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HM Inspector of Constabulary

Ms J Curran
Chief Constable, Humberside Police

3 September 2014

Dear Justine

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 This must not be published until this date and time.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, there is no overarching crime prevention strategy. 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.
- The force has good analytical capability and extensive analytical work is carried out to target resources to preventive policing and problem-solving.
- 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 cannot effectively evaluate work or share good practice easily.
- 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 training, the force would be able to make the most of opportunities to prevent future crimes and provide a better quality service to the public.

Crime recording and attendance

- The force does not have a policy to attend all reports of crimes and incidents, but one based on a series of considerations including identifying the threat, risk and harm to the victim, caller or community. HMIC understands that the force has not consulted with the public in relation to this policy.
- 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 to consistently identify vulnerable and repeat victims of crime and anti-social behaviour.
- The Command Centre has a good quality assurance system, including dip sampling and live time call listening, for supervisors to check the service quality of call handlers.
- The majority of Command Centre staff have not been trained in using the National Decision Model (NDM) and follow defined processes whilst applying limited professional judgment. The force is aware of this and plans to complete NDM training in the near future.

- Automatic Resource Location System (ARLS) is outdated and the technical support for the current version has ceased. This means that the force may not be able to deploy the nearest most appropriate resource consistently. This force is planning to replace this system.
- 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 is unable to identify how many crimes are recorded directly onto the crime recording system, or how many of those crimes it attends subsequently.

- 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 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.
- The force was unable to provide HMIC with the number of suspects who had failed to answer their police bail. Without this information, the force may be unable to ensure that it has effective arrangements to manage outstanding named suspects and offenders.
- 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.

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. The force uses XIMES demand and resource analysis and has carried out work using this tool on 9 occasions since 2011.
- However, more work can be done in relation to identifying and addressing those tasks that are not believed to be the responsibility of the police.

- The inspection found that the force does not have a thorough understanding of how staff are spending their time. Although some basic management information is available, staff are unclear about what is expected of them.
- 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. There is a cohesive joint strategy with South Yorkshire Police around information technology.
- The use of mobile devices, (such as tablets and mobile phones) to enable officers to access force systems while on patrol is limited.
- The application of Unsatisfactory Performance Procedures (UPP) is very bureaucratic and there is little support for supervisors or managers who apply UPP.
- HMIC notes that the force has embarked upon a significant change programme designed to address a number of the issues identified during this inspection which demonstrates the forces commitment to examine and address these issues. HMIC looks forward to re-examining its progress in due course.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roger Baker', written over a horizontal line.

Roger Baker
HM Inspector of Constabulary