

HMI Zoë Billingham's assessment of Lincolnshire Police – Transcript

Hello. I'm Zoe Billingham and I'm Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary for Lincolnshire Police. I am one of five inspectors of constabulary, and our role is to inspect police forces on behalf of the public. Each year we produce an annual assessment of how each force is performing.

I am satisfied with some aspects of the performance of Lincolnshire Police in keeping people safe and reducing crime, but the force does need to improve some areas in order to provide a consistently good service.

The force has an effective approach to crime prevention, tackling anti-social behaviour and disrupting the activity of organised crime groups. The time taken to allocate crimes for investigation has reduced; but the force needs to improve the quality of these investigations. It also needs to improve how it works with partners to reduce re-offending.

The force is good at identifying and responding to the most vulnerable people. However, our inspections found that it does not always involve the right level of specialist expertise or have appropriate supervision for complex cases involving domestic abuse and serious sexual offences. The force should also improve its response to missing children and child sexual exploitation by developing its understanding of the scale and nature of these issues. I have been reassured by the force's response to our inspection findings and the steps it is taking to remedy the problems we identified.

While the force has made the necessary savings in recent years, at the time of our inspection I was concerned that the force was projecting a budget deficit after 2016. This would have meant that Lincolnshire Police would not have been in a position to maintain its workforce numbers. I am reassured that the force has reviewed its position and I will focus on this issue when I return to inspect the force's efficiency in 2016.

I am pleased with the progress the force has made in reinforcing ethical and professional behaviour. It works well with its communities and partner agencies to understand and address local priorities. The force engages well with its communities through social media and tailored communication with minority groups for whom English is not their first language.

In the year ahead, I will be particularly interested to see how the force improves its response to vulnerable people and child sexual exploitation, and how it works to improve the quality of its crime investigations.