

POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

Meeting to be held on 12 March 2018

Crime Data Integrity (CDI) Inspection

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Purpose of this report is to provide Members of the Panel with the Commissioner's response to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) findings, following their Crime Data Integrity inspection of Lancashire Constabulary including information on the link to Victim Services

RECOMMENDATION

The Panel is asked to consider the report.

Background

The Panel will recall that at their meeting in December 2017, Members received a report highlighting the HMICFRS inspection findings on Crime Data Integrity and sought a report on the Commissioner's response to the findings.

The Police and Crime Commissioner fully supports the HMICFRS audit and inspection regime that provides independent scrutiny and ultimately leads to improved service delivery to the public.

Further, the Commissioner is a strong advocate of the PEEL assessment process and genuinely believes in learning and improvement through frank, open and honest dialogue. As such any deficiencies in the Constabulary's systems and processes identified through these inspection activity are robustly scrutinised.

Recently, the Deputy Chief Constable has established an internal HMICFRS Board. The purpose of the Board is to review recommendations, Areas for Improvement (AFIs), points of note and action plans associated with all seven of 2017/18 HMICFRS inspections. The Board, monitors and tracks progress as through bespoke action plans. It also ensures the Constabulary have a forward look at the upcoming inspections and preparation, ensure there is an understanding of the requirements, have benchmarked the Constabulary's position and are undertaking activity which is required to make necessary improvements.

As the Panel is aware, in July 2017, HMICFRS completed their inspection of Crime Data Integrity, this comprised reviewing approximately 2500 incident logs to ensure crimes reported had been recorded or a suitable negation supplied, the data work

was then followed by four days of reality testing.

The report was published on the 28th November 2017, Lancashire was graded 'inadequate' with a number of recommendations made which the force is working to implement immediately.

Whilst the Police and Crime Commissioner accepts the grading and recommendations in relation to the crime recording process, and expects the Chief Constable to address these, he does not consider that it accurately reflects the quality of the service currently provided to the victims and is concerned about the impact such comments could have on the trust and confidence of vulnerable victims in Lancashire.

Indeed, the Inspection report itself acknowledges in relation to rape crimes:

"We found that although a crime may not always have been correctly recorded, Lancashire Constabulary provided support and safeguarding in all of these cases, including referrals to partner organisations when appropriate, and carried out an investigation in all".

Further, at the inspection debrief, HMICFRS staff informed the Constabulary:

"On a positive side an examination of the service provided showed that in virtually every case safeguarding was considered and provided where needed. In many cases some positive action was taken in line with the wishes of the victim."

"We were also impressed with the quality of call handling found within the FCR (Force Control Room). Safeguarding was at the forefront of considerations and with some exceptions, call to log content was good."

"During fieldwork we found that officers were positive and victim focused."

"In respect of messages from the Chief Officer Team there was no confusion and officers fully understood their responsibilities. It is clear that the culture of the constabulary is positive from COT (Chief Officer Team) right down to the frontline. HMIC witnessed victim encounters within the FCR which were professional where the victim received a good service. Our audit staff were impressed with the high standard of call handing displayed within the calls listened to."

In response to the inspection report the Police and Crime Commissioner conducted an extraordinary Scrutiny meeting on Monday 5th February 2018 which gave specific scrutiny and focus on the Constabulary's response to the CDI Inspection findings. The Commissioner was updated on the work being undertaken and ongoing to address the issues identified. Officers had visited South Wales, who were one of 4 forces inspected for CDI to graded as good (5 forces were graded requires improvement and 8 forces inadequate) in order to illicit best practice in this area.

Further, at his Strategic Scrutiny Meeting on the 21 February 2018, the Commissioner was presented with the Constabulary's CDI Action Plan.

The Commissioner was assured that work is ongoing to address the plan. One of the recommendations in the inspection pertained to the establishment of a crime data integrity team. This is an area that is currently being modelled and in respect of which needs costing. The Chief Constable and the Commissioner are acutely aware of the lack of resources and therefore the introduction of this team needs careful consideration. Further, if such a team is introduced it's likely that there will be an impact on call handling times as they will take longer. This issue is therefore not just a compliance issue, it's about making an informed decision and balancing all the relevant factors.

Further, the Constabulary have undertaken changes to practices and procedures and has instigated immediate and on- going training for officers force wide. Additionally, it has enlisted the help of some of the staff in the Force Control Room to help reclassification of crimes to help inform how best practice can be achieved moving forward.

The Police and Crime Commissioner is committed to supporting vulnerable people and victims in our community and through his discussions with the Chief Constable he is assured that when those people who turn to the police in crisis, they are receiving the help and support they need.

The Police and Crime Commissioner has commissioned Lancashire Victim Services to provide a comprehensive integrated support service for all those who are victims of crime. The service is available regardless of whether victims chose to report a crime or not and where a crime is recorded as an incident victims can still access relevant support and advice. Where victim information is not automatically transferred to Lancashire Victim Services the Constabulary will provide victims with information and contact details about the service.

The Police and Crime Commissioner will continue to closely monitor the progress of Lancashire Constabulary in this area.