



Inspecting policing
in the public interest

Crime inspection 2014

Leicestershire Police

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How effective is the force at cutting crime?

Overall summary

Leicestershire Police has seen bigger reductions in crime over the last four years than across England and Wales. The police work well with partners to prevent crime and reduce reoffending.

Neighbourhood policing remains a clear focus in the force's approach to cutting crime and tackling anti-social behaviour. Neighbourhood teams understand their local community concerns and priorities and use a range of tactics to fight crime and prevent it.

HMIC found that there is a strong focus on the victim and the force has made good progress in taking steps to ensure that the most vulnerable are protected. Victim satisfaction with policing services is broadly in line with the overall figure for England and Wales.

Anti-social behaviour is a force priority and there is good work taking place in the neighbourhood teams and with partners to tackle it, although more could be done to learn from what works.

This year, HMIC undertook an inspection into the crime data integrity of all 43 police forces, to determine the extent to which police-recorded crime information can be trusted at a national level. HMIC has concerns about Leicestershire Police's approach to crime recording, which is not as accurate as it should be. Individual force reports are available at <http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/>

How effective is the force at reducing crime and preventing offending?

Good

The force has a victim-centred approach and a strong focus on ensuring that the most vulnerable victims receive a comprehensive service from all agencies. HMIC found good evidence of frontline staff working with partners to find ways to divert offenders and prevent crime.

Crime in Leicestershire has reduced by 22 percent over the last four years, compared with a reduction of 16 percent across England and Wales, although the force has experienced a rise this year. The force works well with partners across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland in using a range of tactics to prevent crime and reduce reoffending.

HMIC found that the force's ability to measure the impact of its activities and to learn from what has worked is limited. The force has recognised this and is starting to develop better ways to identify what works.

How effective is the force at investigating offending?

Good

Leicestershire Police has a strong focus on providing a good service to victims, particularly on identifying the most vulnerable and ensuring the risks to them are properly understood and addressed by both police and partners.

HMIC found some good work to improve the quality of investigations. The force has plans to revise how crime is allocated to investigators. It especially needs to eliminate the practice of police and community support officers carrying out investigative functions for which they are not trained.

The force works well with other partners to tackle the most prolific and harmful offenders.

How effective is the force at tackling anti-social behaviour?

Good

Leicestershire Police shows a robust commitment to neighbourhood policing and the teams have a good understanding of local concerns and priorities. Neighbourhood officers work well with local people in tackling anti-social behaviour and are committed to ensuring the most vulnerable in their communities are protected.

The force has mature and productive relationships with partner organisations in understanding anti-social behaviour concerns and finding solutions.

HMIC found that the force needs to do more to understand what works in tackling anti-social behaviour locally and share this widely so that all can learn from good practice.

Introduction

This inspection looks at how effective police forces are at cutting crime. The public expects the police to reduce, prevent and investigate crime, bring suspects to justice and, in conjunction with other services and agencies, care for victims. To assess each force's effectiveness, we looked at three specific areas:

- How effective is the force at reducing crime and preventing offending?
- How effective is the force at investigating offending?
- How effective is the force at tackling anti-social behaviour?

Methodology

During our inspection we analysed data and documents from forces, and conducted in-force inspections. We interviewed the senior officers responsible for crime, neighbourhood policing and victim care in each force. We held focus groups with frontline police officers, investigators and police staff, and observed their activities first hand. We also reviewed 20 crime investigations in each force and interviewed heads of partner organisations such as local authorities. We focused on anti-social behaviour and the offences of: burglary dwelling; serious sexual offences; and violence with injury on this inspection. We chose to focus on these offences because they cover the areas of acquisitive and violent crime and the protection of vulnerable people. This has allowed us to make an assessment of how well the force treated the victim throughout the investigation – examining in particular how well officers gathered evidence and how well they were supervised.

Victims are at the heart of this inspection. Victims are entitled to a service from the police; this includes regular information about their case, an opportunity to provide an impact statement where relevant and to be consulted on potential criminal justice outcomes. When the police provide this service to victims, it increases victim satisfaction and builds trust and confidence in the police.

As part of this inspection, we considered how well forces deal with domestic abuse, alongside other offence types. HMIC published a report in March 2014 on how well forces tackled domestic abuse and provided support to victims. As a result of that inspection all forces were asked to provide an action plan setting out how they were improving services to victims of domestic abuse and we have reviewed the action plans developed by forces. The action plans have not informed the judgments made in these reports.

The crime inspection provides HMIC with the first opportunity to test whether the force's approach to improving how it tackles domestic abuse is beginning to have an effect and this forms part of our overall assessment of the force.

How effective is the force at reducing crime and preventing offending?

HMIC looked at the how the leadership of the force deploys its resources to reduce the volume of crimes being committed, maximise the quality of victim contact, and ensure that the force focuses on community priorities while mitigating national threats.

We looked at how the force prevents crime, how it uses police tactics such as stop and search powers to prevent and detect crime and reduce offending. We also looked at how the police work with other agencies such as social services to reduce crime.

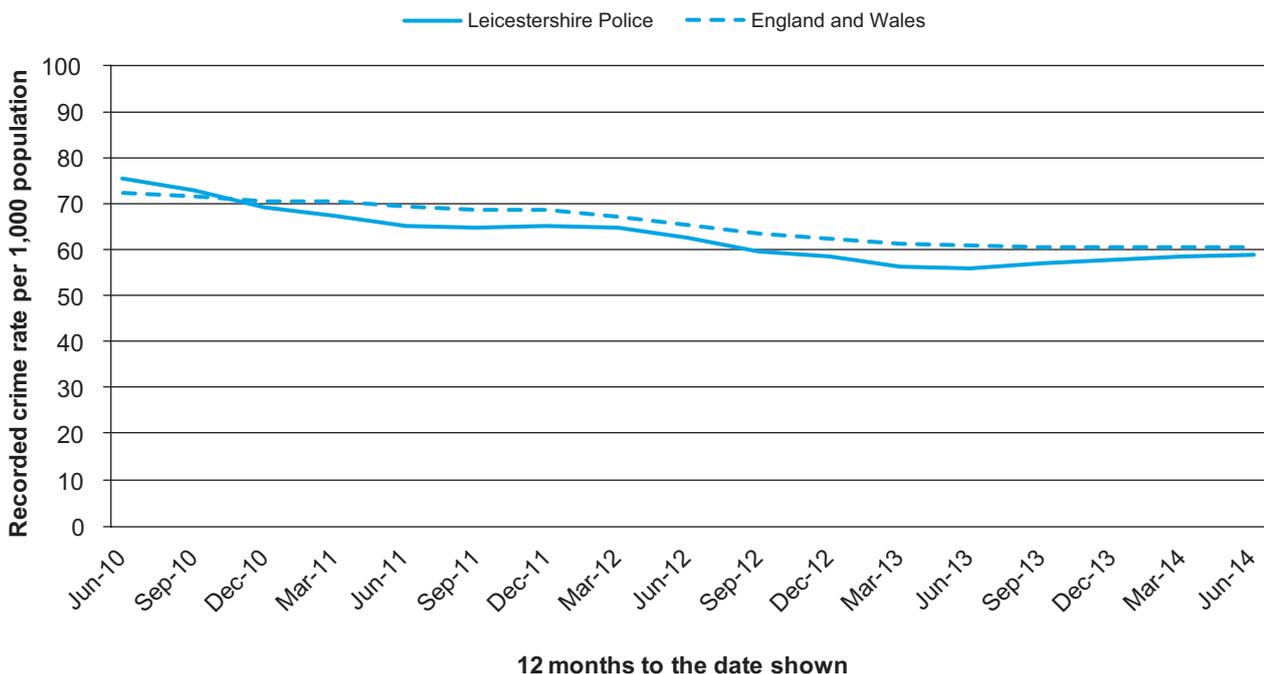
Crime

In 2010 the Home Secretary set a clear priority for the police service to cut crime. When compared with the 12 months to June 2010, recorded crime (excluding fraud) in the 12 months to June 2014 reduced by 22 percent in Leicestershire compared with a reduction of 16 percent across all forces in England and Wales.

Over this period, victim-based crime (i.e., crimes where there is a direct victim such as an individual, a group, or an organisation) decreased by 19 percent in Leicestershire, compared with a reduction of 16 percent across England and Wales.

During the 12 months prior to the end of June 2014, recorded crime (excluding fraud) in Leicestershire increased by 5 percent, compared with a 1 percent reduction across England and Wales.

Figure: Recorded crime rate (per 1,000 population) between June 2010 and June 2014.



By looking at how many recorded crimes and incidents of anti-social behaviour occur per 1,000 population, we get an indication of how safe it is for the public in that police area. The table below shows crime and anti-social behaviour rates in Leicestershire (per 1,000 population) compared with the rest of England and Wales.

12 months to June 2014	Leicestershire Police rate (per 1,000 population)	England and Wales total rate (per 1,000 population)
Crime excluding fraud	59.0	60.7
Victim-based crime	53.6	53.9
Sexual offences	1.1	1.2
Violence with injury	4.8	5.9
Burglary in a dwelling*	10.7	8.9
Anti-social behaviour incidents*	23.8	36.8

*Note that anti-social behaviour data is for the 12 months to March 2014 and the rate for burglary in a dwelling is the rate per 1,000 households, not population.

We have chosen these types of crime to give an indication of offending levels in the force area. We are not judging the effectiveness of the force on recorded crime rates only. For information on the frequency of other kinds of crimes in your area, go to www.justiceinspectrates.gov.uk/hmic/crime-and-policing-comparator

Leicestershire's detection rate (for crimes excluding fraud) for the 12 months to the end of March 2014 was 25 percent which was broadly in line with the 26 percent for England and Wales.

The new crime outcomes framework was introduced in April 2014. It replaces a previous framework for recording how the police finalise investigations through what was known as 'sanction detections' (e.g. charges and/or summons). The new crime outcomes framework is designed to support police officers to use their professional judgment to ensure a just and timely outcome which reflects the harm to the victim, the seriousness of the offending behaviour, the impact on the community, and which deters future offending. Data on the full range of outcomes achieved as a result of investigations (not just detections but also, for example, community resolutions such as mediation known as restorative justice) will be available from July 2015 and used in future HMIC inspections.

Meeting the needs of the community

Leicestershire Police has a well-developed way of ensuring police operational activity reflects the priorities set by the police and crime commissioner and uses the annual strategic assessment of threat, harm and risk to identify police priorities. Each priority area has a named senior lead who then develops a plan involving partner agencies, local authority representatives and the voluntary sector to bring together actions focused on prevention, investigation, enforcement and satisfaction.

The force can demonstrate that resources are aligned to tackling priorities, and it is able to match resources to community threats and risks. It also understands future risks which include cyber-crime and how it will support emerging demand, for example tackling female genital mutilation.

The force has matched frontline resources to demand with a particular focus on profiling neighbourhood policing. The review of demand was based on the following factors - vulnerability, socio-economics, and crime and incident levels. There are plans to move to a new policing model in early 2015, reducing the number of local policing units from 15 to eight while retaining the existing 65 neighbourhood policing areas. The plan is that each neighbourhood area will have a different mix of police officers and PCSOs on each team based on an assessment of demand, threat and risk.

However, during inspection we found a number of neighbourhood teams with high crime and investigative workloads allocated to them, which takes them away from their core role. This has been identified by the force and the move to the new policing model should mean that crime investigation is undertaken by a new force investigation unit (FIU), rather than local neighbourhood teams. The FIU will carry out investigative tasks, meaning that neighbourhood teams are able to concentrate on their core role.

The force is moving away from a rigid performance framework to an approach based on continuous improvement, which focuses on identifying significant trends and managing associated risks. This is a developing approach where crime trends are assessed through a statistical process rather than immediate allocation of resources to any particular crime giving concern. The force believes this is a long-term approach, designed to tackle issues that really matter to communities. For example, Operation Tiger identifies 13 'Tiger Territories' within which there are 32 acute areas where officers are expected to patrol intensively, often in only a few streets, for short periods to engage the community, gather intelligence and be vigilant in order to prevent and reduce crime. The force has also invested in dedicated place managers in these areas to work with partners and the community to solve problems. However, the force's ability to measure the impact of its activities on crime and offending and then to learn from what has worked (or not worked)

is still a developing area. The force understands its broad long-term trends and the scale of the problem. A more sophisticated approach of examining the effect of a broad range of tactics on identified crime problems would be beneficial.

The force is making better use of predictive policing tools and IT software to enable better targeting of its resources. The imminent planned restructure of the local policing units and a change in how crimes are allocated provides opportunities to re-focus responses and neighbourhood policing teams on what matters most.

Quality of victim contact

There is strong and visible leadership from the top of the organisation for improving public confidence and satisfaction. There is also a focus on improving the service to victims and in understanding the reasons why victims may feel let down by the service provided. The force has invested in a range of methods for helping officers to provide a better service to victims, including training, victim surveys and improving the way call-handlers assess risk.

Leicestershire Police carries out roadshows, consultation exercises, and regular surveys of the public and victims. It uses many different methods to contact the public including Twitter, Facebook, web forums, email and text messages; for example, between August 2013 and July 2014 it held 1,458 public open sessions.

The force carries out a number of different surveys. In addition to the victim surveys that all forces undertake, Leicestershire Police also surveys victims of anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse and serious sexual offences. It is noteworthy that the force is one of the few forces nationally which asks victims of domestic abuse about the service provided and these results are reviewed to identify trends and to understand what works so that it can improve the service it provides. Officers receive feedback from the surveys carried out and report that they find this information valuable.

The force has clear policies and procedures to enable its call handlers to consistently identify vulnerable and repeat victims of crime and anti-social behaviour. The focus is on how best to respond to calls for service. This is a change from traditional forms of prioritisation to an assessment of the threat, harm, vulnerability and risk of the individual caller using the national decision making model¹. Call-handlers have been trained in this approach and there is a graded response policy for the deployment of officers to calls from the public which takes vulnerability and repeat victimisation into account.

¹ A nationally agreed model to assist to analyse risk, threat and tactical options to support decision making.

The force and its partners are keen to use new and innovative procedures in support of public safety. For example, the joint deployment of police officers and mental health nurses in a mental health triage scheme leads to better assessments and provision of healthcare to vulnerable people.

An important measure of the impact of changes to service delivery for the public is how satisfied victims are with the overall service they receive when they seek police assistance. In the 12 months to the end of June 2014, Leicestershire Police had a victim satisfaction rate of 85.2 percent (\pm 1.9 percent) which is broadly in line with the satisfaction rate in England and Wales of 85.0 percent (\pm 0.2 percent). Its current rate is broadly in line with the 85.4 percent (\pm 1.8 percent) recorded for Leicestershire in the previous year.

Use of police tactics

A broad range of tactics to prevent crime and reduce reoffending is used by the force, including specialist departments. HMIC found evidence that the force is using the full range of its powers and tactics to disrupt crime and divert offenders; for example, the new police power to issue domestic violence protection notices (DVPNs) has been widely used in Leicestershire to prevent domestic abuse offenders from having contact with their victims for a period of time. The value to the victims of this tactic is widely understood by officers and over 15 DVPNs have been issued so far. The force is also to be part of a national pilot, with three other forces from November 2014, which will evaluate the benefits of offenders being offered alternatives to other offences being heard in criminal courts. These will involve community resolutions and a wider use of police cautions.

The force also demonstrates a strong commitment to divert young people away from crime. HMIC is encouraged by the activity with multi-agency teams to prevent crime and reduce offending, for example engagement with city and county-based football, rugby and basketball teams. There is also work within the force to work with those who are marginalised in society or susceptible to becoming a victim of crime. Outreach work has encouraged many of these people to join the police cadets.

Dealing with organised crime groups is important for the force and there is a meeting structure to identify and closely monitor gang activity and use intelligence to pursue a robust approach to disrupting their criminal activities. This involves detectives and field intelligence officers and, where appropriate, neighbourhood teams.

The force has established good links with local communities and there is a positive flow of intelligence to and from the PREVENT² teams who are based in neighbourhoods with daily conversations about threat and risk.

2 Specialist police officers who work in communities to identify signs of radicalisation.

Partnership working and information sharing

There is good and constructive partnership working to prevent crime and offending both at a strategic level and at a tactical level. Neighbourhood policing remains at the heart of Leicestershire's approach to policing and the neighbourhood teams work across a range of multi-agency teams and partners to find ways to divert offenders and prevent crime. There is an integrated offender management team co-located in the city which facilitates the sharing of information between agencies to build a more informed view of an offender's risk. This is a well-established way of working with the full range of local partners to identify and manage prolific and dangerous criminals.

There are also good systems in place to share information across partners with active schemes, for example, City Watch, Neighbourhood Watch, Pubwatch and Crimestoppers. Analysts look at problem locations and give information to partners who may be better placed to tackle these problems.

The force uses two electronic databases which are updated with information that helps officers and staff prevent crime in neighbourhoods. One system (Sentinel) is used to manage cases of anti-social behaviour jointly with partner agencies such as local authorities. Plans used to problem solve are developed and shared with partners. Actions and tasks are monitored at regular joint action group (JAG) meetings. Not all partners are signed up to the system but where they are, officers reported that it is an effective means of sharing information with external organisations. During reality testing, HMIC found good examples of neighbourhood preventive activity taking place; however, these would have benefited from more structured evaluation and, where appropriate, the sharing of best practice.

Domestic abuse

In March 2014 HMIC published the results of its inspection of 43 forces on the effectiveness of the police approach to domestic violence, with a focus on outcomes for victims and whether risks to victims are adequately managed. This included clear recommendations for each force about improvements it should make. As a result of this inspection all forces were required to produce and publish an action plan setting out the steps they were taking to improve the services to victims of domestic abuse. This plan should demonstrate that HMIC recommendations are being addressed and also explain how:

- the leadership will ensure the changes necessary and hold the right people to account;
- the police respond when a victim first contacts them (by a 999 call or by visiting a police station) and when they first attend the scene of the incident is improved;
- the force will ensure there is a high quality investigation of all domestic abuse crime;

- victims will be properly supported and offenders properly managed; and
- the training and learning provided to officers ensures they can give the best available response to the victim.

HMIC has made an initial consideration of the action plan submitted by Leicestershire Police. We found the force has produced a comprehensive action plan following the national template. The report outlines activity that is in line with the agreed national priorities outlined above. There is direct reference to the majority of HMIC force recommendations in the plan.

The crime inspection provided us with our first opportunity to test whether changes in the force's approach to domestic abuse were beginning to have a positive effect.

HMIC found evidence from the crime file review that the force has a strong victim focus in cases of domestic abuse. Investigations were of a high quality with good levels of supervision and clear safeguarding of victims. Officers regularly seek advice from specialist colleagues in the domestic violence investigation unit. The multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC) process is working well and partners see the identification of vulnerability and the referral process as strengths. Repeat victims of domestic abuse assessed as medium or standard risk can also be referred to the JAGs and/or MARAC which helps to improve outcomes for victims. Co-location has also improved information sharing and provides a better service for victims. In the 12 months prior to 31 July 2014 Leicestershire Police presented 570 cases to a MARAC.

Recommendations

- Within six months Leicestershire Police should ensure that there are methods in place to:
 - (a) systematically review and evaluate the benefits from both current tactics and new crime fighting and anti-social behaviour initiatives;
 - (b) systematically capture learning and good practice in crime prevention and local problem solving; and
 - (c) share learning and good practice across the force and with partners.

Summary



Good

- The force has a victim-centred approach and a strong focus on ensuring that the most vulnerable victims receive a comprehensive service from all agencies. HMIC found good evidence of frontline staff working with partners to find ways to divert offenders and prevent crime.
- Crime in Leicestershire has reduced by 22 percent over the last four years, compared with a reduction of 16 percent across England and Wales, although the force has experienced a rise this year. The force works well with partners across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland in using a range of tactics to prevent crime and reduce reoffending.
- HMIC found that the force's ability to measure the impact of its activities and to learn from what has worked is limited. The force has recognised this and is starting to develop better ways to identify what works.

How effective is the force at investigating offending?

HMIC looked at the range of police tactics and powers used by the force to investigate offending, including how investigations are conducted, whether persistent offenders are diverted from crime and how people vulnerable to repeat crime are supported. We looked at how the force learns from experience in order to improve professionalism in operational practice and leadership.

Vulnerability, risk and victims

Officers and staff have a good victim focus and this is also demonstrated through clear leadership. The new model to assess and respond to threat, harm and risk ensures a strong focus on the victim and the need to protect those most at risk. The force has taken steps to ensure that those vulnerable members of the community, whose circumstances make them the most susceptible to becoming victims of crime, are identified and that special steps are taken to ensure that they get the level of service they need. HMIC recognises that processes are still developing and will take time to embed with incidents of anti-social behaviour becoming part of the crime triage process in January 2015.

Officers from detective roles spoke positively about meeting the requirements within the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime and HMIC found officers had an excellent knowledge of it. The use of special measures, for example the entitlement of vulnerable victims to give evidence by video link, is always considered for more serious crimes. The provision of victim personal statements, which describe such matters as any trauma suffered as a consequence of being a victim of crime, is now a matter of routine. During focus groups and reality testing of neighbourhood and response officers and staff, knowledge of the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime was also generally well understood, although it was disappointing that there has been a slow take-up on training. The force is also about to roll out new anti-social behaviour training as a consequence of recent legislative changes.

Investigation

Leicestershire Police is effective at investigating crime. It has strong systems in place to provide victims with appropriate support and information throughout the process. On the inspection, HMIC was impressed at the investment the force have made in training staff to improve standards in investigations.

There is a strong focus on improving the quality of investigations within the force. There are regular meetings with the Crown Prosecution Service and learning is taken from this and other audits, including domestic homicide and serious case reviews, to improve investigation and file quality. The force has produced a guidance document for minimum

standards of investigation and there is a guidance section on the force intranet in relation to improving file quality. Officers also spoke about file quality 'gatekeepers' who are a great source of support and guidance for officers.

There has been recent improvement in training for officers. In addition to the 'get it right first time' training, there is now an input for supervisors called a 'day in the life'. Both give an opportunity to link decisions taken in the early stages of an incident to the quality of an investigation and final outcome. Officers are required to produce an investigation strategy for each crime or incident they attend. This strategy is reviewed by their supervisor and aims to ensure that all opportunities to gather evidence are taken and that the investigation is brought to a successful conclusion. This approach and the way officers update victims are monitored by supervisors who provide clear expectations for officers to follow. The case files we reviewed were all of a good standard. In addition, during reality testing we looked at other case files. Each was also of a good standard with an investigation strategy and supervisory oversight, with domestic abuse cases receiving greater focus and attention.

The force carries out regular audits of compliance with the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime; a force survey of 80 victims who reported crimes in July 2014 revealed that they were all notified of the result of the investigation. However, keeping people informed throughout the investigation is still a challenge. Eighty percent of those records checked showed that a victim had been updated within the 28-day time limit.

The force uses a skills matrix to understand the expertise of staff and how to help them develop their skills and capability. The force has adopted national standards of investigative training with all detectives trained to Professionalising Investigative Practice (PIP) Level 2 standard. It is reported that 30 officers from specialist posts within the domestic abuse investigation unit, child abuse investigation unit, SIGNAL (the force rape investigation team) and the force serious crime team have undergone a three-day forced marriage/female genital mutilation awareness training course.

New officers in their probationary period have a Criminal Investigation Department (CID) attachment and some specialist neighbourhood officers also have a CID attachment in order to share good practice and learning. However, HMIC found PCSOs investigating and finalising crime, sometimes of a complex nature, and they had limited investigatory training. It was reported that they sometimes felt ill-equipped to deal with some issues they were being asked to attend. The local policing unit restructure is designed to stop this situation from occurring but at the time of inspection this had not yet commenced.

For a number of years, Leicestershire Police has also delivered a regular and effective programme of training for staff; this focuses on identifying victims who may be particularly

vulnerable and in understanding their responsibilities to protect them. This classroom-based training enables officers and staff to better understand how to support victims and put in place safeguarding measures as part of the investigation.

Tackling repeat and prolific offenders

The force is refreshing its partnership arrangements that it has in place for managing the most prolific offenders who pose a risk to the public. The force recognises that preventing reoffending requires a joined-up approach from all partners locally. This integrated offender management approach (IOM³) is led by a reducing reoffending management board. The force recognises it needs to improve how neighbourhood teams are tasked with the primary responsibility for disruption of those offenders who continue to re-offend. There are plans to increase the number of IOM staff so they are able to work more closely with neighbourhood teams.

In some areas neighbourhood teams are co-located with probation staff and the council. This means there is an opportunity for better problem solving and access to diversionary schemes; for example, there is integrated work with Youth Offending Boards, Safer Leicestershire Families, the Prison Service and Prince's Trust. There has been no evaluation of the effectiveness of these diversionary schemes but as of 31 July 2014, the force had 375 offenders under the IOM programme. Of these, according to the force's definition, Leicestershire Police had 247 prolific offenders as of 31 July 2014.

Learning from experience

HMIC found a mixed picture in terms of the force's approach to learning. There is some excellent work going on through various review groups and good progress has been made to improve how the force tackles domestic abuse. While there are some pockets of sharing good practice there is not a formal, systematic process and as a result good practice and potential solutions may be overlooked. The force is conducting a number of evidence-based policing operations, for example, Operation Tiger, Operation Endeavour and Operation Umbel. However, an evaluation of the tactics used to understand which have been most effective in preventing and reducing crime is problematic and the force is aware that it needs to do more to understand what works, share learning and good practice. The evidence-based approach also needs to be explained to officers and staff as during focus groups and reality testing it became clear that they did not always know why they were doing a particular task and how it linked to overall activity.

3 There is no standard national definition of who should be considered for Integrated Offender Management arrangements. Leicestershire Police decides who needs to be managed under these arrangements using its own scoring system.

Recommendations

- Within three months, Leicestershire Police should review the role that police community support officers perform in relation to the investigation of crime and by March 2015 should have provided guidance for their continued use and, if required, commenced appropriate training.
- Within three months, Leicestershire Police should review the operation and resourcing of the integrated offender management scheme and by March 2015 should have communicated the role and tasks that staff, especially within neighbourhood teams, are expected to perform in relation to the tackling of repeat and prolific offenders.

Summary



Good

- Leicestershire Police has a strong focus on providing a good service to victims, particularly on identifying the most vulnerable and ensuring the risks to them are properly understood and addressed by both police and partners.
- HMIC found some good work to improve the quality of investigations. The force has plans to revise how crime is allocated to investigators. It especially needs to eliminate the practice of police and community support officers carrying out investigative functions for which they are not trained.
- The force works well with other partners to tackle the most prolific and harmful offenders.

How effective is the force at tackling anti-social behaviour?

HMIC looked at how the force prevents and tackles anti-social behaviour, in particular the way victims are treated. We looked at the quality and consistency of victim contact across the force and whether victims of anti-social behaviour were dealt with in a comparable way to victims of other crimes.

Community contact and victim care

Leicestershire Police remains committed to the value of neighbourhood policing and is protecting the neighbourhood teams as far as possible from cuts. The teams each have a good understanding of their local community concerns and priorities. They engage well with local people through monthly consultation events which include local forums, panel meetings and surgeries. The results of the force's anti-social behaviour survey are also used to inform actions and the way that priorities are followed up. This has improved over the last year with neighbourhood teams using different methods to update their communities on action taken to resolve anti-social behaviour. The JAG meetings also have an open session where members of the community can attend, ask questions and listen to how the police and partners are tackling problems in their area.

HMIC found that the force leadership focus on anti-social behaviour and protecting the most vulnerable is well understood by all officers. The force has just started deploying dedicated patrol officers⁴ who focus on anti-social behaviour hotspot areas and solely respond to these calls. There are also dedicated place managers in areas where there are a high number of reports and longer term problem solving is required. These managers work with partners and communities to address issues of concern, for example, Operation Endeavour in the Hinckley area provides a very close working relationship with partners and the community and where officers are co-located with local authority staff. In addition, the force has recently identified beacon officers who are expected to monitor anti-social behaviour incidents to recognise emerging trends. They also attend JAG meetings where high-risk cases are discussed for multi-agency intervention. This helps ensure that those who are at particular risk of becoming a victim or a repeat victim of anti-social behaviour are identified and importantly receive an appropriate level of service from the police and partners. The force also has a repeat caller database which can quickly identify those callers who call repeatedly regarding anti-social behaviour. This information is used with incident and crime data to make sure the force is spotting opportunities to prevent the escalation of anti-social behaviour.

There is recognition that the force is engaging well with established communities and it is also making progress to identify and work with hard to reach communities. HMIC was provided with examples including work undertaken with the Somalian community and building links with Romanian and Slovak communities. There are also strong links with the

4 Operation Nighthawk

Muslim community and these have been invaluable due to increased awareness about forced marriage and a recent increase in reporting these concerns.

Partnership working

Anti-social behaviour is seen at all levels as a priority and there is a wide range of tactics used to tackle it. HMIC found that community safety partnerships are strong with clear governance structures to escalate issues. Officers and local authority staff are working in both police and local authority premises and this means that information is shared and local problem solving can be jointly undertaken with partners. We also found good partner engagement in dealing with troubled families.

A case management database called Sentinel is an effective way of sharing information between the police and partner agencies as there is shared access and it is used to task actions, and record, monitor and manage problems. It includes a risk assessment matrix and how this is completed and risk evaluated was part of joint training with partners to improve consistency. Joint action groups meet monthly to discuss and deal with high risk and repeat cases and there is individual officer ownership of each case and supervisory oversight. There is a tiered response to escalating anti-social behaviour problems, for example from civil remedies and mediation, and where necessary, to warning notices, anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs) and designated street drinking orders. In the 12 months to the end of July 2014, Leicestershire Police received reports from 15,834 victims of anti-social behaviour and 82 anti-social behaviour dispersal orders were issued; 1,698 anti-social behaviour warning notices and 21 ASBOs were issued.

Improving services to the public

In the 12 months prior to the end of March 2014, Leicestershire Police recorded 24,544 incidents of anti-social behaviour. This remains in line with the previous 12 months. From the first call there is a focus on providing victims with information and appropriate signposting and referral. There is a good level of risk assessment and awareness on vulnerability and from January all anti-social behaviour victims will be dealt with in a comparable way to victims of other crimes via the triage desk within the incident management unit.

There are a wide range of tactics used by the force, many in conjunction with partners, to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour. We found some good examples of activities to divert young people away from anti-social behaviour such as sports activities and the force uses a range of sanctions for example, letters to parents and formal warnings. There was a good understanding among neighbourhood officers of the scale of local concerns and the importance of their role in tackling anti-social behaviour. The force is in the process of rolling

out face-to-face training, which includes training with partners, for all neighbourhood staff in the new police anti-social behaviour powers. Response officers will get distance learning through webinars⁵ to give them the required information and knowledge.

We found some evidence of measurement and evaluation of the effectiveness of the various tactics and activities in preventing and tackling anti-social behaviour. However these tended to evaluate the success of a number of tactics rather than identifying which specific tactic had worked. Sentinel captures plans used in problem solving for each case. This means that, while there is a central database to record activities being carried out in neighbourhood teams through these plans, staff do not use this to identify which activities have worked. Consequently, the force may be missing opportunities to share learning and good practice.

Summary



Good

- Leicestershire Police shows a robust commitment to neighbourhood policing and the teams have a good understanding of local concerns and priorities. Neighbourhood officers work well with local people in tackling anti-social behaviour and are committed to ensuring the most vulnerable in their communities are protected.
- The force has mature and productive relationships with partner organisations in understanding anti-social behaviour concerns and finding solutions.
- HMIC found that the force needs to do more to understand what works in tackling anti-social behaviour locally and share this widely so that all can learn from good practice.

⁵ Similar to a seminar but conducted over the force's video-conferencing system

What each judgment means

HMIC uses four categories for making judgments, two are positive and two are negative. The categories are:

- outstanding;
- good;
- requires improvement; and
- inadequate.

Judgment is made against how well the force cuts crime. In applying the categories HMIC considers whether:

- the way the force is cutting crime and reducing offending is good, or exceeds this standard sufficiently to be judged as outstanding;
- the force requires improvement in the way it cuts crime, and/or there are some weaknesses; or
- the force's effectiveness at cutting crime is inadequate because it is significantly lower than is expected.