

**Stephen Otter QPM**  
HM Inspector of Constabulary

Mr Adrian Leppard QPM  
Commissioner  
City of London Police  
37 Wood Street  
London, EC2P 2NQ

By email.

3 September 2014

Dear Adrian,

### **Core business: An inspection of crime prevention, police attendance and use of police time**

Between January and April 2014, HMIC carried out inspection fieldwork across all 43 forces in England and Wales. This inspection, called 'Making best use of police time' (now known as 'Core business: An inspection of crime prevention, police attendance and use of police time') assessed three areas of police work. These were:

- how well forces are preventing crime and anti-social behaviour;
- how forces respond to reports of crime, including investigating crime and bringing offenders to justice; and
- how well forces are freeing up the time of their staff so they can focus on core policing functions.

Attached is an embargoed copy of the national thematic report for this inspection which will now be published by HMIC on Thursday 4 September 2014 at 00:01. This must not be published until this date and time.

The findings that specifically relate to your force are included in this letter. The initial findings were previously sent to you for factual accuracy checks and, where appropriate, have been amended following your response.

The majority of the inspection findings contained in the national thematic report do not identify individual forces. However electronic versions of the national report will link to the HMIC website where data on each force can be viewed.

We will revisit some of the evidence gathered during the 'Core business' inspection as part of the crime inspection for HMIC's Police Efficiency, Effectiveness and Legitimacy (PEEL) interim assessment.

All forces will be given the opportunity to provide an update. This updated evidence will be considered as part of the PEEL interim crime inspection, which is due to be published at the end of November.

## Preventing Crime

- **The force is one of the few forces in England and Wales that has an overarching crime prevention strategy. This has recently been produced and the force is in the process of implementation.**

The inspection team found that there was a clear commitment by Chief Officers and the Police Committee to prioritise crime prevention. This was reflected in the Policing Plan for 2014 – 2017 in which activities were split into three key areas Engagement, Prevention and Service. This means that preventative measures are considered for each element of the force's priorities and subsequent actions clearly captured and documented.

- **HMIC found some good examples of where the force has undertaken long-term crime prevention initiatives. In addition, HMIC found that the daily management meetings in the force were being used well to focus staff towards crime prevention activity.**

The inspection team found a number of areas where the force activity had significant emphasis on prevention. These were mainly linked to the priorities set in the crime and policing plan, specifically counter terrorism, public disorder, violent crime, and roads policing. The daily management meeting was inspected and showed clear directions and tasking of preventative activity. Most uniformed police officers reported that preventative activity formed a significant part of their working day. Information provided by the force showed that approximately 1600 hours per month were spent on preventative patrol with a particular focus on the protection of critical sites from terrorism.

- **Although the inspection found evidence of crime-prevention in neighbourhoods, the force does not have a database to assist officers and staff. This means that the force finds it difficult to evaluate work or share good practice easily. However the force does have an organisational learning forum which is chaired by the Assistant Commissioner which provides some opportunity to share evidence based good practice.**

The force has recently introduced a prevention and problem solving strategy, which was published and circulated to all staff in November 2013. This strategy sets out an approach to minimise criminal opportunity and promotes the use of tried and tested problem solving techniques. However this has yet to extend to the introduction of a good practise database. Problem solving plans were managed centrally through the performance management group and the force tasking and security group, to ensure that these prevention plans were appropriately resourced.

- **Although the force has provided some training to officers and staff, formal crime prevention training has not been delivered to staff who frequently deal with victims of crime and anti-social behaviour. HMIC believes that by providing learning opportunities, the force would be able to make the most of opportunities to prevent future crimes and provide a better quality service to the public.**

Learning in relation to preventative policing is not structured or promulgated across the force. Initial and on-going crime prevention training was found to be minimal and patchy with a lack of consistency across function and departments. Ongoing crime prevention learning for patrol staff was almost exclusively restricted to online education. Officers expressed concerns that this approach did not provide practical help or advice when dealing with victims and other vulnerable people at street level.

## Crime recording and attendance

- **The force is clear about how it will respond to calls for service from the public. It is one of the few forces that has a policy requiring officers to attend all reports of crimes and incidents.**

The inspection team found an expectation from the Police Committee that the police will attend all incidents and crimes that are reported to them to maximise the opportunity to solve the crime and prevent further harm to the victim. The timeliness of the police response was determined by the call taker who prioritises the incidents in accordance with a graded response policy which dictated how soon an officer should attend. This policy sets out 3 levels of response: immediate (arrival within 12 minutes); scheduled (arrival within 60 minutes); and routine (arrival within 48 hours). Performance against all 3 response grades was found to be excellent with 97% compliance for immediate and 99% for scheduled responses this year. The average response time for emergency deployments, from the time that the call was received to the time that an officer arrived at the scene, was just 5:27 minutes.<sup>1</sup>

- **During discussions and observations in the force's call-handling centre, the inspection team identified that the force has clear policies and procedures to enable it consistently to identify vulnerable and repeat victims of crime and anti-social behaviour.**

The inspection team interviewed control room supervisors and found they are required to conduct weekly reviews to check calls from the public, to ensure that appropriate questions have been asked to identify vulnerable and repeat callers. The force's command and control system assists in part with the identification of repeat callers as the system automatically identifies repeat telephone numbers and addresses. The system does not however automatically identify repeat callers by name.

- **Crime is recorded by the force in one of two ways: creating an incident on the command and control system and then subsequently entering details onto the crime recording system; or directly recording crime onto the crime-recording system, without creating an incident first.**
- **The force has systems in place to identify how many crimes that it attends.**

The inspection team reviewed a range of reported incidents. This confirmed that, almost exclusively, incidents were resolved by the police attending the incident and speaking to the people involved in person. The only examples of non-attendance were reports of internet frauds which were directed to action fraud for assessment, where the victim lived a significant distance away from the force, or the victim had specifically requested not to be visited by police.

- **During the inspection, HMIC reviewed a number of crime investigations, including reports of crimes that were not attended. HMIC found that, in general, there was clear evidence of officers recording updates of the progress of the investigation and supervisory oversight.**

The inspection team found that investigative opportunities were not being missed through demand filtering or screening out processes. Crime Management Unit (CMU) staff recorded and allocated crime investigations to the most suitable resources and were empowered to make decisions to direct or close investigation where appropriate. With a low number of recorded crimes, senior managers within the force were able to review all reported crimes on a daily basis. Their oversight ensures that the appropriate level of investigation is carried out using suitably qualified and skilled resources. The vast majority of crimes were investigated by detectives within CID.

- **HMIC examined the arrangements for the Integrated Offender Management scheme, which was in place to manage those offenders likely to cause most harm to the communities. These were found not to be as effective as they could be. The force should aim to standardise its approach to offender management and evaluate the effectiveness of the way it uses the scheme.**

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<sup>1</sup> Figures from the November force performance plan report (year to date 2013/14)

The inspection team found that the force does not have an Integrated Offender Management (IOM) programme due to the extremely small residential population and relative absence of high risk active criminals within it. However, in the absence of a formalised programme, the intelligence unit had identified 18 offenders who resided outside the force area but were believed to be criminally active in the city area. This group were monitored by a Prolific and Priority Offenders (PPO) panel which met infrequently (every 4 months). This meeting was attended by several partner agencies but HMIC found little evidence that this process was effective in collectively targeting these individuals to reduce their levels of offending.

- **The force was able to provide HMIC with the number of named suspects that are yet to be arrested or interviewed, as well as those who had failed to answer police bail. Although it appears the force has an effective way to oversee those suspects wanted for priority crimes (such as burglary in a dwelling and violent crime), there is not the same level of scrutiny for those suspected of committing other crimes.**

### Freeing up time

- **HMIC identified that the force has a relatively good understanding of demand, and is taking steps to build up a more detailed insight of demand and how its resources are distributed. This includes analysis of different types of incidents and policing activity.**

The inspection team found the force understands, in part, the demand for its services following the organisational restructure through the City First programme. The resultant new operating model introduced a new 15 week shift pattern, designed to better match resources to demand and split neighbourhood team into 3 functions: Business team, Residents Team and Engagement team. This approach aims to be more effective in engaging with the wider population, especially businesses and the transient workers which number in excess of 300 000 people

- **The force is working towards developing a greater understanding of staff productivity. At present basic information is available. This needs to be enhanced if the organisation to measure and understand staff productivity effectively.**

The inspection team found that a performance management group (PMG) meets monthly to consider force level performance, with individual staff performance left to supervisors who can access and examine their activities through the force information systems. HMIC conducted a workload assessment which identified that roughly the same levels of crime investigations were allocated to each team member according to their role or function. Response officers generally did not carry any live investigations; neighbourhood officers carried 2 to 3 each whilst in CID the workload increased to around 6 to 8. All crime investigations were allocated according to the skills of the officers and the CID crime investigations focussed appropriately on priority crimes and those victims who were considered to be vulnerable.

- **The force is not able to identify the amount of savings in staff time that has been made as a result of changes introduced or as a result of new technology it has implemented.**

The inspection team found the force restructuring has generated savings and made efficiencies, however it could not identify if the full range of business benefits had been comprehensively captured. Whilst some benefits were realised through cashable savings; reductions in bureaucracy and the freeing up of police time had not been fully quantified. As a consequence, the force could not accurately identify the amount of time freed-up by its structural and workforce changes through the City First programme.

- **The use of mobile devices, (such as tablets and mobile phones) to enable officers to access force systems while on patrol is limited.**

The inspection team found the force has made a clear commitment to build technology systems which maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of operations. However, the current IT infrastructure is poor and has lacked development over the last 2 years whilst the force examined a collaboration opportunity with other organisations. Primary systems such as the crime recording system, the command and control system and the duty management system are not integrated which leads to significant wasted time through making multiple entries of the same information.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Otter', written in a cursive style.

**Stephen Otter**  
HM Inspector of Constabulary