

**Roger Baker, QPM, MBA, MA**  
HM Inspector of Constabulary

Sir Peter Fahy  
Chief Constable, Greater Manchester Police

3 September 2014

Dear Sir Peter

**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 This must not be published until this date and time.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

- Although the inspection found references to crime reduction and prevention in some of the force's plans and documents including a crime policy and procedure document, there is no overarching crime prevention strategy, although HMIC recognise that one was in development at the time of the inspection. This would provide greater clarity to officers, staff and the public, of the importance to the force of preventing crime and anti-social behaviour and how it will be achieved.
- 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.
- HMIC notes the force's plans to enhance CCTV capability around the metrolink system. There is also an intention to upgrade existing cameras with ANPR technology which will improve intelligence capture.
- Although the force has an electronic database, that is updated with information that helps officers and staff prevent crime in neighbourhoods, it is not being used as effectively as it could be. While we did find evidence of problem-solving, areas such as thorough evaluation and sharing of good practice were absent.
- HMIC noted the Operation Challenger initiative, which is a long-term commitment within a force-wide partnership with other agencies that combines the assets and information available to police and partner agencies to help disrupt serious criminal activity as part of a long term strategy to divert younger people away from crime. It is supported by similar localised operations such as Operation Bank and Golf. HMIC looks forward to seeing the evaluated results of the project.
- Crime prevention training is delivered to staff in the form of problem solving training to PCSOs, special constables and new recruits. HMIC believes that by providing role specific training to other members of staff who regularly deal with victims of crime and anti social behaviour would provide opportunities to prevent future crimes and provide a better quality service to the public.
- The force's policy does not require officers to attend all reports of crimes and incidents. Instead it considers the threat, risk and harm to the victim, caller or community. In addition to this, there are specific occasions when a crime is reported, where the force will always aim to attend. HMIC understands that the force has not consulted with the public in relation to this policy.
- HMIC were told by staff that grade 5 incidents which are sent to the PAD or CSD would nearly always be dealt with by way of telephone resolution even if the victim requested the attendance of a police officer.
- HMIC observed that in the absence of an established attendance policy. There is a lack of clarity amongst staff around which incidents will be attended and which will not be attended.
- HMIC were told by staff that whilst the capability exists to identify and deploy resources by force systems such as ARLS and DMS, they are not being used

consistently by operators owing to the unreliability and complexity of the displayed information.

- During discussions and observations in the force's call-handling centre, the inspection team identified that the force does not consistently identify vulnerable and repeat victims. The force needs to ensure that the necessary checks are in place so that all potential vulnerability factors, such as disability or race, are identified.
- HMIC were concerned at the high number of vacancies (23) in the call handling function at the time of the inspection which may adversely affect call handler's time available to identify risk and vulnerability issues.

### **Crime recording and attendance**

- 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.

- HMIC noted the local resolution pilot operating in Bury is showing promising early signs of streamlining processes around public contact and looks forward to seeing the evaluated results of the pilot.
- During the inspection, HMIC reviewed a number of crime investigations, including reports of crimes that were not attended. In certain cases, for crimes such as burglary dwellings, there was clear evidence of investigation and supervision. However, for other offences, such as theft from a motor vehicle, many of which were not attended, some cases were found to have little evidence of meaningful investigation or supervision.
- HMIC identified some examples of victims calling to report crimes and being asked to conduct local enquiries in relation to their own crimes in lieu of a police officer attending
- HMIC noted that a dedicated CCTV recovery vehicle has allowed the efficient retrieval of CCTV material by a properly equipped resource at the earliest opportunity to secure evidence.
- HMIC observed that PCSOs are being sent to take reports of crime, undertake investigative actions and update crimes before submitting them for finalisation by a police colleague. The force should review whether this is in line with policy and whether they have the necessary skills for this purpose.
- HMIC found that the Integrated Offender Management scheme, in place to manage those offenders likely to cause most harm to the communities, to be well managed. There are regular meetings with key partners and a structured approach is used to identify and assess risk.

- The force was unable to provide HMIC with the number of named suspects who had yet to be arrested or interviewed. Without this information, the force may be unable to ensure that it has effective arrangements to manage named suspects.
- A small sample of named suspect files, including those circulated as wanted on the police national computer, provided clear evidence that activity had been documented and properly supervised in a number of cases.
- HMIC noted the work of the Tameside Neighbourhood Resolution panels run by volunteers but co-ordinated by the police which directly involves members of the local community taking ownership of a restorative justice scheme to reduce re-offending.

### **Freeing up time**

- HMIC identified that the force is taking steps to build up a more sophisticated understanding of demand and how its resources are distributed. This includes analysis of different types of incidents and policing activity.
- HMIC particularly noted the work being undertaken in Salford which is examining smarter ways of working to manage resources more effectively by better understanding demands.
- The force has carried out a significant level of work with other agencies to identify and address those tasks that are not the sole responsibility of the police.
- HMIC were told by front line operational staff that there were often difficulties in accessing the nearest custody facilities and gave accounts of transporting people they had arrested to custody facilities a long distance away which extended the time taken to deal with them considerably.
- The inspection found that the force does not have a thorough understanding of how staff are spending their time when away from the police station. Although some basic management information is available, staff are unclear about what is expected of them.
- The force has some understanding of 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 use of mobile devices, (such as tablets and mobile phones) to enable officers to access force systems while on patrol is limited. There is a recognition that the force has stated its commitment to significantly invest in a programme to upgrade its IT capability in the future.
- Staff spoken to by HMIC stated that the forces IT systems they worked with were poor and not configured to meet the business needs. HMIC understands the force is aware of this issue (see above comments re IT investment).
- HMIC were concerned to be told by staff that officers are using their personal IT devices to record evidence and intelligence images and to update force social

media sites. This present risks to the organisation around data integrity and security.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roger Baker', enclosed within a faint rectangular border.

**Roger Baker**  
**HM Inspector of Constabulary**