

ORIGINATOR: CHIEF CONSTABLE

PAPER NO: AP14/29

**SUBMITTED TO: ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL –
29 APRIL 2014**

SUBJECT: HMIC INSPECTION ACTIVITY

SUMMARY:

1. The summary provides an overview of key HMIC inspection activity that the Constabulary has been subject to for the financial year 2013/14.
2. The report also highlights expected future activity covering the first part of 2014/15.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. The Accountability and Performance Panel is asked to note the content of this report.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

- 1.1. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) independently assesses police forces and policing activity from neighbourhood teams to serious crime and the fight against terrorism in the public interest.
- 1.2. HMIC is independent of Government and the police service and its Inspectors of Constabulary are appointed by the Crown.
- 1.3. The Chief HM Inspector of Constabulary reports to Parliament on the efficiency and effectiveness of police forces in England, Wales, the Police Service of Northern Ireland, and other specified national policing agencies (such as the British Transport Police).
- 1.4. HM Inspectors have powers to seek information from police forces and to access their premises.
- 1.5. HMIC's annual inspection programme is subject to the approval of the Home Secretary in accordance with the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.

HMIC Activity

- 1.6. HMIC's national programme of inspection has resulted in the following inspections for Suffolk Constabulary in the financial year 2013/14.

Valuing the Police 3 (VTP 3) – July 2013

- 1.7. This is an annual programme of work that examines a police force's response to the financial challenges resulting from the Governments Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR). The inspection examines; the financial challenge facing the force, the response to the financial challenge and the impact on the public of any changes made in meeting the financial challenge.
- 1.8. The 2013/14 inspection of Suffolk Constabulary started with a document and data request which provided the inspection team with a detailed picture of the force's current position and future projections in terms of finance, workforce, collaboration arrangements and access points.
- 1.9. This was followed by a two day site visit, starting with a round table discussion between HMI Zoe Billingham, Chief Constable Douglas Paxton and PCC Tim Passmore which set out and discussed the force plans for meeting the financial challenge of the CSR. Further interviews took place ranging from strategic leads for finance and HR through to focus groups with frontline staff.
- 1.10. HMIC commissioned a survey to gauge the public's perceptions on the impact of the financial challenge to service delivery. The results were used to further inform HMIC's findings of the field work.
- 1.11. HMIC published a force specific report of their findings and concluded;

"Suffolk Constabulary understands the scale of the current financial challenges and has started to look ahead beyond 2015 to assess the likely future cuts in budgets. It has in place detailed plans designed to deliver the required savings by the end of this current spending review.

The force has made a good start and has already delivered nearly three quarters of the savings needed in the first two years of the CSR period.

The extensive and mature collaborative arrangements with Norfolk Constabulary have made a significant contribution to Suffolk's ability to deliver these savings at the same time as maintaining good performance. Crime continues to fall and satisfaction with policing in the county remains high.

The collaboration also means that the force is in a better position to meet future challenges

Throughout the spending review Suffolk has maintained a focus on crime reduction and victim satisfaction, which is commendable.

The force has well developed plans to continue to deliver a sound service to the public of Suffolk. This has put it in a good position to face further budget reductions after March 2015"

- 1.12. There were no specific recommendations made to the force. Further monitoring of progress will be continued in the next phase of the Valuing the Police Programme (VtP4).

Domestic Abuse – October 2013

- 1.13. In September 2013 the Home Secretary commissioned HMIC to review police forces' response to domestic abuse in England and Wales. This followed the findings of a review of domestic abuse in Essex police which involved a number of tragic domestic homicides.

- 1.14. The review looked at the arrangements for dealing with instances of domestic abuse reported to the police in 4 key areas; identification of domestic violence and abuse victims, effectiveness of the response to victims, the impact on victims; and the management of any future risk.

- 1.15. HMIC published a national thematic report and 43 force specific reports on 27th March 2014. The national thematic report concluded:

"That overall police response to victims of domestic abuse is not good enough. Unacceptable failings in core policing activities, investigating crime, preventing crime, bringing offenders to justice and keeping victims safe are the principal reasons for this".

- 1.16. However, within this report Suffolk Constabulary was one of 10 forces highlighted as providing a better service to victims of domestic abuse. The stronger performance in these forces is characterised by; effective strategic direction set in PCC's Police and Crime plans and strong leadership from Chief Constables; reinforcement of domestic abuse as a force priority in a tangible way; evidence that the whole force has a role in tackling domestic abuse; a focus on understanding the needs of the victim and keeping them safe; investment in training; and investment in Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVA).

- 1.17. The report made 11 recommendations for PCCs, Chief Constables, the Home Office, College of Policing and Partner Agencies to act upon. These are seen as essential to see an overall improvement in the response to victims of domestic abuse across the Country.

- 1.18. Most of the 11 recommendations will require collective action at the national level, however one recommendation requires all forces to produce their own individual action plan (by September 2014) specifying in detail the steps that will be taken to

improve its approach to domestic abuse. Chief Officers will be expected to oversee and ensure full implementation of the plan.

1.19. Suffolk's force specific report concluded:

"The public of Suffolk can generally have confidence that the Police provide a good service to victims of domestic abuse and in doing so help keep them safe.

Tackling domestic abuse is a priority for the force and staff demonstrates a high level of commitment and awareness, they exercise appropriate discretion and work well with partners."

1.20. The report did, however, outline a number of areas where the Constabulary could further strengthen its response and made 9 recommendations for the force to consider. The recommendations are intended to tackle any identified risks to victims of domestic abuse and included:-

- A review of training to ensure all staff understand coercive control, stalking, harassment and honour based violence.
- A review of the allocation of investigations in order that the most experienced and best equipped investigators are assigned the investigations with the highest risk of harm rather than simply the most serious crimes.
- Considering how multiple contacts with victims, by different officers or police staff and other agencies can be streamlined to provide a better service for the victim.
- Reviewing the investigative process for domestic abuse to ensure that officers collect all available evidence to help build strong cases against perpetrators.
- Reviewing a number of standard risk incidents to confirm that they are graded appropriately.
- Reviewing the process by which repeat standard risk cases are identified. Put in place arrangements for monitoring to ensure risk assessments accurately reflect the level of risk, and consider how to better identify early warning signs of escalation.
- Reviewing the means by which victims are updated if a perpetrator is released from custody and ensuring that risk assessments and safety plans are reviewed at this stage.
- Working with the PCC and partner agencies to increase the numbers of Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs) available to work with victims in the county.
- Publicising the role of the specialist team in order that all staff understand what they do and how they can help make victims safer. Clarifying the role of the ISVA where sexual violence has been part of a domestic abuse incident, and clarify who is responsible for dealing with the domestic abuse element of the crime.

1.21. The Suffolk Constabulary response to the inspection and report recommendations includes:

- The Protecting Vulnerable People directorate has in place an established Domestic Abuse development plan that is used to oversee the Constabulary's approach. The development plan had already highlighted some of the findings in

the report, such as additional investment in IDVAs. The plan will now incorporate all the recommendation from the national thematic and force reports as actions. To strengthen the plan further a Detective Inspector has been appointed who will have strategic oversight for domestic abuse.

- Linking in with the Constabulary's partners, the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) will be incorporating any relevant recommendations into its processes.
- 1.22. The development plan will be taken forward and form the basis of the action plan that each force Chief Constable has been asked to prepare by September 2014, as one of the recommendations in the national thematic report.

Making Best Use of Police Time (MBUPT) February 2014

- 1.23. As part of HMIC's business plan it was intended to assess and undertake discrete inspections focused on preventative policing, police attendance and freeing up police time for all forces in England & Wales. Following a review of its own activity HMIC agreed that these three related areas of business should be drawn together and delivered under one 'umbrella' programme called Making Best Use of Police Time.
- 1.24. The inspection was very wide ranging and covered almost all areas of frontline policing and involved a significant data request, extensive document review, a public survey and in force fieldwork.
- 1.25. The inspection posed 3 key questions:
- (i) How effective are police forces at preventing crimes and incidents from happening?
 - (ii) When crimes and incidents are reported, how do forces respond and how does their activity affect crime investigation and prevention, public reassurance, satisfaction and confidence?
 - (iii) What constitutes a working day for officers and staff, and how are forces freeing up time and exploiting technology to ensure their focus is on those activities that will reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and improve confidence and satisfaction?
- 1.26. The scope of the inspection required a four day visit by a team of six HMIC inspectors. The inspectors held round table discussions with the PCC and Chief Officer Team, interviewed the strategic and tactical heads of crime investigation, leads for intelligence, operations, communications, performance and focus groups with frontline Inspectors, Sergeants, Constables and PCSOs. There was also extensive reality testing which involved talking to and observing staff activity in various locations such as the contact and control room and police stations.
- 1.27. At the end of the four day field work the lead HMIC inspector provided a post inspection de-brief to the Chief Officer Team outlining their initial observations and findings. HMIC stressed that the inspection team were still considering their findings and as such that anything conveyed in the debrief could be subject to change and may/may not appear in the final report.
- 1.28. HMIC's initial findings covered a number of areas and included location, availability, and deployment of resources, crime prevention, predictive policing, staff development and officer and PCSO workloads.
- 1.29. The de-brief was reviewed and discussed at the Chief Officer Briefing (COB) on the 18th February. Business owners were identified for those findings considered as

being immediately actionable or considered a priority. Business owners were tasked to report back with a response and any necessary actions taken to address the issue identified for their business area for the next COB on the 18th March. A final progress update on actions has been requested from business owners for COB on the 6th May.

- 1.30. It is anticipated that a National thematic and force specific reports will be published between May and July 2014. Recommendations from these reports will be considered by the Chief Officer team following publication.

Other HMIC Activity

Publication of force level rape data packs

- 1.31. HMIC published rape data packs for all forces in England & Wales on the 27th January 2014. The data was not new and could already be found in the public domain. What is different however is that this is the first time rape data has been presented and published in a comprehensive, national, format.
- 1.32. The data packs are intended to prompt important questions for forces to ask themselves in terms of reviewing its performance.
- 1.33. The packs are also intended to assist the public's understanding of their local forces performance relating to rape
- 1.34. The head of the Protecting Vulnerable People directorate (PVP) reviewed the pack for Suffolk and recommended two areas for Chief Officers to consider for review; the use of the non-validated crime process for recording of rape allegations and the process for no-crimes and the interpretation of additional verifiable information.
- 1.35. Both of the recommendations have been considered and accepted and are now being developed for incorporation into practice and procedure.

Consultation on HMIC's inspection programme for 2014/15

- 1.36. In February 2014 HMIC published a consultation document on its proposed inspection programme for 2014/15. The consultation asked a series of questions covering subject areas ranging from views on proposed new thematic inspection topics that should be included or excluded from the programme to suggestions for how HMIC could minimise inspection demand in a way that reduces the impact on forces. PCC's were also invited to provide their views on the proposed programme separately.
- 1.37. The Deputy Chief Constable provided a response on behalf of the Constabulary setting out its views following engagement with a number of internal stakeholders.

Inspection activity expected for 2014/15

- 1.38. **Valuing the Police 4 (VtP 4) – April 2014**
- 1.39. This is the next phase of the VtP programme and will adopt a similar approach to previous years. The Constabulary has received notification of this inspection and fieldwork will take place between the 28th and 30th April as a joint inspection with Norfolk. A detailed data request, covering finance, HR, collaboration and access points has already been submitted to inform the inspection team ahead of the fieldwork.

- 1.40. VtP4 will seek an update on how forces are responding to the remainder of the spending review but in particular look at their preparations for 2015/16 and beyond. It is HMIC's intention to have a stronger focus on service delivery, the effectiveness of forces' responses (in particular the contribution of collaboration) and the management and approach to future risk. The Deputy Chief Constables of Norfolk and Suffolk are leading the inspection preparations.

Crime Data Integrity – May 2014

- 1.41. This inspection is designed to test how well the Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR) are applied, explore the culture and behaviours around crime recording and the service the police provide to victims.

- 1.42. The inspection will ask three key questions:

- (i) Has the force made arrangements at a senior level to ensure there is confidence in recorded crime figures and all aspects of the HOCR?
- (ii) Are systems and processes in place to ensure that; crime is correctly recorded in accordance with HOCR and NCRS; standards of out of court outcomes are maintained; and no-crime decisions are correct?
- (iii) Does the force have staff whose conduct and skills ensure accurate crime recording?

- 1.43. Fieldwork will take place in two stages:

Stage 1: up to a five day visit (dependent on force size), that will audit a sample of incident and crime records taken from the 12 months November 12 – October 13. This stage is scheduled for week commencing the 12th May 2014.

Stage 2: a three day visit consisting of interviews with strategic and operational leads, focus groups with frontline staff and unannounced reality testing visit. This stage is scheduled for week commencing 19th May 2014

- 1.44. Forces will receive individual reports on a rolling basis and a national thematic report will be published at the end of the programme in late autumn 2014.

Child Protection

- 1.45. This is a single inspectorate (HMIC) programme and will examine child protection arrangements in each force in England & Wales. Inspections will take place between April 2014 and March 2015.

- 1.46. Forces will be inspected on a quarterly rolling programme beginning from the 1st April. Forces selected for inspection in the first cohort were notified in March and Suffolk is not one of these forces. Selection of the forces in each cohort was based on risk. The risk is based on available data and previous inspection findings and risk based on partner agencies, such as children's services within the forces' policing area.

- 1.47. Inspections will examine forces under two broad headings "leadership, management and governance" and "the experiences, progress and outcomes for children who need help and protection".

- 1.48. Ahead of the formal notification of inspection work is already underway to assess the Constabulary's position by the Head of Protecting Vulnerable People directorate.

Integrity and Leadership (Integrity 3)

- 1.49. HMIC intend to examine force plans to embed the new Code of Ethics developed by the College of Policing as well as follow up on the December 2011 Without Fear or Favour report and the 2012 revisit to forces. It will also examine what forces have done to implement a 'culture of challenge' which enables the organisation to counter corruption.
- 1.50. This inspection will be looking at a number of areas including business interests, procurement arrangements and media relations and will seek to answer the question: "Does the force's workforce act with integrity?"
- 1.51. All 43 forces in England & Wales will be inspected, starting in Cleveland during May 2014 and the intention is to inspect the remainder of forces between June and July 2014.
- 1.52. HMCIC Tom Winsor will have direct oversight of this programme and will present a national thematic report to the Home Secretary in September 2014, followed by individual force reports in October.
- 1.53. The joint Integrity Working Group chaired by Deputy Chief Constable Paul Marshall is overseeing preparations for the inspection.

Annual Inspection Programme

- 1.54. The Home Secretary has asked HMIC to develop an approach to inspection that would allow the public to see, from a small number of easy-to-understand categories, whether their local force is performing well or badly when it comes to cutting crime and providing value for money.
- 1.55. In response to the Home Secretary, and after securing additional funding from the Home Office, HMIC are in the process of developing an annual programme of force inspections.
- 1.56. The objectives of the programme will be: to inspect in a way that leads to genuine improvement; identify problems at an early stage; and reduce the risk of failure and improve effective democratic accountability.
- 1.57. The programme will test how well forces are performing in three areas: cutting crime, providing a service that is fair and provides value for money.
- 1.58. Thematic inspections will continue to examine in depth specific areas of policing but these are likely to be significantly fewer in number and informed by the regular inspection programme.
- 1.59. The programme is still being developed but it is anticipated that it will be rolled out by 2015.
- 1.60. Inspection activity for the Constabulary in 2013/14 has highlighted a number of recommendations for consideration and action. Overall HMIC's view of the Constabulary has been largely positive.
- 1.61. This is the known current and future HMIC activity at the time of writing. Any new or additional inspection work will continue to be overseen on behalf of Chief Officers by the force HMIC liaison officer in conjunction with relevant business owners.

2. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

2.1. None

3. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

3.1. Although inspection activity throughout 2013/14 has generally been positive, there is a reputational risk should future inspections highlight any significant issues or failings.

3.2. No changes are needed to the PCC Risk Register.

ORIGINATOR CHECKLIST (MUST BE COMPLETED)	PLEASE STATE 'YES' OR 'NO'
Has legal advice been sought on this submission?	No
Has the PCC's Chief Finance Officer been consulted?	No
Have equality, diversity and human rights implications been considered including equality analysis, as appropriate?	Yes
Have human resource implications been considered?	No
Is the recommendation consistent with the objectives in the Police and Crime Plan?	Yes
Has consultation been undertaken with people or agencies likely to be affected by the recommendation?	Yes
Has communications advice been sought on areas of likely media interest and how they might be managed?	No
In relation to the above, have all relevant issues been highlighted in the 'other implications and risks' section of the submission?	Yes