

WEST MERCIA POLICE AND CRIME PANEL 27 NOVEMBER 2018

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

Recommendation

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

Background

2. In March 2018 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and 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).
3. The PEEL Inspection Reports provide a judgement grade of 'outstanding', 'good' 'requires improvement' or 'inadequate'. Each force is given an overall grading as well as individual grades for each of the key areas which were subject to inspection in that year. The overall grading for West Mercia in the latest report was 'requires improvement' with a rating of 'inadequate' for tackling serious and organised crime.
4. An initial report on the Effectiveness Report was submitted to the Panel in June 2018 and is attached as Appendix 1 . The Report outlined the areas for improvement and recommendations identified by the Inspectorate and set out the activity, processes, oversight and governance in place to address them. As requested by the Panel this Report provides an update on the ongoing actions being undertaken in response to the HMICFRS Report findings.

Areas for Improvement (AFIs) and Recommendations

5. For the three inspection areas covered in the 2017 Report HMICFRS gave six areas for improvement (AFIs) and made five recommendations. 'Preventing Crime and Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour' (ASB) and 'Protecting Vulnerable People and Supporting Victims' each had 3 AFIs and 'Tackling Serious and Organised Crime' had 5 recommendations. An update on each area is provided below.

Preventing Crime and Tackling Anti-social Behaviour

6. 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.

7. A significant amount of work has been undertaken to fully develop and embed problem solving within the force in a structured and phased way. This has included developing a dedicated problem solving hub on the intranet, which gives information on problem solving and a tool kit for staff to use. Work is underway to review and benchmark how problem solving activity is recorded so as an organisation it can understand how to problem solve holistically and a 'best practice' section on the problem solving hub will enable sharing of what works.

8. Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) officers, staff and community safety partners have received 1-day training on problem solving, developing the methodology in a common language.

9. A defined leadership structure is now in place which clearly sets out responsibilities from the executive to tactical. A number of problem solving co-ordinators have been appointed to provide problem solving methodology and tools, advice, support and guidance to all areas of business.

10. Continued support has been given by Durham Police and the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) lead, including a peer review which took place in August.

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.

11. Intranet based Beat Profiles have been launched and are maturing and developing. The beat profiles include detailed demographic data which allow SNTs to truly understand their communities and MOSAIC data is to be incorporated soon to enable officers to understand how they can and should engage with all communities including those that are hard to reach.

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.

12. Problem Solving Conferences have been conducted which included a number of partner agencies and guest speakers from across professional field of problem solving. This has resulted in greater partner awareness of the policing approach and the benefits of joint enterprise around problem solving.

Protecting Vulnerable People and Supporting Victims

13. There were 3 AFIs identified in this area:

AF11. 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.

14. It was reported to the Panel in June that an action plan approach to dealing with unresourced incidents had been introduced. This approach remains in place and current activity is now to reality-test Operations and Communication Centre (OCC) staff on their knowledge and skills in applying THRIVE and identifying vulnerability. The results from this will be assessed to ensure the identification, application and consistent reassessment of vulnerability is being applied. Oversight is via a Demand Reduction and Public Contact Board.

15. The force has been accepted onto the NPCC/College of Police national pilot for the telephone resolution of very low-level domestic abuse where the deployment of an officer may not be necessary. There are strict criteria and operational guidance and all pilot forces must adhere to these. HMICFRS are fully aware of the pilot and are happy with the set criteria for participating forces only.

AF12. 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.

16. The findings from the alliance wide domestic abuse (DA) audit conducted in early 2018 were shared with policing leads for consideration and action and a West Mercia focused DA action plan was produced. Improvement work around DASH has included a specific DA input for Custody Sgts and Inspectors during their mandatory refresher training, circulating a comprehensive guidance document concerning all elements of the police response (initial evidence gathering, coercive control, DASH, Arrest/Bail, protective orders etc.) for briefings and providing a DASH completion guide for officers.

17. In the OCC DA incidents are subject to ongoing quality assurance review by the OCC Audit Officer. This includes listening to the original call, and gauging call collection and handling through to deployment. Any opportunities to improve are the subject of discussion with the staff concerned. DASH completions are also monitored by supervisors as part of the daily management meetings, however it is recognised that the completion rate can still improve. SPOCs are being identified on each shift to assist colleagues in the accurate completion of DASH and act as the DA Ambassador for the team, to help improve completion rates.

18. West Mercia Police and Warwickshire Police have in principle been accepted onto the early adopter phase of the NPCC/CoP national pilot for the new Domestic Abuse Risk Assessment tool which is being developed as a replacement for the current DASH tool and the criteria has been received. Reality testing has been undertaken and learning needs analyses conducted to understand the knowledge base of officers.

AF13. 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.

19. The DA audit identified four key performance factors influencing the use of this outcome 16. Further work has since been undertaken, including a more general outcome survey for investigating staff, officers and supervisors, seeking to assess their understanding of the outcome codes and to obtain better insight into how they are being applied – particularly in relation to outcome 16. An outcome report identifying issues, evidence, findings and recommendations has been prepared and is awaiting submission to the executive.

Tackling Serious and Organised Crime (SOC)

20. 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

21. Four Serious and Organised Crime Joint Action Groups (SOCJAGS) are in place, using standardised terms of reference and agenda to ensure that a consistent approach is applied to each meeting. To strengthen engagement and buy in from partners, three SOC conferences have been held across the force area to highlight the importance of SOC and partnership working. These conferences were also used to promote the 'Protect' branding of the SOC work; and to promote details of a dedicated intelligence email set up to enable partners to easily submit intelligence reports directly into the Force Intelligence Bureau.

22. Local SOC profiles have been refreshed and completed in a standardised format by the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Analysts who are now based in the force Intelligence Unit. These profiles incorporate partner data and will be further developed as the volume of partner input increases. The profiles have been shared with partners.

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

23. A central Organised Crime Group Management Unit (OCGMU) has been established and all submissions to the Regional Organised Crime Threat Assessment Unit (ROCTA) for organised crime group mapping are channel through this unit, providing a consistent centralised approach. As SOC becomes more embedded across the organisation, the OCGMU are encouraging local policing areas to come forward with OCG nominations and to help identify potential OCGs with partners through the SOCJAGs.

24. On a monthly basis the ACC for shared services chairs an Organised Crime Group Management meeting (OCGM) at which OCGs are reviewed on a rolling schedule determined by the scoring attached to each OCG. This meeting is also used to monitor a wide number of OCG activity indicators including nominations, disruptions, civil orders and SOCJAG activity. A separate tactical tasking meeting is held on the same day to determine action to be taken against each of the OCGs at an operational level.

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

25. A lead responsible officer (LRO) at Detective Chief Inspector rank has been identified for each local policing area. Each LRO is an experienced officer and is supported by the central OCGMU. The LRO's have regular training days to bring them all together, share best practise and to ensure a coordinated approach is maintained. The LROs are responsible for the management of the OCGs within their area and for maintaining the associated 4 P plans. One of their first tasks was to review and revise all their 4 P plans in line with a standardised template.

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

26. Work is ongoing to develop and strengthen the force approach in this area and the work done with partners around developing a problem solving ethos will help. SOC is now included on the agenda of safeguarding boards to help drive a more partnership based approach. Work is ongoing with the MAPPAs (multi agency public protection arrangements) coordinators and the Integrated Offender Management (IOM) coordinator to ensure a focus on SOC and a lifetime offender management approach.

27. A scoping exercise has been undertaken to identify diversionary activity taking place across the force area, this information is being developed into a database so that good practice can be shared across local policing areas.

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

28. The number of disruptions is monitored by the OCGMU who submit returns to the ROCTA in line with national reporting requirements. Although the number of disruptions increased in the last quarter, the OCGMU are engaging with LROs and the LPAs to ensure all disruption activity is captured, including partner activity. Disruptions are subject to scrutiny at the OCGM which is attended by all the LROs and the LPA Superintendents

Peer Review

29. At the request of the force, a SOC peer review was undertaken by national leads in early October. The findings from this review have been submitted to the force in a detailed report and have been subject to close scrutiny and consideration. Learning from the peer review will be used to further strengthen the actions put in place to address the 'inadequate' HMICFRS grading.

30. An important part of the concentrated work on SOC has been to reality test whether all the activity put in place has landed with the wider workforce so that individuals understand their contribution to addressing SOC. In June two officers undertook a programme of reality testing around OCGs and SOC with a range of officers and staff. The findings from this reality testing were used to inform some of the activity being implemented in response to the recommendations. It is anticipated that some further reality testing will take place in advance of the onsite PEEL inspection in January 2019.

Action Plan Monitoring

31. An alliance PEEL Effectiveness Core Group was established to co-ordinate activity and monitor progress against the effectiveness action plan put in place to address the inspection findings. This Group had continued to meet monthly until this month. As the force is now moving towards the 2019 Integrated PEEL inspection all three core groups have been dissolved and replaced in West Mercia by a HMICFRS preparation meeting which will meet on a fortnightly basis until the onsite inspection in January 2019. This new meeting is chaired by West Mercia's Assistant Chief Constable (ACC).

32. A West Mercia Delivery Group was established to provide additional challenge and checks to ensure the activities put in place to ensure AFIs and recommendations are fully embedded. The initial focus for this Group has been the serious and organised crime element of the effectiveness report, in particular, the West Mercia SOC action plan and the SOC specific improvement plan prepared for HMICFRS. Most recently the Group scrutinised the peer SOC review. This meeting is chaired by West Mercia's (ACC).

33. Each of the PEEL core groups and the delivery group feed into the Service Improvement Board, chaired by West Mercia's Deputy Chief Constable (DCC). This Board provides strategic oversight across all three PEEL pillars.

Police and Crime Commissioner's (PCC) Oversight

34. The PCC's oversight and scrutiny of the force's response to HMICFRS' Effectiveness inspection findings is ongoing. Involvement is maintained in the action and delivery meetings as the PCC's office attend the Effectiveness core group, delivery group and the Service Improvement Board to monitor progress and to raise any concerns to the PCC. The PCC will also be represented at the newly formed HMICFRS preparation meeting.

35. Specifically in relation to SOC, the PCC's office attend each of the SOCJAG meetings, fulfilling a commitment made by the PCC at April's holding to account

meeting to attend all SOCJAGs for an 18 month period, and the Organised Crime Group Management meeting. The latter meeting is chaired by the ACC with direct responsibility for shared functions across both West Mercia Police and Warwickshire Police, appointed in the summer.

36. The close scrutiny and oversight of SOC to ensure effective delivery of both the SOC action plan, and the SOC improvement plan continues to be managed via a three strand approach within the PCC's office. 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.

37. The focus of the PCC's July holding to account meeting was for chief officers to provide an update on all AFIs and recommendations. Notes from this meeting are available on the PCC's website.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – West Mercia Police and Crime Panel [19 June 2018](#) Agenda and Minutes: 'PEEL: Police Effectiveness 2017 An inspection of West Mercia Police' (HMICFRS March 2018)

Specific Contact Points for this report

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Head of Legal and Democratic Services) there are no background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

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