

Warwickshire Joint Audit and Standards Committee Report Summary

Meeting Date: 26th September 2023

Subject: Analysis and Performance – HMICFRS update

Contact details: Stephen Russell, Director of Data, Strategy & Technology

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 Performance & Assurance Board (formerly 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 new HMICFRS activity inspection and a number of report publications in Warwickshire Police throughout 2023, particularly since the last report to JASC. At the time of writing the following are relevant for reporting to the committee:

New and ongoing activity:

- Vetting & Counter-Corruption Inspection (Warwickshire).
- PEEL Serious & Organised Crime Inspection (Warwickshire and West Midlands Region).
- Operation Soteria Inspection preparation (Warwickshire – expansion phase force).
- Activism in Policing Inspection (urgent review) preparation (document request – inspected force cohort to be confirmed at the time of writing).
- PEEL 2023-2025 preparation (Warwickshire).
- Vetting, misconduct and misogyny in the police service (final submission of updates against recommendations and AFI's).
- Addressing the outcomes from the PEEL 2022 report – 22 Areas for Improvement (AFI's).

New reports:

- National Child Protection Inspection 2022 Review report (Warwickshire).
- National thematic Inspection into the State of Armed Policing report (Warwickshire participating force).
- An inspection of how well the police tackle serious youth violence (report and recommendations).
- Responses to the super-complaint from the Tees Valley Inclusion Project about the police response to victims of sexual abuse from ethnic minority backgrounds who may be at risk of honour-based abuse (Warwickshire participation).
- State of Policing: The Annual Assessment of Policing in England and Wales 2022.
- Police performance: Getting a grip (report and recommendations).
- An inspection of how well the police and National Crime Agency tackle the online sexual abuse and exploitation of children.
- Race and policing: An inspection of race disparity in police criminal justice decision-making (report and recommendations).
- Race and Policing: A review of the police service's leadership and governance arrangements for race-related matters.
- Homicide prevention: An inspection of the police contribution to the prevention of homicide (report and recommendations).

Activity details:

In March 2023, HMICFRS conducted an **inspection into vetting & counter-corruption** (every force undergoes this process). The report is due for publication imminently, so it is not possible to report on the findings at this stage.

Following its extraction from the main PEEL Assessment Programme, the new rounds of the bespoke **Serious & Organised Crime Inspection** are underway. During June and July 2023, Warwickshire and regional forces as well as ROCUWM underwent the inspection activity. Again, the report is in preparation phase so it is not possible to report on the findings at this stage.

Operation Soteria is a national collaborative project aimed at improving the standards of investigation and detection/prosecution rates for rape and serious sexual offences (RASSO). Four forces were originally selected as pathfinder forces. The second phase of expansion forces included Warwickshire Police. Following a two-day (non-HMICFRS) peer review in November 2022, the HMICFRS have now formalised an inspection programme to assess forces' progress against the implementation of the National Operating Model and relevant standards. This inspection is in the preparation phase and will be taking place (virtually) in Warwickshire week commencing 6th November 2023.

On 2nd September 2023, The Home Secretary wrote to HMCIC Andy Cooke to commission an urgent **inspection into activism and impartiality in the police**. Participant forces have not yet been announced, but every force in England & Wales is currently compiling their respective responses to a extensive document request.

Although the 12-month continuous assessment of Warwickshire Police under the **PEEL 2023-2025 programme** does not begin until February 2024, preparation is already well underway. Strategic Leads are driving the responses to the 22 AFI's issued from the 2022 PEEL report and the Performance & Assurance Board (chaired by the DCC) and thematic Steering Groups (chaired by the ACCs) continue to scrutinise progress and hold the leads to account. The final inspection phase will take place in January 2025.

The HMICFRS report into **vetting, misconduct and misogyny in the police service** last year delivered wide ranging recommendations and AFI's, totalling 34. Significant work has been done

in-force to ensure compliance with these and the final submission of updates was prepared in July 2023 and sent to the NPCC, for compilation and delivery to HMICFRS. We await the outcome of HMICFRS' assessment and whether these will now be closed and shown as achieved.

Responding to PEEL 2021 – 2022. The Force continues to address the areas for improvement (AFIs) raised during the inspection. The responses are managed through the relevant governance/steering groups and assurance is undertaken at the Performance and Assurance Board.

When it is assessed by the Force that an AFI is complete the evidence is submitted to the HMICFRS for consideration of closure. At Appendix A is a summary of the areas for improvement and their current status.

Reports:

A number of reports relevant or specific to Warwickshire Police have been published since the last summary was submitted to the March 2023 JASC. For reasons of brevity, they will only be outlined below, but links are included in the titles for further information if required.

[National Child Protection Inspection Review report](#)

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. In February 2023, Warwickshire Police was subject of a one-week anniversary review (middle tier) to assess progress against the recommendations.

HMICFRS published their assessment of the force in June 2023. The narrative was largely positive and the inspectorate was satisfied with the progress made and that Warwickshire Police has a good understanding of what is required to address the remaining AFI's (response to missing children and the focus on children's welfare when they are detained in custody). Work is ongoing to close off these remaining matters and is overseen through the Vulnerability and Exploitation Steering Group.

[An inspection of how effective police forces are in the deployment of firearms](#)

HMICFRS examined how effective police forces are in the deployment of firearms, including specialist munitions. They examined policies, structures and processes, compliance with relevant legislation, cross-border collaboration, and the selection, training and deployment of tactical firearms advisors and commanders. Warwickshire Police were one of the nine participating police forces and a national thematic report was produced. Nine recommendations resulted and these are overseen through the Armed Policing Board.

[An inspection of how well the police tackle serious youth violence](#)

HMICFRS examined how well police address serious youth violence to reduce violent crime involving young people (particularly between the ages of 14 to 24 years). Two recommendations apply to the force and are being tracked through the P&AB.

[An inspection of how well the police and National Crime Agency tackle the online sexual abuse and exploitation of children](#)

The above title is self-explanatory and whilst the inspection looked at the NCA alone, HMICFRS made 17 recommendations for police forces. They are aimed at improving the consistency of the police's approach and the timeliness of their investigations, reducing the availability of child sexual abuse material, and getting better outcomes for children. These are tracked through the Vulnerability and Exploitation Steering Group.

Responses to the super-complaint from the Tees Valley Inclusion Project about the police response to victims of sexual abuse from ethnic minority backgrounds who may be at risk of honour-based abuse.

This report was mentioned in the last summary and a report was published regarding force responses and the overall national picture. Warwickshire Police responded via the NPCC within the stipulated timeframes and progress around these recommendations has been confirmed as completed and will continue as business as usual.

State of Policing: The Annual Assessment of Policing in England and Wales 2022.

This report is the annual assessment of the effectiveness and efficiency of police forces in England and Wales by HMCIC Andy Cooke, based on the inspections carried out between 1 December 2021 and 31 March 2023. The report paints a bleak picture of the public's loss of trust and confidence in the police and gives real food for thought around how to rebuild it in the wake of serious failures in recent years.

Police performance: Getting a grip

This report summarises the findings from the 2021/22 PEEL inspection programme. It comprises of two parts: part 1 examines national themes, (both positive and negative) and part 2 explores a problem with performance management. The report encourages better use of data and issues stark warnings around the failure to improve nationally. Three recommendations are being tracked through the P&AB.

Race and policing: An inspection of race disparity in police criminal justice decision-making – and – **Race and Policing: A review of the police service's leadership and governance arrangements for race-related matters**

These reports were published simultaneously and their titles are self-explanatory. They have only recently been released and the force is in the process of assessing their contents. The four recommendations will be allocated for ownership in due course.

An inspection of the police contribution to the prevention of homicide

This thematic inspection report examines how effectively the police understand, and contribute to the prevention of, homicides. The inspection examined how effectively forces understand the pattern of homicide in their areas, including the underlying causes and risks; and how effectively forces contribute to the prevention of homicides, including how they use the homicide prevention framework. Two recommendations coming from the report will be tracked through the Investigations Standards and Outcomes Board.

Insp 1284 Angus Eagles
HMICFRS Force Liaison Officer (FLO)
13th September 2023

Appendix A

AFI#	AFI Details	Strategic Lead	Progress (Summer Steering Groups)
1	The force should improve its external scrutiny processes for stop and search and for use of force, to make sure the powers are being used fairly and appropriately.	Supt Communities & Response	Significant Progress
2	The force should increase its use of body-worn video to improve interactions between officers and the public.	Supt Communities & Response	Significant Progress
3	The force should make sure that abstractions are effectively monitored and reduced (An abstraction is the diversion of an officer to duties that aren't part of their core duties, not necessarily emergencies, for an extended period).	Supt Force Operations	Some Progress
4	The force should make sure that repeat callers, and those that are vulnerable, are routinely identified.	CSupt OCC	Significant Progress
5	The force needs to make sure that call handlers give appropriate advice on the preservation of evidence and crime prevention.	CSupt OCC	Significant Progress
6	The force needs to attend calls for service within its published attendance times and make sure that, when this doesn't happen, victims are fully updated.	CSupt OCC	Significant Progress
7	Our 2019 report said that the force needed to improve the application of risk assessment when delays occur. This remains an area for improvement. The force should make sure that risk assessments are consistently applied to calls for service so that risk and vulnerability are visible from the outset and inform deployment decisions. Improvements must also be made to the quality of incident risk assessments when deployment delays occur.	CSupt OCC	Complete
8	The force should make sure it carries out proportionate and thorough investigations into reported crimes.	CSupt Protective Services	Significant Progress
9	The force should make sure investigation plans are created where applicable, with supervisory oversight to make sure that all reasonable investigative opportunities are pursued.	CSupt Protective Services	Significant Progress
10	The force needs to make sure that the requirements of the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime are complied with. This includes giving victims the opportunity to give victim personal statements and complete victim needs assessments.	CSupt Local Policing	Significant Progress
11	The force should make sure that there is an auditable record of the decision of the victim and their reasons for withdrawal of support. The force should make sure it documents whether evidence-led prosecutions have been considered in all such cases.	CSupt Protective Services	Some Progress
12	The force needs to put in place appropriate governance and monitoring processes to make sure that the use of outcomes is appropriate and complies with force and national policies.	CSupt Protective Services	Significant Progress

AF#	AFI Details	Strategic Lead	Progress (Summer Steering Groups)
13	The force needs to improve its capacity and capability to deal with child sexual exploitation.	DSupt Public Protection	Some Progress
14	The force should make sure its harm assessment unit within the multi-agency safeguarding hub is resourced effectively so that delays can be avoided in the assessment of child and adult cases.	DSupt Public Protection	Complete
15	The force needs to make sure that it has effective governance in place to monitor the application and use of release under investigation and bail.	Head of CJ (moving to CSupt Protective Services)	Significant Progress
16	The force should improve its performance monitoring processes to make sure it can robustly address the backlog of work. Supervisory oversight should include a thorough review of Violent and Sex Offender Register records, providing additional scrutiny to address outstanding actions.	DSupt Public Protection	Complete
17	The force should make sure it has the capacity and capability to progress all investigations of online indecent images of children effectively and quickly, including those referred to the force and those highlighted in peer-to-peer file-sharing systems. The force's investigative practice should include early liaison with children's services.	DSupt Public Protection	Significant Progress
18	The force should continue to review and improve wellbeing support for staff in high-risk roles and staff experiencing trauma.	Director of ES	Complete
19	The force should evaluate its wellbeing offer, and make sure its officers and staff have manageable workloads and the time to access wellbeing support.	Director of ES	Some Progress
20	Our 2019 report said that the force should improve individual performance reviews and that processes for talent identification should be consistently and fairly applied across the workforce. Poor performance should be managed consistently. This remains an area for improvement.	Head of HR	Some Progress
21	The force needs to make sure that it realises the benefits of its investment in IT and data to continue to improve its overall efficiency.	CIO	Complete
22	The force needs to develop a comprehensive understanding of demand, and make sure it has the capability and capacity needed to meet and manage current demands efficiently.	Head of A&SI	Significant Progress