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HM Inspector of Constabulary, Eastern Region

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Mr Simon Cole QPM
Chief Constable - Leicestershire Police

Dear Simon

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 This must not be published until this date and time.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

- HMIC found some good examples of the force having undertaken crime prevention initiatives. There are references to crime reduction and prevention in some of the force's plans and strategies. However, while there is a prevention element to each of the force's control strategies, these are mainly focused on short-term issues. It is not clear how prevention activity across the force as a whole is managed, co-ordinated and prioritised.
- The daily management meetings are not being used as well as they could be to direct staff towards crime prevention activity. At the time of the inspection the force had recently made changes to the focus of daily management meetings, which are now intended to support a stronger preventative focus. The DMMs are being considered further within the structural changes proposed under the force's change programme, Operation Edison.
- The force uses two electronic databases, which are updated with information that helps officers and staff prevent crime in neighbourhoods. One system (Sentinel) is used to manage cases of anti-social behaviour jointly with partner agencies such as local authorities. This has been an innovative approach involving the development of a single repository for ASB across all local authority areas where vulnerable people's cases are managed. However, the force and partnerships both recognise that further embedding is required in order to reap the maximum benefits from the system. For other issues, the force tasking and briefing system (TABS) is used. Like Sentinel, the TABS system is not yet being used as effectively as they could be. Although we found evidence of neighbourhood preventive activity taking place; the force does not have a means of evaluating this work or sharing 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.

Attendance at crimes and incidents

- 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 some specific types of crime or incident, where the force always aims to attend as a priority. This has led to the force having a high number of incidents that are assessed as needing a priority response, making it hard for the force to effectively prioritise. At the time of the inspection the force was planning a new approach where the type of crime or incident is not, in itself, a consideration in determining attendance. HMIC understands that the force has not consulted with the public in relation to this policy.
- The force has clear policies and procedures to enable its call handlers to consistently identify vulnerable and repeat victims of crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Crime is recorded by the force, initially by creating an incident on its command and control system and then by 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. In certain cases, for crimes such as burglary dwellings, there was clear evidence of investigation and supervision, but this was not the case for other types of crime. We also found that investigative awareness among call takers needs to be improved. In a sample of incidents we reviewed we found a number where investigative opportunities may have been missed.

- 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 recognises this and is developing plans to improve the way that IOM operates across the force area.
- The force was able to provide the number of named suspects that are yet to be arrested or interviewed, as well as those who had failed to answer police bail.
- 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

- 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 force has carried out highly effective work 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 front-line officers and staff.
- The force has an 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. In particular, the force is making effective use of body worn video, including using the video evidence as statements. This has the potential to save a significant amount of officer time. The force is also making good use of technology to help target officer time more effectively and increase visibility.
- Mobile devices have been used and developed within Leicestershire Police for some considerable time. MDTs were first introduced by the force in 2008 with full desktop functionality being achieved in 2010, enabling officers to access force systems while on patrol. However, because technology moves on swiftly the force acknowledges the need to revisit mobile device functionality to maximise the benefits accrued and is actively developing this area.

Yours sincerely



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Copied to Roy Mollett
HMIC Liaison Officer