

### **WEST MERCIA POLICE AND CRIME PANEL 18 JUNE 2019**

### **HER MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY AND FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES (HMICFRS) 'PEEL: POLICE EFFECTIVENESS 2017 AN INSPECTION OF WEST MERCIA POLICE' – UPDATE REPORT**

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#### **Recommendation**

1. Members of the Panel are invited to note this report.

#### **Purpose**

2. In June 2018 a report was submitted to the Panel outlining how the force and the PCC were responding to findings outlined in the 2017 PEEL Police effectiveness inspection report. This report provides an update on progress made to address the recommendations.

#### **Background**

3. In March 2018 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) published its inspection findings into police effectiveness as part of its annual rolling programme of inspections on the efficiency, effectiveness and legitimacy of police forces within England and Wales (PEEL). A report was published for each force alongside a national one.
4. In the West Mercia force report HMICFRS gave six areas for improvement (AFIs) and made five recommendations. 'Preventing crime and tackling ASB' and 'Protecting vulnerable people and supporting victims' each had 3 AFIs and 'Tackling serious and organised crime' had 5 recommendations. The overall grading in 2018 for West Mercia in the report was 'requires improvement', with 'Tackling serious and organised crime' graded as 'inadequate'. The HMICFRS put the Force into 'Engaged' status, meaning increased oversight and assessment.
5. In response to last year's inadequate rating for serious and organised crime (SOC), West Mercia's chief officers commissioned a dedicated SOC action plan for West Mercia. This was to support the wider alliance Effectiveness action plan but also to allow for additional focus and oversight for West Mercia. In addition, HMICFRS engaged with the force in the production of a SOC specific improvement plan, focusing on a number of key themes highlighted in the inspection report to further assist the force in responding to the issues raised.

## **Areas for Improvement (AFIs) and Recommendations**

6. Set out below are each of the AFIs and recommendations contained within the inspection report along with a brief summary of the work done to address the report findings.

### **Preventing crime and tackling anti-social behaviour**

7. There were three AFIs identified in this area:

*AFI1. The force should ensure that local policing teams routinely engage with local communities and undertake structured problem solving with partner organisations to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour.*

8. Problem Solving and the use of problem solving plans is now fully embedded within SNT's and feature largely within localised partnership meetings. Beat profiles are used to provide local community information. The force has two problem solving coordinators located in the north and south of the force in the harm hubs who coordinate activity and problem solving plans and support local policing teams in the development of community based problem solving.

*AFI2. The force should evaluate and share effective practice routinely, both internally and with partner organisations, to improve its approach to the prevention of crime and anti-social behaviour*

9. The force has introduced a Continuous Improvement Team to help identify best practise and ensure it is shared across the force through evaluation and audit of local activity. Part of the role of the problem solving coordinators is to share best practise. A problem solving partnership conference has also been held.

*AFI3. The force should work with local people and partner organisations to improve its understanding of local communities, to understand their needs. It should supplement this with focused analysis to inform activity and prioritisation*

10. Beat profiles provide a good base for understanding local areas however work is ongoing to better understand their effectiveness and the activity they drive. A Consultation and Engagement Strategy is in place at a force level. The findings from the confidence and perception survey commissioned by the PCC is being used to better understand local communities.

### **Protecting vulnerable people and supporting victims**

11. There were 3 AFIs identified in this area:

*AFI1. The force should improve its service to vulnerable people, particularly domestic abuse victims, when officers have been unable to attend, or attendance is delayed. This should include a re-assessment of the risks that victims face so that safeguarding support can be prioritised.*

12. Domestic abuse (DA) incidents are subject to an initial THRIVE assessment in the Operations and Communication Centre (OCC). Part of that process is daily reassessment of all unresourced incidents by Control Room Supervisors, and daily assessment by local policing management teams of any incidents that have become higher risk. Any that remain unresourced have continued daily re-assessment until they are resourced. The opportunities provided by VAL are being explored to improve support to vulnerable victims.

*AFI2. The force should ensure that frontline officers become more proficient in completing DASH risk assessments at initial response and there is sufficient supervisory oversight to ensure opportunities to safeguard vulnerable victims are not missed*

13. 'DA matters' training has been delivered to all staff to enforce the importance of the DASH assessments and DASH completion rates are improving as a result. In addition, quality assurance means that if an officer has not completed a DASH assessment then it is picked up by DMM. Work is ongoing to improve the quality of the DASH assessments and to reduce the number of assessments classed as medium risk.

*AFI3. The force should take steps to understand the reasons why a high proportion of crimes related to domestic abuse fall into the category 'Evidential difficulties; victim does not support police action' and rectify this to ensure that it is pursuing justice on behalf of victims of domestic abuse.*

14. A detailed audit of the use of the outcome code 16 was undertaken which identified a number of contributory factors to its use. The work to address this is ongoing and includes strategic governance on its use through the newly formed Strategic Priorities Board jointly chaired by both Assistant Chief Constables (ACC) and in the Service Improvement Board chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable (DCC), where it is an ongoing area of focus. At a tactical level the work is driven through the Strategic Vulnerability Team. A DA performance dashboard is now circulated on monthly basis which details fundamental data to understand performance around DA.

## **Tackling serious and organised crime (SOC)**

15. The five recommendations identified in this area are:

*Recommendation 1: Engage routinely with partner agencies at a senior level to establish intelligence sharing arrangements and an effective, multi-agency response to serious and organised crime. This should include the creation of a local profile for serious and organised crime which provides the force and its partners with a single, comprehensive picture of the threat*

16. West Mercia has implemented more effective partnership working arrangements to tackle SOC. Four Serious and Organised Crime Joint Action Groups (SOCJAGs) have been established, one across Worcestershire, and one for each of the other local policing areas. Three SOC partnership conferences have been held; these helped to improve engagement and understanding with partners and ensure buy into the SOCJAGs along with improved sharing of information. Local SOC profiles have been produced by the CSP analysts, using both police and partner intelligence and

are subject to regular review. These SOC profiles are linked to local beat profiles. A dedicated SOC intelligence reporting mechanism has been set up with partners to provide an additional channel to submit intelligence direct to the Force Intelligence Bureau using the 'Protect' banner. The SOC profiles are shared with partners and used at the SOCJAGs. The PCC's role in overseeing these is set out below.

*Recommendation 2: Ensure that it maps all organised crime groups promptly following identification and re-assesses them at regular intervals in line with national standards. All mapped organised crime groups are to be subject to regular scrutiny and oversight, enabling it to routinely identify and pursue opportunities for disruption and investigation*

17. All organised crime groups (OCG) have been identified and mapped and a four P's plan has been developed for each. The 4 P's plan is owned by an identified responsible officer (LRO). The ACC for Shared Service chairs a monthly OCG management meeting where plans are scrutinised and reviewed on a scheduled cycle. On the same day an OCG tasking meeting takes place chaired by the ACC to agree appropriate disruption or further development of tactics as required

*Recommendation 3: Assign capable lead responsible officers to all active organised crime groups as part of a long-term, multi-agency approach to dismantling them. These officers should have a clear understanding of their responsibilities, and adopt a 'four Ps' (pursue, prevent, protect, prepare) approach to tackling serious and organised crime*

18. Lead Responsible Officers (LRO's) at Chief Inspector rank have been assigned to OCGs. The LROs receive regular training and guidance to ensure a consistent approach is taken to the management of 4P's (*pursue, prevent, protect, prepare*) plans and to share learning. More widely work has taken place to raise the profile of SOC across the workforce and partners under the 'Protect' banner. All staff now know SOC is everybody's business and it is one of the force's priorities. A West Mercia SOC strategy has been published and aims to further develop and strengthen a multi-agency approach to SOC.

*Recommendation 4: Identify those at risk of being drawn into serious and organised crime, and ensure that preventative initiatives are put in place with partner organisations to deter offending*

19. The force is working to develop a partnership approach to identify those most at risk of being drawn into SOC. Safeguarding Boards now consider SOC as part of their agenda and it is also integrated into the Integrated Offender Manager (IOM) process. There has been a considerable increase by the force in the use of civil orders and in 2018/19 8 Serious Crime Prevention Orders (SCPOs) were secured. A database of local diversionary activity has been developed and can be accessed by all officers. Innovative and imaginative ways of prevention are being considered. MATES in Hereford has been recognised as a good example of a successful partnership intervention.

*Recommendation 5: Begin to measure its activity on serious and organised crime across the four Ps, and ensure that it learns from experience to maximise the disruptive effect of this activity*

20. A central OCG Management Unit has been established to assist lead responsible officers and others in maximising disruption potential and quality assuring/reporting to ROCU / ROCTA as per national reporting requirements. The unit has developed a disruption template to allow for the wider workforce to more easily record any disruption activity. Work is ongoing to improve the wider understanding of what a disruption is, this includes improving partner understanding as all OCGs disruptions meeting the necessary criteria can be submitted to the ROCU.

### **Action plan oversight and monitoring**

21. The PEEL Effectiveness Core Group set up under the alliance structure continued to meet through 2018. This was chaired by an ACC and attended by service leads who were required to report on progress for their area. To respond to changes to the inspection regime and to allow for a more West Mercia focused approach in the lead up to the latest inspection, all three PEEL core groups were disbanded, with the Service Improvement Board retained for oversight of progress against recommendations and actions arising from all the PEEL inspections.

22. To retain the focus on SOC and to ensure the activity set out in the SOC delivery and improvement plans was achieved the West Mercia SOC Delivery Group has continued to meet and ensure progress is maintained. The ACC who chairs this group reports into the Service Improvement Board.

23. The force have secured a number of peer reviews into their approach to SOC, with input from both Merseyside and Derbyshire. The findings from the Derbyshire peer review were incorporated into the SOC delivery plan to ensure learning from it was used to inform activity.

24. More recently the force has been subject to a Home Office supported strategic framework review of serious violence and vulnerability, focusing on issues such as county lines and gang violence. The review focuses on partnership approaches and it is anticipated that the findings from the review will help inform the partnership work around preventing people from being drawn into SOC.

### **Police and Crime Commissioner's oversight**

25. The PCC's oversight and scrutiny of the force's response to HMICFRS' Effectiveness inspection findings is ongoing. Representatives from the PCC's remain part of the both the SOC Delivery Group and Service Improvement Board. In addition, the PCC is also represented at the monthly Organised Crime Group Management Meeting. Attendance at these meetings enables officers to monitor progress and to raise any concerns to the PCC.

26. The close scrutiny and oversight of SOC is managed via a three strand approach within the PCC's office. One officer is responsible for the HMICFRS work, one for oversight of SOCJAG as it is embedded across West Mercia and one for oversight of a SOC performance framework which has been developed with business leads. The PCC receives a regular briefing on these three aspects which in turn informs his quarterly meetings with the Head of Protective Service and his quarterly regional meetings.

27. Either the Deputy PCC or the officer responsible for SOCJAG oversight have attended every SOCJAG meeting as they have been held. The PCC's Crime Reduction Board (CRB) is now formally recognised as the Board with responsibility for the strategic governance of SOCJAGs. Updates on each SOCJAG along with a management report are discussed at this meeting. The CRB is attended by senior representatives from partner agencies and police leads allowing for open and transparent discussion on the effectiveness of the SOCJAGs.

28. The PCC attended a number of meetings with the Chief Constable to discuss progress of the SOC improvement plan with representatives from HMICFRS and the Home Office. The improvements the force has made in its approach to SOC have been recognised by HMICFRS and the Force is now no longer 'Engaged' and the closer scrutiny by HMICFRS has now ended. This is a significant achievement as historically no Force has previously been dis-'Engaged' in a single inspection cycle.

29. The PCC has continued to use his holding to account programme to challenge the force on different issues highlighted in the Effectiveness report. This has included the use of Outcome 16 for resolving crimes which has been raised by the PCC in November and more recently in May 2019.

### **Integrated PEEL Inspection**

30. In 2018 HMICFRS announced that it would be moving to an Integrated PEEL inspection programme. This has seen the three separate, Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy Inspections combined into one risk based inspection. Under the new inspection regime, all forces are inspected on a number of key lines of enquiry from each of the former PEEL inspection area. A risk based assessment of each force is then used to determine which additional areas will form part of the inspection.

31. In the autumn of 2018 HMICFRS began this new approach with a series of 'insight visits' to West Mercia Police, looking more closely at specific service areas and functions including SOC and the OCC. This pre-inspection fieldwork was used by the Inspectorate to inform its two week onsite inspection which took place in January this year. It is understood that the resulting Integrated PEEL inspection report will not be published at the end of June as originally scheduled. No revised date has been provided, but it is likely to be after the summer.

### **Contact Points for this report**

Sheena Jones, Democratic, Governance and Scrutiny Manager  
Tel: 01905 844871  
Email: [sjones19@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:sjones19@worcestershire.gov.uk)

Andy Champness, Police and Crime Commissioner Chief Executive  
[andrew.champness@westmercia.pnn.police.uk](mailto:andrew.champness@westmercia.pnn.police.uk)

## **Background Papers**

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Head of Legal and Democratic Services) the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report are:

Agenda and minutes of the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel on [19 June 2018](#) and [27 November 2018](#)

All agendas and minutes are available on the Council's website [here](#)