

Police and Crime Panel

10th January 2022

HMICFRS inspections

Report of the Police and Crime Commissioner



Purpose

1. To brief the Police and Crime Panel on the findings of the recent inspections/ report by HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) that have required a PCC comment, listed below:
 - Police response to violence against women and girls - Final inspection report;
 - PEEL 2021/22 – An inspection of Durham Constabulary;
 - A joint thematic inspection of the criminal justice journey for individuals with mental health needs and disorders.

Individual inspections and findings

Police response to violence against women and girls - Final inspection report.

2. The inspection's overarching findings are as follows:
 - There should be a radical refocus and shift in the priority given to VAWG offences by the police and all partners, including wrap-around, tailored support for victims;
 - Chief Constables should review and ensure that there are consistently high standards in the response to VAWG, including dealing with breaches of non-molestation orders, using Clare's Law to protect potential domestic abuse victims, and identifying and managing the most dangerous VAWG perpetrators; and
 - There should be a national policing strategy to coordinate the response to VAWG.
3. Durham Constabulary and the OPCC are working to produce a cohesive strategy to address violence against women and girls, which is also a key deliverable held within the Police and Crime Plan 2021-24 under the Safer People priority. This will enable Durham Constabulary to respond effectively to HMICFRS recommendations to; record protected characteristics of victims, standardise its approach to responding to violence against women and girls offences, meeting national standards, and providing strong rationale for evidential difficulty outcomes (supportive and unsupportive complainants).

PEEL 2021/22 – An inspection of Durham Constabulary.

4. The PEEL inspection 2021 graded Durham Constabulary as ‘Good’. This iteration of PEEL saw the introduction of a new grading category process and the application of twelve inspection questions, by which ten areas are graded below:

Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires improvement	Inadequate
Disrupting serious organised crime	Preventing crime	Supporting victims		
Good use of resources	Investigating crime			
	Treatment of the public			
	Responding to the public			
	Protecting vulnerable people			
	Managing offenders			
	Developing a positive workplace			

5. Overall, it is positive to see nine out of ten categories graded as ‘Good’ and ‘Outstanding’. This is testament to Durham Constabulary as an organisation, particularly with the inspection taking place within the context of Covid-19 which has posed significant challenges upon the service. Notwithstanding, an ‘Adequate’ grading for supporting victims is of concern, with a series of areas for improvement cited by the inspectorate. These are predominantly focused upon effective victim contact and engagement and Victim’s Code of Practice compliance regarding victim needs assessments and written confirmation of offences.
6. The PCC will closely monitor this area to provide assurance while Durham Constabulary work to address these findings in order to provide the best possible service to victims of crime.

A joint thematic inspection of the criminal justice journey for individuals with mental health needs and disorders.

7. The inspection’s overarching findings are as follows:
- Dedicated investigative staff should receive training on vulnerability which includes inputs on responding to the needs of vulnerable suspects (as well as victims);

- Assess the standard and consistency of decision making to determine any training or briefing requirements and the need for any ongoing oversight, with regard to the journey of individuals with mental health needs who progress through the criminal justice system;
 - Improve the availability, prevalence, and sophistication of mental health flagging to improve data sets; and
 - Police Forces should assure themselves that risks, and vulnerabilities are properly identified during risk assessment processes, particularly for voluntary attendees. They must ensure that risks are appropriately managed, including referrals to Healthcare Partners, Liaison and Diversion and the use of appropriate adults.
8. Durham Constabulary adhere to all of these recommendations and there is confidence that the data is interacted with effectively, and work will continue in partnership with the Mental Health Tees, Esk & Wear Valley Trust. The OPCC will continue to monitor this space.

Recommendations

9. That the Panel notes the content of the inspection report.

Joy Allen
Police and Crime Commissioner

Appendix 1: Risks and Implications

Finance

N/A

Staffing

N/A

Equality and Diversity

N/A

Accommodation

N/A

Crime and Disorder

N/A

Children's Act 2004

N/A

Stakeholder/Community Engagement

N/A

Environment

N/A

Collaboration and Partnerships

N/A

Value for Money and Productivity

N/A

Potential Impact on Police and Crime Plan Priorities

N/A

Commissioning

N/A

Other risks

N/A

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