

Police and Crime Panel

5 January 2017

Recent HMIC inspection reports

Report of Office of Police and Crime Commissioner



1. Purpose of report

To brief the Police and Crime Panel on the findings of the recent assessments by HM Inspectorate of Constabulary into Police efficiency, Police legitimacy, and leadership.

2. Summary

HMIC undertakes a programme of four inspections with each Force, each year, covering

- Efficiency
- Legitimacy
- Leadership
- Effectiveness

The results of inspections (except for Leadership) are categorised as follows:

- Outstanding
- Good
- Requires Improvement
- Inadequate

On 22 November, the results of the *efficiency* inspection were released, and Durham Constabulary was rated as 'outstanding'.

On 7 December the results of the *legitimacy* inspection were released and Durham was rated as 'good'.

On 7 December the results of the *leadership* inspection were released. The report is a narrative and does not contain an overall rating.

The results of the *effectiveness* inspection will be known early in 2017. A verbal report will be given to the Panel on 5 January, if the outcome is known at that time.

3. Findings of the Efficiency Inspection

The overall assessment for Durham in this inspection is 'Outstanding'.

There are four components to the assessment:

How well does the force understand its current and likely future demand? Outstanding

The assessment highlights:

- The Constabulary's comprehensive understanding of demand. It has used detailed research to make decisions on where to place appropriately trained staff, depending on the levels of threat, risk and harm.
- The emphasis on preventative measures, such as restorative justice and problem solving, which are seen as the principal methods to drive down demand linked to crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Efforts made to understand and respond to demand that is less likely to be reported (eg Halo project with diverse communities)
- That inefficient processes that create unnecessary internal demands are continually challenged; and the Constabulary has been able to show examples of this resulting in significant and minimal gains.
- The Constabulary has taken considerable steps to understand future demand, based on a detailed understanding of the changes in the demographic make-up and the impact on crime types and identified the crimes that are likely to increase in the immediate future.
- The Constabulary can demonstrate a good understanding of how reductions in the funding of their partners will affect demand for police services.
- The Constabulary identifies public expectations through PACT meetings and uses a variety of public perception surveys extensively.
- Messages outlining the financial status of the Constabulary are presented by a highly visible chief constable, including through the local media.

How well does the force use its resources to manage current demand? Outstanding

The assessment highlights:

- The Constabulary can demonstrate that its strategic decisions on prioritisation are based on a comprehensive understanding of current and future demand, local priorities, national requirements and public expectations.
- It has worked closely with partner agencies, including local authorities and other blue light services, to understand fully the impact of budget reductions.
- The Constabulary has a comprehensive understanding of the costs associated with providing a quality service and has been able to review continually and to implement new ways of working at a reduced cost.
- Strong governance processes enable the Constabulary to identify gaps in capacity and capability at an early stage and move resources around the Constabulary in a timely and effective manner.

- The Constabulary maximises the opportunities to work collaboratively with other police forces and a range of public and private sector partners and can demonstrate clearly how its joint working is transforming outcomes, reducing costs and/or building resilience.

How well is the force planning for demand in the future? Outstanding

The assessment highlights:

- Durham Constabulary has future plans that are well developed, ambitious and comprehensive, based on realistic assumptions from a set of comprehensive information about future demand and workforce capabilities.
- Its future workforce plan outlines the measures the Constabulary has taken to understand its financial status and its ability to match resources to changing demand.
- The Constabulary's ambitious ICT strategy is closely aligned with its workforce and service plans. It is enabling the Constabulary both to do things it is already doing more efficiently and improve the way it provides a service.
- Durham Constabulary has a comprehensive understanding of financial challenges and has developed prudent plans that take into account possible reductions in central funding through a process of scenario and risk planning in relation to the medium-term budget.
- The Constabulary has considered a number of measures that could be adopted to mitigate the risk of higher shortfalls than planned.

Comment on efficiency inspection

Two forces were rated as 'outstanding' in the 2016 efficiency inspections. However, Durham was the only force in the country to be rated as 'outstanding' in all three areas of the Efficiency inspection.

4. Findings of the Legitimacy Inspection

The overall assessment for Durham in this inspection is 'Good'

There are three components to the assessment, each with a rating (shown underlined):

To what extent does the force treat all of the people it serves with fairness and respect?

Good

The assessment highlights:

- The Constabulary has a culture in which high ethical standards are understood and practised across the organisation. The 'Durham difference' forms the basis of all policing activity. HMIC found that staff have a good understanding of the reasons

why treating people with fairness and respect is so important in providing an effective service to local communities.

- The Constabulary recognises the importance of receiving both positive and negative feedback from as many of the people it serves as possible. The professional standards board identifies concerns about officer and staff behaviour and devises action plans to address these issues. The Constabulary has an effective process for informing staff across the organisation about lessons learned.
- Durham Constabulary regularly feeds back to the communities it serves through a variety of methods. It recognises the importance of enhancing public confidence and places great emphasis on ensuring that it continually reviews how to do so.
- In September 2017, HMIC will re-assess the force's compliance with those features of the Best use of Stop and Search scheme that it was not complying with in 2015

How well does the force ensure that its workforce acts ethically and lawfully?

Requires improvement

The assessment highlights:

- The Constabulary is effective in ensuring that staff within the organisation are aware of what standards are expected of them. It has a strong, robust and effective process of ensuring that important messages are communicated to and understood by staff.
- The Constabulary has effective lines of communication for informing the workforce of the results of misconduct hearings and uses established processes to report cases of gross misconduct to the public.
- The Constabulary does not have sufficient capability to proactively monitor force systems.
- The Constabulary also has limited capacity and capability to seek intelligence on potential corruption.
- Awareness of the threat posed by officers abusing their position for sexual gain is widespread across the workforce. However, the Constabulary has no proactive capability for identifying officers who may be engaged in such activity

To what extent does the force treat its workforce with fairness and respect?

Outstanding

The assessment highlights:

- The Constabulary recognises the link between providing an efficient and effective service to the public and maintaining a motivated, well-supported and well-managed workforce. It has invested considerable time and effort into ensuring that the voice and wellbeing of its staff are the main reasons for changing its policies and working arrangements.
- Working in partnership with Durham University Business School, the Constabulary's annual staff survey provides a detailed academic assessment of the current factors influencing staff perceptions of their work. The regularity of the process has enabled the Constabulary to build on the improvements made since the first staff survey in 2013.

- The Constabulary has appointed wellbeing champions across the organisation, enhanced its welfare provision and given supervisors training to help them identify the early warning signs of stress.
- The annual individual performance appraisal (PDR) process is well established and many staff members feel that it helps them identify and achieve training and development opportunities. The workforce perceives opportunities to progress within the organisation to be fair and transparent.

Comment on legitimacy inspection

A 'Good' assessment is comparable to the majority of Forces: 36 of 43 received a 'good' rating, and only 2 were 'outstanding'.

We understand that the key reason for 'Requires Improvement' under the second criterion was that the Force did not have adequate capability to identify corruption. This has since been addressed by the acquisition of software which traces every key stroke, and highlights areas of concern. The concern that the Constabulary has no proactive capability for identifying officers who may be abusing their position for sexual gain is shared across many Forces, and gained profile in the media in September.

5. Findings of the Leadership Inspection

Unlike the other inspections, the HMIC Leadership Inspection is not graded, and so direct comparisons between Forces are not possible. During the inspection, however, HMIC indicated that they regard the leadership of Durham Constabulary to be of outstanding quality, compared to all other Forces. The report makes a number of positive comments, including:

- Durham Constabulary communicates extensively with its workforce to define and communicate its leadership expectations;
- The chief officer team champions the guiding principles and standards of the Police *Code of Ethics*, together with being 'positive, fair and courageous with integrity': this is referred to collectively as 'the Durham Difference';
- The Chief Constable has an 'open door' policy and welcomes challenge at all times; The force uses several approaches to ensure a balanced perspective, including 360 feedback, personality 'pack' profiling, formal mentoring and coaching agreements;
- Senior leaders regularly communicate with staff at all levels, and chief officers carry out formal mentoring and coaching programmes;
- The force understands its leadership teams' capabilities and proactively looks for candidates with senior leadership potential. It is also prepared to recruit externally; three candidates from other forces were recently recruited to chief inspector and superintendent roles;
- Durham Constabulary demonstrates good practice across many areas and regularly hosts visits from other forces to share information;

- Officers are encouraged to be innovative and offer suggestions for improvement;
- The force recognises the need to increase employee diversity above and beyond the nine protected characteristics (age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief; sex; and sexual orientation) and works hard to appeal to individuals from backgrounds where joining the police is not the norm.

6. Recommendation

That the Panel notes the content of the inspection report

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