

Warwickshire Joint Audit and Standards Committee Report Summary

Meeting Date: 15th March 2023

Subject: Analysis and Service Improvement – HMICFRS update

Contact details: Stephen Russell, Head Analysis and Service Improvement

Purpose of the report:

This report provides an overview of activity in relation of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) who independently assesses the effectiveness and efficiency of police forces. Their findings are reported through thematically-based reports and reports following Policing, Effectiveness, Efficiency & Legitimacy (PEEL) inspections.

Recommendation:

That the current activity is noted by members of JASC.

Background:

Within the TOR the Committee has the role to consider reports and policies from an ethics or standards perspective which includes HMICFRS reports.

This activity is primarily governed within force through the Warwickshire Assurance Board, chaired by DCC Franklin-Smith. The Board receives regular updates on inspection activity and force's readiness, compliance and delivery of recommendations.

Executive summary:

There has been significant HMICFRS activity inspection in Warwickshire Police throughout 2022:

- National Child Protection Inspection 2022.
- HMICFRS conducted a National Thematic Custody Inspection (unannounced) Sept 2021 – the report was published in February 2022 and the force was subject of a scheduled anniversary revisit in October 2022. HMICFRS signed off the force from further inspection and management of the remaining areas for improvement was devolved to local level.
- PEEL Inspection – 22 Areas for Improvement (AFI's) resulted.
- National thematic inspection into the state of Armed Policing.

At the time of writing the following are relevant for reporting to the committee:

National Child Protection Inspection:

Every Home Office force in England & Wales undergoes a periodic inspection into standards around Child Protection (NCPI). In February 2022 Warwickshire Police underwent the HMICFRS

deep-dive for two weeks. The report was published in August 2022 and contained a largely positive narrative, with a number of areas to develop.

Eight recommendations were made and improvements have been subject of a comprehensive action plan driven by D/Supt Pete Hill (Vulnerability & Safeguarding). Governance is driven through the Vulnerability & Exploitation Steering Group (chaired by ACC Gardner) and overseen by the quarterly Force Assurance Board.

Every force is revisited around the first anniversary of the original inspection in one of three formats:

- post-inspection visit;
- post-inspection review; or
- a full re-inspection.

Warwickshire Police is subject of a one-week review (middle tier), week commencing 27th February 2023. The activity will include interviews with Strategic Leads, investigation audits and examination of progress against the recommendations made.

HMICFRS will publish their assessment of the force's progress on their website later in 2023.

PEEL 2022 Inspection AFI's and new Force Liaison Lead:

HMICFRS have nominated a new FLL, Mr Arjun Jabbal, who also serves as FLL for Staffordshire Police. While he has not delivered the 2022 PEEL Inspection Report himself, he will be working closely with Warwickshire Police to navigate addressing the 22 AFI's (Areas for Improvement). Furthermore, he will be Lead Inspector during the next round of PEEL continuous assessment. Evidence collection for the next round commences in February 2024.

The AFI's are spread across a number of business areas and each is owned by a Strategic Lead (Superintendent or equivalent and above). (These were detailed in last quarter's HMICFRS FLO's report for JASC.) Progress is monitored through the various Delivery and Steering Groups and overseen by the Deputy Chief Constable at the Force Assurance Board.

Recommendation Tiers:

HMICFRS have recently announced an improved system for scrutiny and achievement of recommendations/areas for improvement which arise from reports. This improves HMICFRS understanding of the demand placed on organisations. Forces have more control over how HMICFRS are updated and can now evidence work which has been completed in a timely manner.

AFI's allocated to Warwickshire fall into two distinctive tiers. This dictates how each is evidenced and signed off for closure:

- **Tier 2** - Forces are able to close records when they have completed the work, including a letter signed by the Chief Constable. The majority of recommendations from national thematic reports fall into this category. This is administered in-force by the FLO and is scrutinised by the Steering Groups before final consideration at Assurance Board.
- **Tier 3** - Forces self-certify that the recommendation is complete, including uploading a letter signed by the Chief Constable. Recommendations in this tier include the force-specific PEEL 2022, Cusotdy and NCPI inspections as well as the Vetting and Mysogyny national thematic report. HMICFRS manage follow-up and complete verification via the

next relevant planned inspection (January 2025). Scrutiny in-force is as per Tier 2. If there is clear demonstrable progress prior to the next PEEL inspection, scope exists for early consultation with HMICFRS with a view to closure.

It is envisaged that work will progress in earnest to close as many completed thematic recommendations as possible during Spring 2023.

Forthcoming inspections:

- HMICFRS have notified Warwickshire Police that the next wave of national inspection into Counter-Corruption Units (CCU) and Vetting will take place in Warwickshire week commencing 24th April 2023. Reports are prepared and published in tranches. The release date is unknown but is estimated at mid-summer 2023.
- In 2021, the Serious & Organised Crime aspect of the PEEL inspections was moved to a separate, more specialised thematic inspection by region, to incorporate Regional Organised Crime Units (ROCU). A report is published around the regional capability and performance, as well as individual constituent forces: in the West Midlands region this is Warwickshire, West Mercia, Staffordshire and West Midlands Police, plus ROCUWM. At present there is no date confirmed, but the inspection programme is in progress nationally and the force is conducting internal assurance to prepare for inspection at any time.

Thematic Reports in the last period:

HMICFRS have released the following thematic reports since the last JASC report was submitted to the committee:

How the police respond to victims of sexual abuse when the victim is from an ethnic minority background and may be at risk of honour-based abuse - Super-complaint — 16 December 2022

HMICFRS, the College of Policing and the Independent Office for Police Conduct published a report in response to a super-complaint from the Tees Valley Inclusion Project about how the police respond to victims of sexual abuse from ethnic minority backgrounds and who may be at risk of honour-based abuse.

The recommendations are lengthy and for reasons of brevity are not duplicated here. However, the report can be found [here](#) and the force has accepted – and comprehensively responded to – all three on 9th February 2023. All forces' responses are currently being considered by the NPCC and they will form part of a single national response by them.

An inspection into how well the police and other agencies use digital forensics in their investigations - national thematic report — 1 December 2022

In this national inspection, HMICFRS examined the provision of digital forensics in police forces and regional organised crime units. Of the nine recommendations, three are allocated to Warwickshire Police; they are as follows:

- By December 2023, each force in England and Wales should develop a governance and oversight framework to better understand the local demand for digital forensic services.
- By September 2023, the National Police Chiefs' Council and all forces within England and Wales need to include the management of digital forensic kiosks in their governance and oversight frameworks.

- By November 2024, chief constables should integrate digital forensic services under their existing forensic science structure.

These recommendations are driven through the Cyber & Digital Board and Delivering Effective Justice Steering Group. Oversight is held through Assurance Board.

Insp 1284 Angus Eagles
HMICFRS Force Liaison Officer (FLO)
27th February 2023