

**Warwickshire Joint Audit and Standards Committee Report Summary**

**Meeting Date:** 27<sup>th</sup> March 2024

**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 His 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 (chaired by DCC Franklin-Smith) and strategic Thematic Steering Groups (chaired by ACC Gardner and ACC Smith). The boards receive regular updates on inspection activity and force's readiness, compliance and delivery of recommendations.

**Executive Summary**

**New HMICFRS reports:**

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

**[The impact of recruitment and retention on the criminal justice system – joint inspection](#)**

In this report HMICFRS, HM CPS Inspectorate, HM Inspectorate of Probation and HM Inspectorate of Prisons focussed on challenges to recruitment and retention in the police, CPS, the Probation and Youth Offending Services and the Prison Service.

The report drew on evidence from previous inspections and reports across the four inspectorates and therefore no new recommendations were made. Nonetheless force leadership has digested the contents and noted the challenges highlighted. All respective services appear to be suffering from a number of recruitment and retention difficulties, including COVID legacy, inexperienced

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workforces and high strain on the criminal justice system. The report praises a highly dedicated workforce.

### [Update on the HMICFRS activism and impartiality in policing inspection](#)

In September 2023, The then Home Secretary Rt Hon Suella Braverman MP wrote to HMCIC Andy Cooke to commission an urgent inspection into activism and impartiality in the police. HMCIC Cooke wrote to Chief Constables in January 2024 to update around their initial findings. There is consistent compliance with the Equality Act 2010 across forces, but there are difficulties in other areas, such as how non-crime hate incidents are recorded (NCHIs), the use and format of advisory groups (e.g. IAGs) and the perception of political influence on operational policing. Although Warwickshire was not chosen as a participant inspection force, future national recommendations will certainly follow and these will be managed by relevant strategic leads and governed through the existing structure. The report is anticipated late Spring or early Summer 2024.

### [Meeting the needs of victims in the criminal justice system – joint inspection](#)

This inspection aimed to assess how well the criminal justice system meets the needs of victims, from when a victim reports an offence to after the offender has been convicted. A total of 6 recommendations were made, but are allocated to other CJS agencies, such as Home Office, MoJ, College of Policing, etc. However the learning has been cascaded to senior leads in the force.

### [Report on the Criminal Justice Alliance's super-complaint - Section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 and independent community scrutiny of stop and search](#)

'Super-complaints' are infrequent but far-reaching and detailed. Only a small number of authorised bodies can bring super-complaints and request a subsequent inspection. The Criminal Justice Alliance Section are one such body and they brought a super-complaint about the police's use of section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 (search without grounds following serious disorder, for example), and the scrutiny of all stop and search powers. The report issued a number of recommendations, 6 of which apply to forces. The force is under a duty to publish a response within 56 days of publication, indicating how we intend to implement them. The Warwickshire Police response is [here](#) and the recommendations are driven by our strategic lead (Superintendent Communities & Response) through the Use of Police Powers Board and overseen by the Legitimacy & Equality Board, chaired by ACC (Local Policing).

### [A report into the effectiveness of vetting and counter-corruption arrangements in Warwickshire Police](#)

In April 2023, HMICFRS inspected Warwickshire Police to examine the effectiveness of the force's vetting, IT monitoring and counter-corruption arrangements for one week. This previously formed part of the PEEL process but new arrangements now mean that Vetting, Counter-corruption and (from June 2024) Professional Standards departments are inspected and graded separately. Under the revised system starting this summer, each department will receive an individual grade. (Warwickshire's next inspection is not anticipated for at least a couple of years.)

The report was issued in September 2023 and contains 3 areas for improvement (AFIs), affecting:

- (1) risk mitigation around the consideration of vetting clearance when adverse information has been raised;
- (2) the introduction of lawful business monitoring in our IT systems;

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- (3) the collection, assessment, development and investigation of counter-corruption intelligence.

Progress against these is driven by the Head of PSD and Head of Vetting and assurance is given to the Deputy Chief Constable at the Performance & Assurance Board.

### **New and ongoing activity:**

#### **PEEL 2023-2025 inspection preparation**

This is the force's principal area of HMICFRS-related focus for 2024. PEEL is a far-reaching inspection, covering 10 core areas of policing. With the exception of some specialist areas, which have their own inspections (Armed Policing, Serious & Organised Crime, etc), it covers most of the breadth of daily business.

The 12-month continuous assessment of Warwickshire Police under the [PEEL 2023-2025 programme](#) began in February 2024. Strategic Leads have been driving our response to the 22 AFIs issued from the [2022 PEEL report](#), governed and scrutinised by the Performance & Assurance Board (chaired by the DCC) and thematic Steering Groups (chaired by the ACCs). Appendix A below shows progress at-a-glance against the AFI's – albeit we currently await new data with the latest picture. This is not yet available at the time of writing.

It is worth noting that HMICFRS have stated that many of the AFIs will not be assessed or re-inspected until the Victim Services Assessment (VSA) part of the next PEEL inspection takes place. Furthermore, reality testing of many of the non-VSA AFIs will take place in late Spring 2024 during HMICFRS' familiarisation work. PEEL Inspection activity will take place throughout 2024, with intensity increasing during the second half of this year. The final evidence collection phase will take place in January 2025, and the report is anticipated for release in May 2025.

The Chief Officer Group have allocated additional resources to ensure inspection readiness and drive further service improvement. T/Chief Inspector Angus Eagles heads up the Service Improvement Team, supported by Inspector Stuart Randall and T/DS Jenny Deakin. The team is actively reality testing a wide range of force services, overlaid with the [HMICFRS PEEL Assessment Framework](#) to ensure compliance, identify better ways of working and improve service delivery. Findings are reported promptly to strategic leads and chief officers.

#### **Vetting & Counter-corruption:**

In addition to September 2023's report following the [inspection into vetting & counter-corruption in Warwickshire Police](#) (above), HMICFRS also published a national thematic report around [vetting, misconduct, and misogyny in the police service](#) in November 2022, following the murder of Sarah Everard by Wayne Couzens. The report delivered wide ranging recommendations and AFI's, totalling 34. Significant work has been done in-force to ensure compliance and final updates were submitted in 2023 to the NPCC, for compilation and delivery to HMICFRS. They have assessed and authorised the closure of 15 to date, with more in the pipeline. The timeline is dependent on HMICFRS working through a very high volume of updates, but strategic leads and T/CI Eagles continue to ensure compliance behind the scenes.

#### **S&OC Inspection:**

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Following its extraction from the main PEEL Assessment Programme, the bespoke **Serious & Organised Crime Inspection** took place during June and July 2023 in Warwickshire and other regional forces, plus ROCUWM. Publication of the report has been significantly delayed through 2023 and release is now earmarked for May 2024. Strategic leads have already taken the learning from the hot debrief at the time to promptly implement improvements.

### **Operation Soteria compliance inspection:**

**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. HMICFRS conducted an inspection programme to assess forces' progress against the implementation of the National Operating Model and relevant standards. Warwickshire Police was part of the cohort of inspected forces, and activity took place (virtually) in Warwickshire during November 2023. We await the national thematic report and any recommendations, anticipated late Spring 2024.

### **Thematic recommendation progress:**

Last year, HMICFRS introduced a new system for the completion and closure of recommendations and AFIs. They are now split into two tiers. Tier 2 allows the force to self-assess and certify that each recommendation is accomplished. Once Chief Officers have been fully assured of compliance, a letter of confirmation is completed, evidence is appended, and then the recommendation is closed on the HMICFRS portal by the Force Liaison Officer.

Naturally, each recommendation can be subject to future scrutiny and may be considered as evidence for future inspection activity. However, many recommendations and AFI's sit at the new Tier 3, which require scrutiny and closure by HMICFRS themselves. These include, for example, PEEL AFI's and recommendations from the Vetting & Misogyny inspection report.

The force has made significant progress in the closure of thematic recommendations in recent months, as the tables in Appendix B show.

**T/Chief Inspector Angus Eagles**

**Service Improvement Team & HMICFRS Force Liaison Officer**

**March 2024**

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Appendix A – PEEL 202 AFI Progress as at December 2022 – regrading and quarterly progress reports currently sit with Strategic Leads - and will therefore be more up to date shortly after release of this report.

AFI#	AFI Details	Strategic Lead	Progress
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	Complete
2	The force should increase its use of body-worn video to improve interactions between officers and the public.	Supt Communities & Response	Complete
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	Significant Progress* (* Complete?)
4	The force should make sure that repeat callers, and those that are vulnerable, are routinely identified.	CSupt OCC	Significant Progress - VSA 2024
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 - VSA 2024
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 - VSA 2024
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 - VSA 2024
8	The force should make sure it carries out proportionate and thorough investigations into reported crimes.	CSupt Protective Services	Significant Progress - VSA 2024
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 - VSA 2024
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 - VSA 2024
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	Significant Progress - VSA 2024
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 - VSA 2024
AFI#	AFI Details	Strategic Lead	Progress
13	The force needs to improve its capacity and capability to deal with child sexual exploitation.	DSupt Public Protection	Complete
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.	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 Prevention	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	Complete
18	The force should continue to review and improve wellbeing support for staff in high-risk roles and staff experiencing trauma.	Director of ES	Significant Progress
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.	Director of DS&T	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&P	Significant Progress

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### Appendix B – Thematic recommendation progress

#### **HMICFRS Open Thematic Recommendations and AFI's across Tiers 2 & 3\***

\*excludes PEEL 2022 AFI's

<b>June 2023</b>	<b>September 2023</b>	<b>December 2023</b>
<b>180</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>129</b>

#### **Closures on HMICFRS Portal to date:**

<b>Tranche 1: September 2023</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Tranche 2: December 2023</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Tranche 3: March to April 2024</b>	<b>27 confirmed ready for closure to date (currently being prepared). Forecast is approx 35-40</b>