

**Zoë Billingham BA Hons (Oxon)**  
HM Inspector of Constabulary, Eastern Region

3 September 2014

Mr Alan Pughsley  
Chief Constable – Kent Police

Dear Alan

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 This must not be published until this date and time.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

Findings that specifically relate to your force are;

### **Preventing crime**

- Although the force does not have an overarching crime prevention strategy, this does not inhibit the effectiveness of its approach to preventing crime. Preventative aims and a focus on quality of service are clear throughout the Police and Crime Plan and related force objectives. This preventative philosophy is clearly understood by staff at all levels and the force's governance arrangements support this approach, with a dedicated chief inspector leading force preventative activity and co-ordination.
- 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 are being used well to focus staff towards crime prevention activity, linked to the force's predictive policing initiative – PredPol.
- The force has a database to assist officers and staff to solve problems that support neighbourhood prevention activity. We found clear evidence that this is regularly and consistently used to record activity undertaken to resolve and prevent community issues. The inspection also identified that some evaluation and sharing of good practice takes place.
- The force has already provided formal crime prevention training to 500 officers and staff and has plans to extend this further.

### **Attendance at crimes and incidents**

- 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. This approach is well understood by staff and appears to work effectively. HMIC understands that while the force did not specifically consult with the public in developing this policy, it did take account of feedback from victims of crime obtained through surveys.
- The force control room does not have a clear understanding of those resources that should be booked on duty on any particular day or time. We found examples of detectives who had booked on duty several days beforehand and had still not booked off. We were also told of instances of officers booking both on and off duty at the end of their shift. Control room supervisors spend significant amounts of time sorting out these anomalies. This could have a significant adverse impact, for example in the event of a short-notice mobilisation.
- The force has clear policies and procedures to enable call handlers to consistently identify vulnerable and repeat victims of crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Crime is recorded by the force, initially through creating an incident on the command and control system and then subsequently entering the details onto the crime recording system. The force has systems in place to identify how many crimes that it attends.
- During the inspection HMIC reviewed a number of crime investigations, including reports of crimes that were not attended. HMIC found that, in general, there is clear evidence of officers recording updates of the progress of the investigation and effective supervisory oversight.
- HMIC examined the arrangements for the Integrated Offender Management scheme, which are 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 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. The inspection team found that the force has clear, robust arrangements to manage its outstanding named suspects and offenders.

### **Freeing up time**

- HMIC identified that the force has a good understanding of demand, and is taking steps to build up an even more sophisticated insight into demand and how its resources are deployed. This includes analysis of different types of incidents and policing activity.
- The force has established a demand reduction board which has already taken steps to reduce demand and has highlighted a number of other areas where significant reductions in demand could be achieved. This includes work that the force has undertaken with other agencies to identify and address those tasks that are not the sole responsibility of the police.
- The inspection found that there is a clear structure to assist supervisors in assessing the workload and performance of frontline officers and staff.
- The force has a well-established programme of continuous improvement and has been able to identify savings from these initiatives, either in terms of money, time or both.
- The force has made a clear investment in enhancing the use of mobile technology devices, such as tablets and mobile phones to enable officers to access force systems whilst on patrol.

Yours sincerely



**Zoë Billingham**

HM Inspector of Constabulary, Eastern Region

Copied to Sonya Gransden  
HMIC Liaison Officer