

22 June 2015

Police and Crime Panel

HMIC Feedback

Report of Chief Finance Officer



Purpose

To share with the Panel feedback received from the latest HMIC inspection.

Efficiency Inspection

HMIC inspected the Force during week commencing 27th April 2015 regarding efficiency. The feedback received is shown below:

Force efficiency at keeping people safe and reducing crime

Strengths

- There is an evidence based approach to considering opportunities for change, working with partners, the College of Policing and academic institutions to ensure rigour in assessing what works.
- The force plays a full and active role with partners at both a strategic and tactical level.
- The force actively seeks innovation.

Use of resources to meet demand

Strengths

- The force understands and actively manages demand e.g. a rigorous and innovative approach was taken in a detailed analysis and clearly dealing with a repeat missing from home case, which led to effective safeguarding of a vulnerable young person. Particularly impressed with the time and money data captured and also the significant changes to a young person's life.
- Hidden demand is understood, for example in the specialist area of CSE.
- The force effectively predicts demand, for example cybercrime, night time economy.
- Good use of volunteers and volunteer cadets to manage demand.
- The force makes good use of Restorative Approaches, over and above most other forces.
- ICT development is good.
- Shift pattern review based on demand and aligned to Plan on a Page and the principle of putting the public first.
- Shared sense of purpose for specialist staff.
- Commands interact well to manage and react to demand.

Areas for consideration

- Staff may not always understand the reason for delays to the introduction and development of systems and this information could be communicated further, especially to front line staff.
- The force has taken a cautious approach to mobile data. Staff are largely unsighted as to why this is not moving more quickly.
- There is a perception that the revised shift pattern may increase more remote supervision and fear re increased vulnerability during night shifts. The staff also reported experiencing more child care issues and increased childcare costs.

Force workforce model sustainability and affordability

Strengths

- The force has a sustainable work force model which is closely aligned to Plan on a Page and to the Force Vision.
- The level of detail in the workforce plans is impressive and the budget is aligned and balanced. This is supported by clear and detailed tactical plans.
- There is clear acknowledgement of the challenges ahead and work is clearly aligned to increasing demand and there is a clear understanding of cost and capability to mitigate the risk to service delivery.
- A continued review of the operating model is undertaken with changes made where necessary, initial early benefits of moving to Safeguarding Neighbourhoods Command were seen.
- The approach to agile working is recognised and this approach should continue in the future.
- The level of knowledge in the workforce plans is very impressive – a level that ‘most forces would die for’.
- Highly skilled and extremely knowledgeable staff in key roles across the organisation.

Area for consideration

- There is a risk of the loss of expertise in single person specialist support roles.
- The force may need to revisit the operating model again in the future.

Force's financial sustainability for the short and long term

Strengths

- “The force is delivering for today while planning for tomorrow.”
- Following early achievement of savings in previous years, the force has demonstrated robust financial planning and strong financial controls, with a balanced budget for 2015/16 with no use of reserves.
- The detailed financial plans give confidence that the force can deliver the required savings.
- The force has identified a range of activity to identify cost savings.

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

- There is an ethos of reviewing costs while investing to reduce demand.

Areas for consideration

- While satisfied that appropriate checks and balances are in place, the force should regularly review the capacity of the Assistant Chief Officer to carry out the dual role with the force and the OPCC.

Legitimacy pillar – key questions

1. To what extent does practice and behaviour reinforce the wellbeing of staff and an ethical culture?
2. How well does the force develop and maintain an ethical culture?
3. How well does the force provide for the wellbeing of staff?
4. How well has the code of ethics been used to inform policy and practice?
5. How well does the force tackle complaints, misconduct and corruption?

Strengths

- There was a clear message that the force is a genuine, caring organisation.
- There was no evidence found of any bias against protected characteristics.
- The force has invested heavily to embed the Code of Ethics, building on existing standards across the force.
- Supervisory staff both police officers and police staff demonstrated a good knowledge of staffing and well-being issues.
- A good level of support to staff was evidenced in several examples.
- There is a good level of support available to staff e.g. Confidential Care line, Health Management Unit.
- The promotion processes are seen to be free of bias.
- The level of complaints made against the force is significantly below the national average.
- Staff stated that they have confidence in the Bad Apple system and the force effectively supports staff who report concerns.

Areas for consideration

- Some misconduct cases were finalised by HR rather than PS & LS which could lead to inconsistency.
- Awareness of the well-being provision was 'patchy'.
- There was some reluctance to access the welfare services in the force due to stigma and that the Welfare Office is based at HQ, and in view of the Executive offices.
- There is a perception that staff are required to seek out support as welfare services no longer have the capacity to be proactive.
- While the promotion process was seen as free from bias, there was a view that the involvement of the chief constable in the process could carry this risk.

Leadership element – key questions

1. How well led is the force?
2. Does the force have a clear understanding of the current status of its leadership at every level?

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3. Has the force provided a clear and compelling sense of the future direction of the organisation?
4. How is the force developing leadership, motivating its workforce and encouraging staff engagement?
5. To what extent is leadership improving the effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy of the force through clear, reasoned and swift response to challenges?

Strengths

- There is clear leadership expressed throughout all ranks and levels.
- Staff felt that first-line supervision at all levels was supportive with good skills. Excellent examples were freely given by staff.
- While there is no formal 'talent management' plan, the level of support offered is very extensive, and demonstrably higher than in most forces with POP master classes, NLP, Pack typing Mindfulness and Executive support for Continued Professional Development – which are all well received and have the desired impact on performance.
- Executive blogs were well-received.

Areas for consideration

- 'Consistent view of an uncertain future'. Lack of awareness of the plans in place to deal with this. This may indicate that there is not always a clear understanding of Executive messages in relation to key areas, examples included the detailed work in relation to the financial future was not clearly understood by staff.

Finally HMIC stated there were many additional areas of interesting initiatives and projects which were of interest and which were flagged in this inspection and would be of much more interest during the effectiveness inspection later in the year.

Conclusion

Overall, the inspection was positive. The formal national results will not be published until early autumn so as to give HMIC time to inspect all 43 Forces, seek feedback and moderate overall findings.

Recommendation

The Panel is recommended to consider the report.

Gary Ridley
Chief Finance Officer

Appendix 1: Risks and Implications

Finance

No direct implications arise from this report, however the inspection centred on overall financial management and sustainability in the short to medium term.

Staffing

No direct implications arise from this report, however the inspection centred around workforce planning arrangements, overall workforce management and leadership and development.

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

No direct implications arise from this report although the inspection covered collaborative arrangements between force and other partners and future potential collaboration.

Value for Money and Productivity

No direct implications arise from this report, however the inspection analysed arrangements in place relating to value for money, benchmarking and continuous improvement/innovation as a way to ensure sustainability.

Potential Impact on Police and Crime Plan Priorities

N/A

Commissioning

N/A

Other risks

N/A

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