

**WEST MERCIA POLICE AND CRIME PANEL
19 JUNE 2018****HER MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY
AND FIRE & RESCUE SERVICES INSPECTION REPORT -
'PEEL: POLICE EFFECTIVENESS 2017 AN INSPECTION OF
WEST MERCIA POLICE'**

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 & 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. A copy of the West Mercia Inspection Report is attached at Appendix 1.

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'. The table below provides a summary of the grading for each area within the inspection.

Inspection area	Grade
Preventing crime and ASB / keeping people safe	Requires improvement
Investigating crime / managing offenders	Good*
Protecting vulnerable people / supporting victims	Requires Improvement
Tackling serious and organised crime	Inadequate
Specialist capabilities	Ungraded
Overall	Requires improvement

*This area was inspected as part of the 2016 inspection

4. 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 ASB' and 'Protecting vulnerable people and supporting victims' each had 3 AFIs and 'Tackling serious and organised crime' had 5 recommendations. Further detail on each AFI and recommendation are provided in the 'AFIs and recommendations' section of this report

5. In 2019 the Inspectorate are moving to an integrated regime which will combine all three 'pillars' into one inspection based on a risk based assessment of each force. Details of the new inspection programme are being finalised, but it is understood that

all forces will be inspected on 4 core areas, with any further areas varying by force depending on the assessment of risk.

Action Plan Development and Monitoring

6. The PEEL inspection programme in its current form has been in existence for three years and prior to the onsite inspection in September 2017 a PEEL Effectiveness Action Plan containing the first two years AFIs and recommendations along with any police specific actions from National and related reports had been developed. The Action Plan set out details of the actions put in place to address report findings and was subject to ongoing monitoring and oversight. The Action Plan is alliance wide, pulling together the findings from both West Mercia Police and Warwickshire Police into the one Plan

7. At the end of the onsite inspection in September 2017, HMICFRS give a 'hot debrief' to chief officers providing some very initial feedback on their inspection findings. The PCC or his representative were invited to attend the debrief. These initial findings were incorporated into the existing Action Plan so that work could begin developing an appropriate response in advance of a seeing the first draft of the Inspection Report in February.

8. In the autumn of 2017, the internal process for monitoring and coordinating activity relating to HMICFRS Inspections was restructured and a core group established under each of the three pillars. Each core group meets monthly, is chaired by a Chief Officer and attended by service leads responsible for different elements of the Action Plan who are required to report on progress for their area. The effectiveness core group is chaired by Warwickshire's Assistant Chief Constable (ACC). Each of the three core groups feed into the Service Improvement Board, chaired by West Mercia's Deputy Chief Constable (DCC). This Group provides strategic oversight across all three groups.

9. Very recently the Force has established a Delivery Group to provide additional challenge and checks to ensure the activities put in place to address AFIs and recommendations are fully embedded. The initial focus for this Group is the serious and organised crime element of the effectiveness report.

AFIs and Recommendations

10. To assist West Mercia Police in implementing an effective response it has undertaken peer reviews and sought support from other forces who have been graded 'outstanding' or 'good' and from the Chief Constable for Merseyside Police who is the National Police Chiefs' Council Lead for serious and organised crime. Set out below are each of the AFIs and recommendations contained within the inspection report along with a brief summary of the work being done to address the report findings.

Preventing crime and tackling anti-social behaviour

11. 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.

12. Problem Solving is a significant part of West Mercia's new interim policing model introduced in April 2018. The force has worked with the College of Policing and Durham Police, to develop a new problem solving approach which is being embedded across the policing alliance. This will put in place a process, and culture that delivers effective problem solving and community profiling.

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

13. The next stage of the problem solving approach will be ensuring partners are contributing to the problem solving framework effectively. New beat profiles have also been developed on the force intranet to improve community awareness within the force.

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

14. Building on the new problem solving approach and new beat profiles above, the force has also implemented a Consultation and Engagement Strategy, as part of its Confidence Strategy work.

Protecting vulnerable people and supporting victims

15. 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.

16. West Mercia has introduced an Action Plan approach to deal with unresourced incidents. 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. At the same time introduction of Incident Progression Teams working closely with the control room have meant that incidents where there is no requirement for deployment are resolved and taken off the list quickly, allowing greater scrutiny around those incidents that are still waiting for deployment where there may be some risk for 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

17. A full alliance-wide audit of Domestic Abuse has been conducted in early 2018 which included a review of related DASH submissions. The results are being compiled and will include commentary regarding findings related to use of DASH. A domestic abuse service review has also now commenced and includes additional interrogation of the use of DASH. All of this has been conducted whilst the results of a College of Policing pilot regarding a new DASH assessment are awaited.

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.

18. As per AFI2 above, a full audit of domestic abuse is now complete. The results are being compiled and will include commentary regarding any findings related to use of Outcome Code 16 (evidential difficulties, victim does not support police action). In addition a Domestic Abuse Service Review has now commenced and includes additional interrogation of the use of Outcome 16.

Tackling Serious and Organised Crime (SOC)

19. 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

20. West Mercia is developing more effective partnership working arrangements to tackle SOC. Joint action groups to address SOC with partners are in place across the Force and work is ongoing to bring consistency to practices. SOC Local Profiles for each policing area have been completed but further engagement with partners is needed to obtain further partner agency information.

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

21. All West Mercia local intelligence teams are briefed on the new Regional and Organised Crime Unit's (ROCU) mapping processes and trigger mechanism, and there are clear examples of newly identified organised crime groups (OCGs) being mapped. Organised crime threats need to be business as usual and the new OCG meeting chaired by an ACC Chief Officer will assist in keeping this focus in place across all departments.

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

22. Training of Lead Responsible Officers is being built into West Mercia's training plan, with additional support and guidance being provided via the Force Intelligence Bureau. This support can also ensure that any OCG activity is resourced appropriately and support development for force or regional tasking bids.

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

23. The work being conducted with partners is assisting in developing a problem solving ethos around SOC that this is a community based issue. A Prevent Strategy is required and the force is looking to engage more fully with the PCC's office regarding opportunities for support with partnership working and access to funding streams. Work is also ongoing to increase the use of civil orders, and has been successful in obtaining two Serious Crime Prevention Orders in recent weeks. Further applications are in place for a number of other serious and organised, and economic crime investigations.

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

24. Disruption activity is now being submitted and work is ongoing to ensure this is sustainable and embedded, using a clear, auditable system. An OCG Management Unit is now established to assist lead responsible officers and others in maximising disruption potential and quality assuring/reporting to ROCU/ROCTA as per national reporting requirements.

SOC Focus

25. West Mercia's Chief Officers have taken a decision to separate the Inspection findings and associated actions relating solely to West Mercia from the Alliance Action Plan so that they could assure themselves that the actions identified within the Plan would be sufficient to address the report findings. As a result of this exercise the Chief Constable commissioned a dedicated serious and organised crime action plan for West Mercia. This supports the wider Alliance Action Plan, but allows for additional focus and oversight on this area for West Mercia which was graded inadequate, whereas Warwickshire was graded requires improvement.

26. HMICFRS is engaging with the Force, which has developed 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 outlined in the Inspection Report.

27. At the time of the effectiveness inspection West Mercia Police and Warwickshire Police as an Alliance were undergoing a leadership review. One of the outcomes of this review is that there will be investment in this area including in senior leadership in the form of a new shared Assistant Chief Constable. The new shared Chief Officer will have direct responsibility for shared functions across both West Mercia Police and Warwickshire Police; this will include as a priority the delivery of policing of serious and organised crime.

Police and Crime Commissioner's oversight

28. The PCC's oversight and scrutiny of the Force's response to HMICFRS' Effectiveness Inspection findings is ongoing. As mentioned earlier in the Report the PCC's office were invited to attend the hot debrief provided by the Inspectors at the end of their fieldwork and representatives from the PCC's office attend both the Effectiveness Core Group and the Service Improvement Board to monitor progress and to raise any concerns to the PCC. The PCC is also represented at the newly formed Delivery Group.

29. One area of concern which the PCC determined to seek additional oversight and assurance through his holding to account process was SOC. This commenced in June 2016 when the PCC questioned what steps had been put in place to address the force response to tackling OCGs. A briefing note was provided on each of the AFIs relating to serious and organised crime. This note was discussed at the subsequent holding to account meeting.

30. Later, in December 2016 and January 2017 the PCC asked about outcomes of the South Worcestershire serious and organised crime joint action group (SOCJAG) pilot and challenged the progress made to develop a West Mercia wide approach. The force advised that the pilot in South Worcestershire had not progressed as well as intended and the PCC requested a further update be made in July.

31. At the July 2017 update, the PCC was advised that the force approach had started to improve and a structure of local partner meetings was in place. It was also agreed that the PCC's Crime Reduction Board (CRB) could provide the governance for the 5 local SOCJAGs. The governance arrangement was agreed by the CRB at its meeting and its terms of reference amended to take effect from December 2017.

32. Following publication of the latest report in March, the focus of the PCC's April holding to account meeting was changed to closely scrutinise the AFIs and recommendations and to seek assurance on the force response. As a result of this meeting the PCC agreed that his office would attend each of the local SOCJAG meetings for the next 12 to 18 months and for an update on all AFIs and recommendations to be brought back to the July 18 meeting.

33. The close scrutiny and oversight of SOC to ensure effective delivery of both the SOC action plan and the SOC improvement plan is now being managed via a three strand approach within the PCC's office. One officer is responsible for the HMICFRS work, one for the SOCJAG implementation and one for oversight of a SOC performance framework which is being developed by 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.

34. The PCC has a statutory responsibility to write to the Home Secretary in response to any force inspection report published by HMICFRS. A copy of the PCC's written response to the Home Secretary on the effectiveness report is attached at appendix 2. The letter has also been published on the PCC's website.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – 'PEEL: Police Effectiveness 2017 An inspection of West Mercia Police' (HMICFRS March 2018)

Appendix 2 – Copy of the PCC's letter to the Home Secretary

Contact Points for the Report

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Background Papers

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

Agenda and Minutes of the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel

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