialist capabilities, which are the minimum expectation. In the North East this included:
- Undercover Foundation and Advanced (only two ROCUs provide foundation undercover policing services on behalf of their constituent forces and only four ROCUs provide advanced undercover policing). There is already agreement in the North East for this to progress.
 - Operational Security Adviser (OpSy). At the time of the inspection it was recognised that there was access to the Northumbria OpSy.
 - Specialist Surveillance Unit (provided by only four ROCUs). This capability is provided by Northumbria Police and is shared with the ROCU.

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- 3.4 HMIC makes 11 recommendations for ROCUs, as well as police forces, the NCA and the Home Office, focused on increasing consistency and exploiting capabilities.
- 3.5 An assessment of the report is being undertaken and an action plan prepared.

PEEL – Effectiveness (Vulnerability)

- 3.6 In HMIC's report dated 15 December 2015, Northumbria Police is judged as **GOOD** at protecting vulnerable people from harm and supporting victims. The Force is one of 12 to achieve this grading, reflecting its priority within the force. 27 forces were judged to require improvement and four forces were judged to be inadequate. No force was judged to be outstanding.
- 3.7 HMIC reported that Northumbria Police provides a good response to and safeguards missing children and victims of domestic abuse, and is well prepared to tackle child sexual exploitation. HMIC identified no areas for improvement.
- 3.8 A full assessment of the Force position will be undertaken with a view to further improving the response and achieving the aspiration to be recognised as providing an outstanding service to those identified as vulnerable.

Increasingly everyone's business: A progress report on the police response to domestic abuse

- 3.9 HMIC's PEEL – Effectiveness inspection programme included an in-depth consideration of the service offered to victims of domestic abuse and how the police service has responded to HMIC's recommendations from 2014. The national thematic report was published on 15 December 2015.
- 3.10 HMIC assessed Northumbria Police's response to victims of domestic abuse as **GOOD**, with the following areas highlighted as good practice within the national report:
- Joint activity with domestic violence workers accompanying police officers on patrol to ensure that appropriate support is given to victims at the earliest opportunity.
 - Surveys to find out the views of victims of domestic abuse, which is now shaping how and what services are being provided, and has improved the way it identifies and manages serial perpetrators of domestic abuse in partnership with other agencies.
 - Use of DVPOs to support improvements in the service provided to victims of domestic abuse.
 - Higher charge rates – for every 100 domestic abuse crimes recorded Northumbria made 84 arrests. The force's charge rate for domestic abuse recorded crimes for the 12 months to 31 March 2015 was 51%, compared with 27% for England and Wales. This is an increase since the last HMIC domestic abuse inspection when the force rate was 43% for the 12 months to 31 August 2013, compared with 30% for England and Wales.
- 3.11 A full assessment of the Force position will be undertaken and any further activity included within the existing action plan, as appropriate.

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The depths of dishonour: Hidden voices and shameful crime, an inspection of the police response to honour-based violence, forced marriage and female genital mutilation

- 3.12 This thematic report, published on 8 December 2015, examined the approach by police forces in the protection of people from harm caused by honour-based violence, forced marriage and female genital mutilation, and at supporting victims of these offences. The inspection followed the 'victim's journey' from initial contact to closure of police involvement. Northumbria Police was one of eight forces visited.
- 3.13 Northumbria Police was identified as being one of only three forces prepared overall to protect people from harm from HBV. Northumbria was assessed as being prepared in each of four sections identified by HMIC i.e. leadership; awareness and understanding; protection; and enforcement and prevention. The Violence against Women and Girls Strategy is highlighted as a good example within the leadership section.
- 3.14 HMIC concluded that the overall effectiveness of the police response to protecting victims of HBV, FM and FGM needs to improve and made 14 recommendations. The recommendations for Chief Constables are in relation to research and analysis to understand better the nature and scale of HBV, FM and FGM in their force areas; information management processes; and clear policies and joint working structures to ensure an integrated approach between police forces and other agencies.
- 3.15 A full assessment of the Force position against the recommendations will be undertaken and an action plan prepared, as appropriate.

CJJI - Meeting the needs of victims in the criminal justice system

- 3.16 This report is a compendium of findings on the quality of services provided to victims by agencies within the criminal justice system (CJS). The report is based on information which has been taken from across the full range of individual inspectorate and criminal justice joint inspection (CJJI) reports published during the period April 2014 to July 2015.
- 3.17 The report is intended to provide a baseline against which future inspections can measure agencies' progress against the findings and recommendations of the original reports. Subsequent, annual reports will add comment on progress, highlight good practice and report where progress is lacking.

Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy (PEEL) Inspection Programme

- 3.18 Throughout 2015, HMIC assessed the extent to which police forces are legitimate in how they keep people safe and reduce crime. This is one strand of the PEEL (police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy) all-force inspection programme.
- 3.19 All forces have been graded against the overarching legitimacy question:
- How legitimate is the force at keeping people safe and reducing crime?
- 3.20 The overall judgement for Northumbria Police is **REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT**. The Force is one of five forces assessed as Requires Improvement. 37 forces were judged Good and one as Outstanding. No forces were considered to be Inadequate.

- 3.21 To reach a judgment on each force's legitimacy, HMIC examined three areas:

To what extent does practice and behaviour reinforce the wellbeing of staff and an ethical culture? **REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT**

HMIC's grading reflects the findings in spring 2015. The chief officer team are aware of many of the cultural issues identified by HMIC, and are planning to address them.

How well does the force understand, engage with and treat fairly the people it serves to maintain and improve its legitimacy? **GOOD**

HMIC found that neighbourhood teams engage well with the public; clear leadership is being provided by the Chief Constable, particularly through his Proud to Protect approach; and the force has a very well-developed cadet scheme.

To what extent are decisions taken on the use of police powers consistent and fair - with a focus on Stop & Search and Taser? **REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT**

HMIC found that Northumbria Police is not compliant with the Best Use of Stop and Search scheme, and should introduce a 'community trigger' policy and publish data that comply with the scheme's requirements. The force uses Tasers fairly and appropriately.

- 3.22 A full assessment of the Force position will be undertaken with a view to improving its response.

4. Financial Considerations

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

5. Legal Considerations

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

6. Equality Considerations

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

7. Risk Management Considerations

- 7.1 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.

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

8. Recommendation

- 8.1 The Committee is asked to note the recent inspection reports.
- 8.2 Members are asked to note the matters of exception for the current reporting period of existing action plans in response to previous inspections.