



Promoting improvements
in policing to make
everyone safer

HMI Wendy Williams' assessment of Gloucestershire Constabulary – Transcript

While I am satisfied with parts of Gloucestershire Constabulary's overall performance, there are several areas that are of serious concern to me.

I am deeply concerned that the force does not have essential tools in place to help it understand the threat from serious and organised crime. Nor does it to provide an effective response to this type of offending. This is particularly troubling as I set out many of the shortcomings in detail last year. The force has done little to address these areas.

While neighbourhood teams communicate well with local people using a range of methods, their ability to build relationships and solve problems is affected because the force regularly reassigns them to cover other duties, taking them away from their routine preventative work. The force has made some progress in the way it protects those who are vulnerable from harm, but its understanding of the nature and scale of vulnerability is hindered by its limited analytical capacity. I am also concerned about the force's inconsistent approach to allocating crimes for investigation.

It is not all bad news however. I am pleased that the force is well prepared to face its future financial challenges and it continues to make a considerable investment in its information and communication technology. This is part of its ambitious programme of modernising how it provides and supports its services and supports its commitment to being at the forefront of addressing cybercrime.

The force also has a good understanding of the current and future demand for its services and it understands the capabilities of its workforce. The force is intending to recruit a substantial number of police officers over the next three years to address the difficulty of directing resources to these areas and sustaining its commitment to neighbourhood policing.

The force has clearly defined values and expected behaviours that are well understood by its workforce. However, the force needs to improve how it looks for signs of suspicious behaviour and, in particular, its approach to managing the risk of officers or staff abusing their authority for sexual gain.

In the year ahead, I will be interested to see how the force responds to this assessment, and addresses the causes of concern HMIC has identified.