

PEEL

Police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy 2018/19

An inspection of Staffordshire Police



Contents

What this report contains	1
Force in context	3
Overall summary	4
Effectiveness	8
Force in context	9
How effectively does the force reduce crime and keep people safe?	11
Summary	11
Preventing crime and tackling anti-social behaviour	11
Investigating crime	12
Protecting vulnerable people	17
Tackling serious and organised crime	23
Armed policing	23
Efficiency	26
Force in context	27
How efficiently does the force operate and how sustainable are its services?	28
Summary	28
Meeting current demands and using resources	29
Planning for the future	29
Legitimacy	37
Force in context	38
How legitimately does the force treat the public and its workforce?	40
Summary	40
Treating the public fairly	40
Ethical and lawful workforce behaviour	42
Treating the workforce fairly	47
Annex A – About the data	48

What this report contains

This report is structured in four parts:

1. Our overall assessment of the force's 2018/19 performance.
2. Our judgments and summaries of how effectively, efficiently and legitimately the force keeps people safe and reduces crime.
3. Our judgments and any areas for improvement and causes of concern for each component of our inspection.
4. Our detailed findings for each component.

Our inspection approach

In 2018/19, we adopted an [integrated PEEL assessment](#) (IPA) approach to our existing PEEL (police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy) inspections. IPA combines into a single inspection the effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy areas of PEEL. These areas had previously been inspected separately each year.

As well as our inspection findings, our assessment is informed by our analysis of:

- force data and management statements;
- risks to the public;
- progress since previous inspections;
- findings from our non-PEEL inspections;
- how forces tackle serious and organised crime locally and regionally; and
- our regular monitoring work.

We inspected all forces in four areas:

- protecting vulnerable people;
- firearms capability;
- planning for the future; and
- ethical and lawful workforce behaviour.

We consider the risk to the public in these areas important enough to inspect all forces every year.

We extended the risk-based approach that we used in our 2017 effectiveness inspection to the efficiency and legitimacy parts of our IPA inspections. This means that in 2018/19 we didn't inspect all forces against all areas. The table below shows the areas we inspected Staffordshire Police against.

IPA area	Inspected in 2018/19?
Preventing crime and anti-social behaviour	No
Investigating crime	Yes
Protecting vulnerable people	Yes
Tackling serious and organised crime	No
Firearms capability	Yes
Meeting current demands	No
Planning for the future	Yes
Treating the public fairly	No
Ethical and lawful workforce behaviour	Yes
Treating the workforce fairly	No

Our 2017 judgments are still in place for the areas we didn't inspect in 2018/19.

Force in context

	Staffordshire rate	England and Wales rate
999 calls per 1,000 population 12 months ending 31 March 2019	155	175

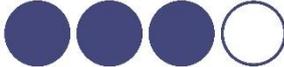
	Staffordshire rate	Most Similar Forces rate
Recorded crime per 1,000 population 12 months ending 31 March 2019	75	79

Staffordshire workforce

	FTE in post on 31 March 2019	FTE in post on 31 March 2014	Percentage change
Police Officer	1567	1729	-9%
Police Community Support Officer	225	215	4%
Police Staff	1057	1085	-3%

	Staffordshire spend	England and Wales spend
Spend per head of population 2019/20 projection	£167	£203

Overall summary

	Effectiveness		Last inspected
Preventing crime and tackling anti-social behaviour		Good	2017
Investigating crime		Good	2019
Protecting vulnerable people		Good	2018/19
Tackling serious and organised crime		Good	2017
Armed response capability	Ungraded	2018/19	
	Efficiency		Last inspected
Meeting current demands and using resources		Good	2017
Planning for the future		Good	2018/19

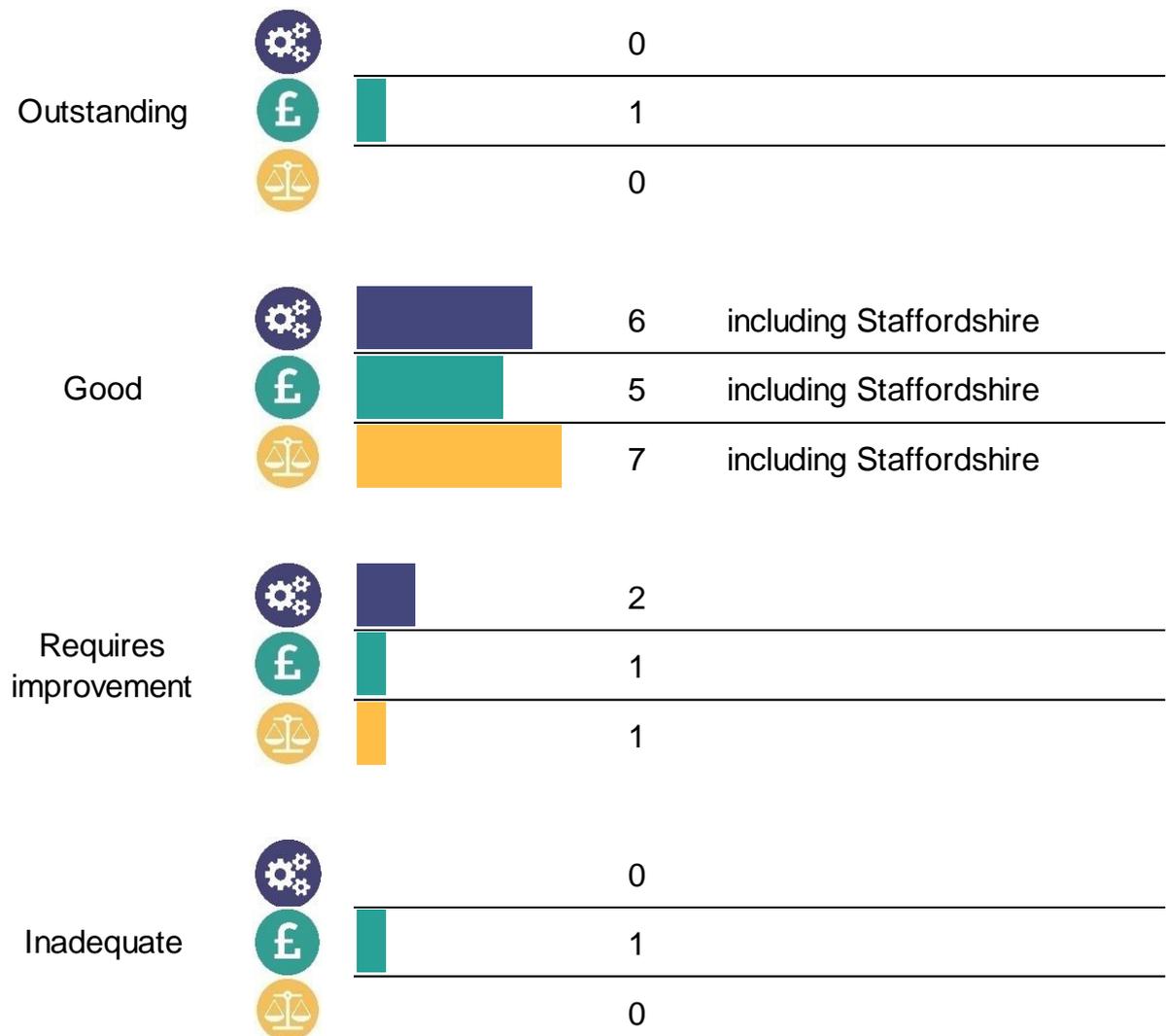
	Legitimacy	 Good	Last inspected
Fair treatment of the public	 Good	2017	
Ethical and lawful workforce behaviour	 Good	2018/19	
Fair treatment of the workforce	 Good	2017	

How does the force compare with similar forces?

We compare Staffordshire Police's performance with the forces in its most similar group (MSG). MSGs are groups of similar police forces, based on analysis of demographic, social and economic factors. [For more information about MSGs, see our website.](#)

Staffordshire Police's MSG forces are Avon and Somerset Constabulary, Derbyshire Constabulary, Essex Police, Hampshire Constabulary, Hertfordshire Constabulary, Northamptonshire Police and Cheshire Constabulary.

Figure 1: Pillar judgments for Staffordshire Police, compared with forces in its MSG



HM Inspector's observations

I am pleased with the performance of Staffordshire Police in keeping people safe and reducing crime.

The force is good at preventing crime and [anti-social behaviour](#). It investigates crime well and continues to improve the quality and supervision of investigations. The force has improved how it assesses and responds to people at risk. It works closely with other agencies to make sure [vulnerable](#) victims are protected.

Staffordshire Police understands the current and future demand for its services much better than it has done previously. It has used this information to develop strong financial and workforce plans for the future.

Senior leaders ensure that the workforce understands the importance of treating the public and each other with fairness and respect. The force continues to uphold an ethical culture and promote the standards of professional behaviour it expects.

Overall, I commend Staffordshire Police for the progress it has made over the past year. I am confident that it is well equipped for this to continue.



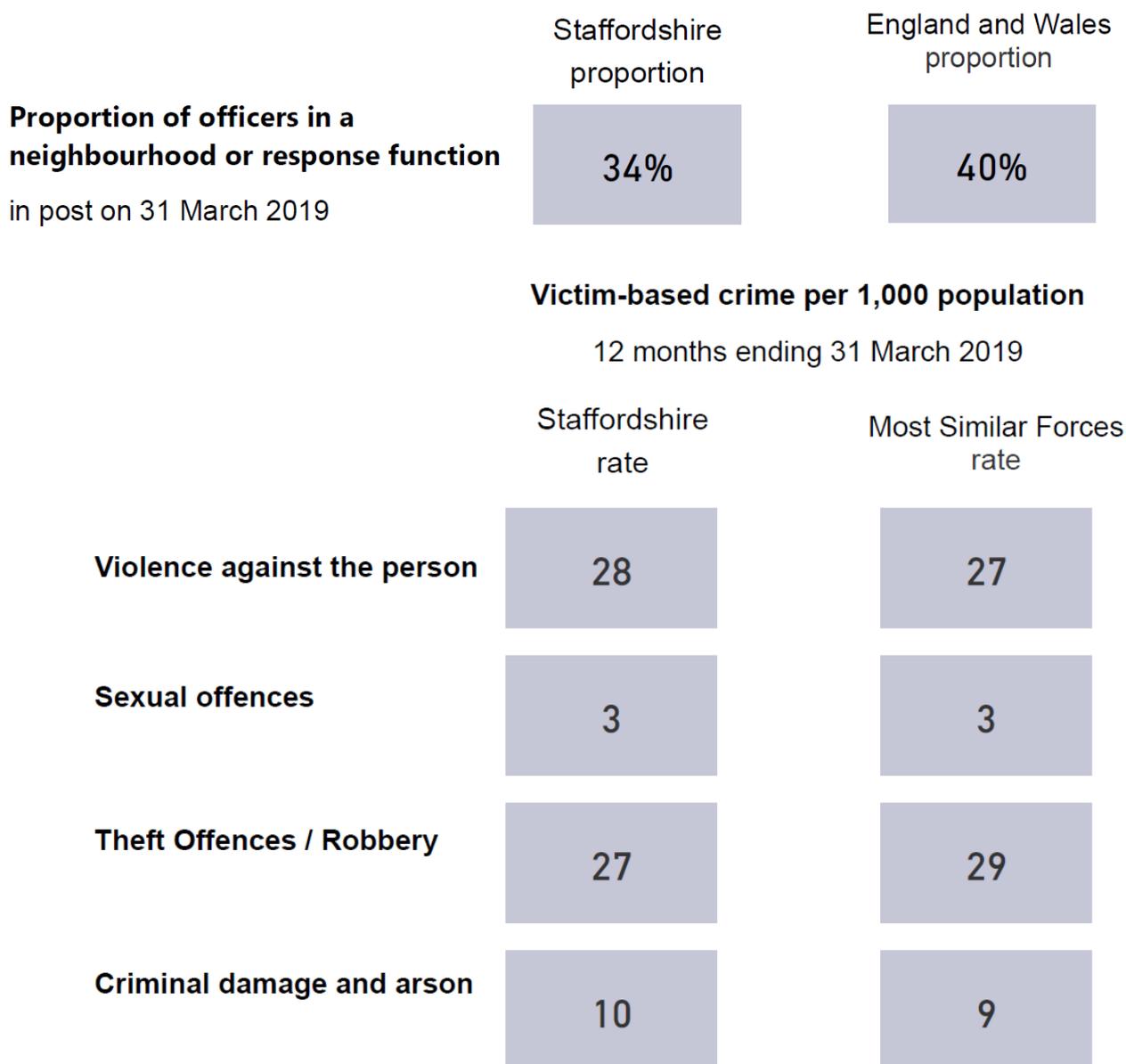
Wendy Williams

HM Inspector of Constabulary

Effectiveness



Force in context



Crime Outcomes

12 months ending 31 March 2019

	Staffordshire proportion	England and Wales proportion
Proportion of crimes where action was taken	14%	12%
Proportion of crimes where suspect was identified	53%	46%
Proportion of crimes where victim did not support police action	25%	24%

Outcomes for crimes flagged as domestic abuse

12 months ending 31 March 2018

	Staffordshire proportion	England and Wales proportion
Charge/summonsed	12%	16%
Evidential difficulties: suspect identified; victim does not support	49%	49%

How effectively does the force reduce crime and keep people safe?



Good

Summary

Staffordshire Police is good at reducing crime and keeping people safe. The force focuses on preventing crime, rather than just reacting to it.

Police officers and police and community support officers (PCSOs) work closely with different organisations and communities to tackle problems.

The force is good at investigating crime. However, it needs to improve its overall management and understanding of those suspected of criminal offences.

The force has effective processes to protect vulnerable adults and children. It has developed relationships with outside partner organisations to support [vulnerable people](#) and meet victims' needs.

The force is good at managing registered sex offenders and violent offenders.

Preventing crime and tackling anti-social behaviour



Good

This question was not subject to inspection in 2018/19, and our judgment from the 2017 effectiveness inspection has been carried over. One area for improvement remained from that inspection.

- The force should routinely evaluate and share effective practice both internally and externally with relevant outside organisations. This will ensure its approach to preventing crime and [anti-social behaviour](#) (ASB) continuously improves.

During our fieldwork we reviewed the force's progress on this area for improvement.

Since our last inspection the force has made good progress in the way it evaluates and shares good practice both internally and externally with partner organisations. The force works closely with different bodies and communities to tackle problems.

Through this unified approach it tries to identify and deal with the causes of crime and ASB, rather than responding to the symptoms. Local policing commanders regularly meet with community safety partnership leads to discuss new concerns.

This is complemented by local multi-agency problem-solving meetings where officers and [staff](#) discuss effective practice to agree shared actions. The force records problem-solving plans on its 'citizen focus toolkit'. This is a database of effective practice which neighbourhood officers and staff can refer to. The force identifies key cases and uses them to promote learning. For example, officers have given presentations on using a community protection notice in response to fox hunting, and injunctions to tackle ASB by children.

This area for improvement is now completed.

Investigating crime



Good

Staffordshire Police gives clear instructions to officers and staff on how they should allocate crimes, and the level of investigative skill needed.

Most of the investigations we looked at were satisfactory. The force has changed its investigation teams so that they include people with the right training and experience.

Initial investigation teams conduct desk-based investigations. The force checks the risk allocated to telephone cases to make sure they are investigated appropriately.

We saw examples of good handovers to investigators – including the results of first enquiries.

The force has made improvements to make sure its standard of supervision is consistent throughout all teams. Supervision has a direct effect on the quality of each investigation.

The force provides victims of crime with a good service. We found that officers contact victims regularly and record this on crime files.

Staffordshire Police needs to improve how it manages its response to find people who are wanted for, or suspected of, a crime.

The force uses [bail](#) legislation effectively to keep the public safe. It reviews investigations and examines the results to improve services to the public.

Areas for improvement

- The force needs to improve its oversight and understanding of those wanted for criminal offences, ensuring they are both circulated on the Police National Computer and actively sought.
- The force should ensure that it is fully compliant with the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime with victim contact details consistently recorded and updated.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the force's performance in this area.

Investigation quality

Staffordshire Police has the right structures to deal with most of its investigative demand. To meet the needs of victims, calls for service and incidents are carefully assessed to ensure cases are investigated by the most appropriate team.

Strategic, tactical and operational meetings help the force move resources flexibly to make best use of staff skills.

Most investigations by Staffordshire Police are good quality. We reviewed a sample of 60 files, and then 12 more during our fieldwork. We found most investigations were conducted effectively, particularly for more serious crimes.

The force introduced a new policing model in July 2018. It restructured its investigation teams to create enough capacity and capability to cope with investigative demand.

The force has trained investigators working in frontline roles and in specialist investigation teams. This enables it to respond effectively to demand. The force has increased the number of officers in the investigations teams and created a specialist child protection and exploitation team.

There are enough skilled and experienced officers and staff to conduct investigations. Investigators' caseloads are manageable. The investigations teams are staffed mainly by officers who are trained to the right level or are working towards their accreditation.

We heard from a cross-section of investigation and neighbourhood teams that the force's crime allocation policy is effective. Officers are mainly allocated crimes that are right for their skills and ability.

The force gives officers and staff a clear framework to ensure investigations are allocated according to harm, crime type and the level of investigative skill needed.

It also considers whether crimes are part of a series or have local impact. The force holds a daily management meeting to review demand from calls for service and crimes and investigations reported over the last 24 hours. This ensures high-risk investigations are appropriately resourced. It also makes sure it promptly reviews the [safeguarding](#) needs of high-risk vulnerable victims.

Many of the force's investigators have been trained to do Achieving Best Evidence (ABE) interviews. This means it is more likely that appropriately trained staff will interview victims and witnesses.

Since our last effectiveness inspection in 2017, the force has introduced three resolution centres to manage non-emergency incidents that officers don't need to attend.

The force reviews and risk-assesses all cases to ensure they are right for this type of investigation. We reviewed sample cases investigated this way and found that they were allocated appropriately and were effectively managed.

Officers have a good understanding of the importance of gathering evidence at an early stage of an investigation. Frontline officers we spoke with made the most of opportunities to gather evidence in the 'golden hour'. This is the hour immediately after a crime has been committed.

If officers can gather evidence during the golden hour, they are more likely to get evidence they might not later. Officers showed good understanding of the requirements of forensic preservation (keeping evidence intact). They said they were given enough time to achieve this at crime scenes.

We saw examples of comprehensive handovers to investigators, which included results of initial enquiries such as CCTV location, house-to-house calls and suspect enquiries.

The force uses investigation plans. These range in complexity according to the type of crime officers are investigating. Most of the investigation plans included a summary of the case and a list of proposed work.

Oversight of investigations by supervisors has improved. In most cases we found evidence of supervisors providing good focus and direction. In specialist units and the criminal investigation department, recorded supervision was more active and informative. For example, supervisors made direct enquiries on investigations.

The force has also made progress following the [Code of Practice for Victims of Crime](#) (VCoP). We found most crime victims get a good service. The force has effective processes in place and good supervision to make sure victims are kept updated on progress with their investigation.

We found that officers contact victims regularly and record this contact on crime files. Investigators recorded the number and nature of the contact as agreed with victims. However, the force knows it has more to do to be fully compliant with the VCoP. For example, data shows that the force only offers [victim personal statements](#) (VPSs) in around 70 percent of cases. To increase the number of VPSs completed the force has plans to introduce a web-based portal. This will enable victims to write their own statements in their own time. The force expects this to improve quality and satisfaction levels.

Over the last 12 months, the force has achieved investigative results broadly equal to that of other forces. In the 12 months to 30 June 2019, 8.9 percent of recorded crimes led to a charge, compared with the England and Wales rate of 7.7 percent. However, in 20.3 percent of cases, a suspect was identified but the victim(s) didn't support police action. This is higher than the England and Wales rate of 18 percent.

In our 2017 effectiveness report, we said that the force should take action to understand the reasons victims don't support police action in a high proportion of the crimes it investigates. This year we found that the force has worked hard to understand this. The force has reviewed cases to understand the reasons for the victims' decisions and to ensure it is recording results accurately.

The force is working to improve its effectiveness in investigation quality, victim and witness services, and the results it achieves. The force has a service effectiveness board (SEB) which reviews investigation processes from first contact to outcome.

It uses a three-step format: contact, solve and prevent. The force gives information and guidance to operational officers, including case studies. This initiative has focused on frontline officers and staff to improve their knowledge and effectively deal with incidents from the start.

The force has focused on identifying and preserving evidence and producing proportionate investigation plans based on assessing the victim's needs and the level of risk. Using [body-worn video](#) (BWV) improves evidence collection to better support prosecutions. All frontline operational officers are given it.

Catching criminals

An important part of the force's investigations is managing suspects who are avoiding prosecution, or people identified as suspects but who have not yet been arrested or interviewed.

In our 2017 effectiveness inspection, we said that Staffordshire Police needed to improve its oversight and understanding of people wanted for criminal offences. Our report said the force should ensure suspects' names are shared through the [Police National Computer](#) (PNC) – and that they were being looked for.

We found the process for making investigative enquiries to find people wanted on warrant on the PNC still needs improvement.

There is also no consistent approach to recording enquiries made to find offenders. The force is aware of this problem and was reviewing it during our inspection. However, locally, the force has an effective process to manage people who fail to appear on bail, people named as having committed a crime and suspects identified through forensic evidence.

The force co-ordinates enquiries to find high-risk offenders through effective daily management meetings chaired by [senior officers](#). Investigators have a good understanding of the need to make appropriate enquiries to try and trace offenders. Officers and staff were focused on finding and arresting them.

Officers regularly consult Immigration Enforcement to manage arrested foreign nationals. They work effectively with [ACRO](#) and Immigration Enforcement to get relevant information about overseas convictions.

The force has protocols with Immigration Enforcement to carry out checks and review options for removing or deporting people who have committed serious crimes or who are a threat to communities. To prepare for Brexit, the force provided training to officers and staff on the use of new tools to manage offenders from EU countries.

Changes to police bail as a result of the Policing and Crime Act 2017 have resulted in many suspects being [released under investigation](#) (RUI) from police custody.

We found the force is using the new bail legislation. Investigators use it to manage offenders – imposing bail conditions in appropriate cases to keep the public safe.

The force monitors and records how it uses RUI. It regularly reviews cases to ensure it is used appropriately. The force has a policy directing supervisors to review all RUI cases at 28 days to ensure there is an investigative direction and all necessary actions are taken.

An inspector needs to authorise RUI, and sergeants are encouraged to be proactive and involved in deciding if bail or RUI is the right action. Custody sergeants have a dedicated email inbox to get updates from officers about ongoing investigations and how this may affect charge/bail/RUI decisions.

The force needs to improve how it records the reasons for RUI decisions to ensure it is being used effectively. The force is aware of this and has given training to all custody staff to ensure bail options are considered when safeguarding is needed.

The force has made good progress on recommendations made in our [Making It Fair](#) report on [disclosure](#) (July 2017).

We found that officers with responsibility for investigations have a good understanding of their disclosure obligations. Many of those we spoke with have had formal training. Twenty-five disclosure practitioner champions support colleagues through advice and guidance where they need it. Performance monitoring is done in line with national requirements. The force gives one-to-one sessions to support those who need to improve.

This ensures investigators apply disclosure rules effectively when they compile criminal case files. The force has an effective process to ensure investigators complete disclosure schedules to a good standard. Supervisors, together with the force's criminal justice department, check the quality of the files before the force submits them to the Crown Prosecution Service.

The force reviewed its justice services in 2017. In response, it created two local prosecution hubs and a centralised support unit. This made justice services more accessible to frontline officers and staff. It enables early intervention in all cases so that only those that need a Crown Prosecution review are sent to the Crown Prosecution Service. It also means out-of-court disposals (outcomes that don't need to go through the courts – like cautions) are used where it is right to do so.

Staffordshire Police performs well on case file quality. Its case files have a low number of errors compared to other forces. For example, in January 2019, Staffordshire had the lowest error rate of all 43 forces in England and Wales (as measured by the national file quality assessment). It continues to maintain relatively low error rates each month.

Protecting vulnerable people



Good

Staffordshire Police has a clear definition of vulnerability and a good strategy for protecting vulnerable people, which the force understands well.

The force is good at identifying vulnerable people when they first contact the police. Call handlers respond to calls quickly and use a structured risk assessment process to make sure they respond to incidents consistently.

Officers complete a domestic abuse risk assessment for victims and other vulnerable people in the household at incidents.

The force uses feedback from victims to improve the services it offers.

Staffordshire Police works with other organisations and exchanges information with them to support vulnerable people and meet victims' needs.

The force is good at managing the risk from registered sex offenders. It uses preventative and ancillary orders to protect the public from dangerous and sexual offenders. It responds effectively when offenders break the rules of these orders.

Areas for improvement

- The force should implement the necessary processes to share information with schools in relation to children affected by domestic abuse incidents, to ensure information is shared as quickly and effectively as possible.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the force's performance in this area.

Understanding and identifying vulnerability

The force has a clear definition of vulnerability with effective processes to protect vulnerable people. The force's approach is to intervene early to reduce harm, focusing on safeguarding people at risk.

The force's policies and guidance give clear, unambiguous guidance and direction for safeguarding children, young people and adults. The force works closely with local authorities and other partners to interpret information. This helps it to understand where harm is concentrated and the types of exploitation happening in local communities.

The force uses a data performance 'dashboard' to identify patterns of crime, repeat victims and vulnerable people in communities. This enables the force to effectively brief officers and staff locally to focus on protecting people at risk of harm.

The force's early intervention strategy focuses on identifying root causes of vulnerability. This includes domestic abuse, mental health, substance misuse and child neglect. The force's vulnerability strategy is reinforced by an internal force media campaign, 'See beyond the obvious'.

Officers and staff we spoke to during the inspection showed a good understanding of the nature and scale of vulnerability. The force has provided vulnerability and mental health training to all frontline and public-facing staff and supervisors, including police officers, PCSOs and call handlers.

It has invested in training and [continuing professional development](#) (CPD) for officers in its public protection team. Also, the force has developed a comprehensive vulnerability toolkit available on both the force intranet and mobile devices. This gives officers and staff examples of good practice, guidance and information on where they can access appropriate services.

To improve its understanding of vulnerability, the force has started a three-year study partnership with an MSc student. This is so it can learn from victims' experiences and use the information to improve the services it provides.

The force works closely with partner bodies, such as adult social services, children's services and voluntary organisations, to understand community threats and risk. When it identifies vulnerability, the force is good at sharing information about its nature and scale.

Each local policing area in Staffordshire has a harm reduction hub. This is a team that offers multi-agency co-ordination and joint activities to keep vulnerable people safe.

The force has a range of meetings where it considers performance and service delivery to support people in the community with complex needs. Together with local partner organisations, each local harm reduction hub holds a weekly vulnerability meeting. This identifies the people most at risk of becoming victims of crime or ASB. Actions are agreed through the meetings, and services provided to support them.

We found the force encourages officers and staff to use their curiosity to investigate and uncover vulnerability and hidden harm. For example, trafficking of vulnerable people who are forced to work without pay or made to work against their will.

Officers and staff work well with partner bodies to take steps to uncover hidden harm. At local vulnerability meetings, agencies share information to identify risk. They agree joint actions and ensure appropriate agencies are involved to address issues early.

The force also hosts and organises a monthly multi-agency modern slavery and human trafficking tactical group. The group identifies new threats and shares intelligence. It makes assessments with partner bodies and gets involved early to deal with these threats. This helps safeguard vulnerable people who might be at risk of exploitation.

Staffordshire Police is good at identifying vulnerable people when they first contact the police. This includes identifying repeat victims, victims of domestic abuse and people who live with mental ill health. Call handlers respond to calls quickly and follow a structured risk assessment process to ensure they respond to incidents consistently.

All call handlers have been trained in the national risk assessment tool known as [THRIVE](#). In the sample of calls we listened to, we found operators applied it well. The force's IT systems allow it to identify cases involving vulnerable people easily, using markers. But the system doesn't automatically identify repeat victims, including victims of domestic abuse. Instead, call handlers must search force systems manually.

Additional information is available to help call handlers assess a person's vulnerability through an application called 'active intelligence'. This system enables call handlers to examine previous calls, revealing any problems or increasing vulnerability. We found that call handlers have a good understanding of the needs of vulnerable people with mental health problems. To make sure callers get the right service, call handlers can get advice and assistance by phone from community psychiatric nurses through a mental health triage scheme.

We found officers who attend incidents are good at identifying risks to victims and consistently identify risks to other vulnerable people in households. This includes recording details of children who live in the household, no matter where they were when the incident took place.

Responding to incidents

The force responds to incidents involving vulnerable people promptly, to keep them safe. To ensure the control room maintains call-handling performance when there are a lot of incoming calls, multi-skilled staff move flexibly between different roles.

During our visit to the force control room, calls were answered efficiently. Call handlers apply their training and use THRIVE well. They identify each caller's needs to make sure they fully assess risks and offer safeguarding advice over the phone to reduce risk of further harm.

When officers attend an incident, they can get information on their mobile devices and regular updates from control room staff. This makes them aware of the vulnerable people and risks they might find when they arrive.

Our effectiveness inspection in 2017 identified the force needed to improve its services to vulnerable people, particularly domestic abuse victims, when officers weren't able to attend or when attendance was delayed. This included re-assessing the risks victims face, so safeguarding support could be prioritised.

We are pleased to report that this area for improvement has been addressed by the force. All deployments are now monitored, and a daily performance report provides updates on incidents. Response times to immediate and priority incidents are monitored by the force incident manager. There is an effective triage process to reassess the risks to victims so that appropriate safeguarding can be put in place.

The force has a good understanding of the nature and scale of vulnerability caused by mental ill health, developed with partner organisations. The force and its partner bodies work together to identify and intervene early in times of crisis. Over the last 12 months the number of people detained in custody under [section 136 of the Mental Health Act](#) has reduced considerably.

In partnership with the mental health trust, the force has an [on-street mental health triage](#) scheme in the north of the county. Officers work alongside a mental health professional and respond to people suffering an acute mental health episode.

Triage is not available 24/7. But the force has identified when it is most needed: between 4.00pm and 2.00am. Outside these hours, officers can contact mental health practitioners for advice over the phone.

There is no on-street mental health triage in the south of the county. However the Staffordshire [police, fire and crime commissioner](#) has secured funding and aims to commission services in the south.

The force has appointed a PCSO as a dedicated early intervention officer in each local policing area. These staff have received enhanced training and co-ordinate a multi-agency response to support people who make repeat calls – many have mental health problems.

The force effectively protects victims of domestic abuse and prioritises attendance at these incidents. In the 12 months to 31 March 2019, officers attended 80 percent of domestic abuse incidents as an emergency or priority call.

The force responds to less than 6 percent of domestic abuse cases by telephone.

It is one of five forces in England and Wales taking part in a pilot to trial telephone-based first responses to domestic abuse cases where an immediate or priority response isn't required.

The pilot isn't meant to replace officers being sent out, or to resolve calls. The force will still send out officers when required, at a timescale reflecting the risk of threat and harm. The pilot is currently being evaluated.

In all incidents involving domestic abuse, officers use a standardised risk assessment tool – the domestic abuse incident log (DIAL) – to assess and record risk. This includes recording details of children who live in the household. Officers and staff clearly understand their responsibility to identify children and make referrals about them to other agencies for assessment and support.

Every day, officers and staff working in the [multi-agency safeguarding hub](#) (MASH) review all high-risk and any standard risk domestic abuse incidents escalated by harm reduction hubs, and put urgent safeguarding actions in place.

Staffordshire Police has one MASH for the county. The force plays a leading role in the MASH. It works with a range of partner bodies, including education, probation, health and children's services to share information and ensure safeguarding arrangements are there for vulnerable people.

The force doesn't comply with the requirements of [Operation Encompass](#). That operation requires that schools be told before 9.00am when a child or young person has been involved or exposed to a domestic abuse incident the previous evening. However, the force has found a technical solution. Its new NICHE records management system (which will be implemented in April 2020) will automatically notify schools.

We reported in 2017 that the force needed to improve its understanding of a number of falling performance indicators. These included arrest and charging rates for domestic abuse cases, and the high proportion of cases categorised as 'evidential difficulties'.

The force has made a considerable effort to understand the issues and completed an internal audit of 100 cases. However, current systems don't allow it to effectively single out the data needed to make an accurate assessment. Its new NICHE system will allow the force to find and analyse data more accurately.

Although this area for improvement is now closed, we will review this aspect of force performance in the future.

Supporting vulnerable victims

The force has effective, well-developed relationships with outside partner organisations like the NHS trust and local authorities. These help it support vulnerable people and address victims' needs. The force has established processes enabling it to analyse data and exchange information about vulnerable people with other safeguarding organisations.

The force exchanges information through different contact points including the knowledge hub, MASH, the mental health triage, and harm reduction hubs based in local policing teams.

Neighbourhood teams are involved in the ongoing safeguarding of vulnerable victims. This includes children at risk of sexual exploitation, people with poor mental health and repeat victims of domestic abuse.

Regular meetings, led by the local policing commander, examine crime and ASB in the area. In the meetings they also cover people missing from home and cases where intervention is needed to protect a child. These meetings ensure the force uses appropriate tactics and the right interventions.

[Multi-agency risk assessment conference](#) (MARAC) processes in Staffordshire are effective. All high-risk domestic abuse cases are referred to the MARAC. The force produces plans to support victims with other agencies.

Over the next 12 months the force will be restructuring MARAC arrangements from one central meeting to one held in each local policing area. This will allow relevant local service providers to attend and work more closely with the harm reduction hubs, co-ordinating actions to protect high-risk victims. The force piloted this approach in two areas (Tamworth and Newcastle). The first evaluations have been positive.

In cases where prosecution is not possible or practical, Staffordshire Police makes appropriate use of legal powers to protect victims of domestic abuse. This includes [domestic violence prevention notices \(DVPNs\) and orders \(DVPOs\)](#).

Each DVPO is included on the daily briefing so frontline officers and staff can actively manage the order and enforce breaches when appropriate. In the 12 months to 31 March 2019, the force applied for 168 DVPOs. Of these, 159 were authorised, and offenders breached 46. In the same period, 201 applications for DVPNs were made, 196 were authorised and 6 were breached.

The force has a clear commitment to the [Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme](#), sometimes called Clare's Law.

It uses the legislation well to protect potential victims of domestic abuse. Force data shows the number of 'right to know' and 'right to ask' applications are increasing.

In the 12 months to 31 March 2019, there were 122 applications to the 'right to know' scheme and the force made 96 disclosures. There were also 133 applications to the 'right to ask' scheme and the force made 53 disclosures.

The force has clear processes to manage pre-charge bail in domestic abuse cases, and safeguard victims. Custody sergeants have been trained in new bail legislation. Before offenders are released from custody, the force reviews the risks presented by them and safeguarding is put in place for the victim.

The force regularly seeks and uses feedback from vulnerable victims and other users to improve its services. It carries out surveys of domestic abuse victims, including whether the victim supports a prosecution.

However, the force has found the current survey only gives an indication of victim satisfaction – and limited details of their experience. To change this, the force will develop a survey similar to Merseyside Police's. It hopes this will provide more detail and so improve its understanding.

To complement surveys, the force seeks feedback from victims of domestic abuse through partner organisations. It has used this feedback to review and adjust the services it provides. For example, the force, with partner organisations, is in the process of introducing a domestic abuse perpetrator programme. It developed this following victim feedback that some people didn't want to end their relationship. They wanted the perpetrator to change their behaviour.

In our 2017 effectiveness report, we said the force should ensure that risks posed by registered sex offenders are managed effectively. The force has addressed this and now uses a risk-based approach to prioritise any backlog of visits or assessments.

This has been effective in reducing build-ups and ensures offenders who present the highest level of risk get appropriate supervision. At the time of our inspection we found minimal delays in assessments and visits. The force does monthly workload reviews. These include information on outstanding visits and assessments. All visits to offenders are unannounced unless three consecutive attempts have been unsuccessful. This means offenders have less opportunity to hide incriminating items or behaviour.

Officers and staff from the sexual offender management unit (SOMU) work flexibly across relevant locations to increase their understanding of local issues. Low, medium and some high-risk cases are the subject of joint visits by SOMU and trained neighbourhood staff. This improves the exchange of knowledge and intelligence between teams and means offenders are managed more effectively.

The force makes good use of additional or ancillary powers, such as [sexual harm prevention orders](#) (SHPOs). In the 12 months to the end of March 2019, the force issued 86 SHPOs. There were 21 recorded breaches.

The force's approach to identifying people who share indecent images of children online is effective. It takes a proactive approach to reducing this threat. The specialist child protection and exploitation team has the capacity and capability to proactively identify and deal with offenders who share indecent images of children.

During our inspection we found there was a backlog of 93 cases awaiting further investigation. However, we found sufficient measures to mitigate risk and the backlog was being managed effectively.

Tackling serious and organised crime



Good

This question was not subject to inspection in 2018/19, and our judgment from the 2017 effectiveness inspection has been carried over. There are no areas for improvement for the force to address.

Armed policing

We have previously inspected how well forces provide armed policing. This formed part of our 2016 and 2017 effectiveness inspections. Subsequent terrorist attacks in the UK and Europe have meant that the police service maintains a focus on armed capability in England and Wales.

It is not just terrorist attacks that place operational demands on armed officers. The threat can include the activity of organised crime groups or armed street gangs and all other crime involving guns. The [Code of Practice on the Police Use of Firearms and Less Lethal Weapons](#) makes forces responsible for implementing national standards of armed policing. The code stipulates that a [chief officer](#) be designated to oversee these standards. This requires the chief officer to set out the firearms threat in an [armed policing strategic threat and risk assessment](#) (APSTRA). The chief officer

must also set out clear rationales for the number of armed officers (armed capacity) and the level to which they are trained (armed capability).

Understanding the threat and responding to it

The force has an adequate understanding of the potential harm facing the public. Its APSTRA conforms to the requirements of the code and the [College of Policing guidance](#). The APSTRA is published annually and is accompanied by a register of risks and other observations. The [designated chief officer](#) reviews the register frequently to maintain the right levels of armed capability and capacity.

Last year we identified one area where the force's APSTRA could be improved. It did not include details of how rapidly its [armed response vehicles](#) (ARVs) respond to incidents. This is important to determine whether the force has enough armed officers to meet operational demands.

The most recent APSTRA still does not include this detail, although we are aware work is currently going on to include it. This work is expected to be completed and included within the APSTRA shortly. The force should ensure this is the case and we will be monitoring this closely.

All armed officers in England and Wales are trained to national standards. There are different standards for each role that armed officers perform. Most armed incidents in Staffordshire are attended by officers trained to an ARV standard. However, incidents sometimes occur that require the skills and specialist capabilities of more highly trained officers.

We found that Staffordshire Police has limited access to specialist firearms capabilities. This reduces its ability to manage incidents that require additional skills. It means that ARV officers sometimes have to attend and resolve incidents to reduce risks and protect the public without the full capacity and capability to do so safely. For high-risk and complex armed incidents to be resolved safely, it is important that the skills and capabilities of officers match the threats they face. Staffordshire Police recognises the limitations of its current specialist firearms provision. The force is considering how it can improve access to specialist capabilities, whether by increasing the skills of existing officers, or providing this capability in collaboration with other forces in the region. Staffordshire Police is exploring the available options so that it can be assured of access to appropriately trained and equipped officers. The force should resolve this situation as a matter of urgency.

Working with others

It is important that effective joint working arrangements are in place between neighbouring forces. Armed criminals and terrorists have no respect for county boundaries. Therefore, armed officers must be prepared to deploy flexibly in the knowledge that they can work seamlessly with officers in other forces. It is also important that any one force can call on support from surrounding forces in times of heightened threat.

Staffordshire Police provides standalone arrangements. We are, however, satisfied the force continues to work closely with other forces in the region to minimise the risk of developing isolated practices and procedures.

We also examined how well prepared forces are to respond to threats and risks. Armed officers in Staffordshire Police are trained in tactics that take account of the types of recent terrorist attacks. Also, Staffordshire Police has an important role in designing training exercises with other organisations that simulate these types of attack. We found that these training exercises are reviewed carefully so that learning points are identified, and improvements are made for the future.

As well as debriefing training exercises, we also found that Staffordshire Police reviews the outcome of all firearms incidents that officers attend. This helps ensure that best practice or areas for improvement are identified. We found that this knowledge is used to improve training and operational procedures.

Efficiency



Force in context

	Staffordshire spend	England and Wales spend
Spend per head of population 2019/20 projection	£167	£203

Spend per head of population by category

2019/20 projection

	Staffordshire spend	England and Wales spend
Visible frontline	£62	£68
Non-visible frontline	£47	£66
Frontline Support	£13	£17
Business support	£33	£45
Other	£11	£8

How efficiently does the force operate and how sustainable are its services?



Good

Summary

Staffordshire Police operates efficiently, and its services are sustainable.

The force is good at working out what demand for its services might be in the future and uses both police and partner agency data for this.

It has enough skilled and experienced people and the financial resources to meet current and future demand.

The force has invested in the skills and equipment it needs to protect the public from cyber crime. It has invested in IT.

Frontline officers and [staff](#) use mobile working. Officers and staff like the technology and say that it is efficient.

The force's [medium-term financial plan](#) has a good balance between savings and investment in important areas such as neighbourhood policing, public protection, estates and new technology.

It has identified savings which will balance the 2018-19 budget without using its [reserves](#).

The force's future plans are realistic. It understands how increased demand can affect an organisation.

Meeting current demands and using resources



Good

This question was not subject to inspection in 2018/19, and our judgment from the 2017 efficiency inspection has been carried over. However, there was one area for improvement identified from this inspection.

- The force should ensure it has sufficient resources available in the control room to fulfil its resourcing model, and so meet its demand, while also considering its workforce's wellbeing.

As part of our fieldwork, we reviewed the progress made by the force in this area.

The force made changes to address this during 2018. Capacity to answer calls during peak times has improved. During our visit to the force control room, calls were answered efficiently. To ensure that the control room maintains call handling performance at times of peak demand, multi-skilled staff move flexibly between different roles.

The force continually reviews future resourcing requirements as part of the change programme. It predicts it will make the savings required in 2019/20 through managing vacancies and reducing the number of Airwave talkgroups, a communication service used by the emergency services, operating across the force's response and neighbourhood teams.

The force predicts a further 23 percent of contact will move to digital channels through social media and introducing the national single online home platform. This platform will provide ways for the public to contact the force and report non-emergency incidents online.

Planning for the future



Good

Staffordshire Police is good at planning for the future. It assesses what skills and tools it needs. It has a good ICT strategy to help address future demands.

The force has a good understanding of public expectations. It works well with local communities and carries out surveys to find out local people's experiences and opinions. The force uses feedback to improve its services.

Staffordshire Police is good at managing its many priorities, using its understanding of future demand and changing public expectations. Its change plans focus on making sure it can meet the needs of the public.

It has invested in new technology such as a replacement for its records management system to improve the way the organisation operates.

It has worked to improve the diversity of the workforce by recruiting from outside the police service.

The force's plans are realistic. Its medium-term financial plan balances making savings with investing in priority areas.

Force leaders recognise that workforce development is important to meet future demand. The force has a good plan that focuses on supportive leadership and wellbeing. Leadership training for officers and staff includes a talent management scheme to help people reach their full potential.

Staffordshire Police and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service are looking at opportunities for more collaboration to identify efficiencies and improve services provided to the public.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the force's performance in this area.

Our last efficiency inspection in 2017 identified the force should ensure it has adequate plans in place to show it can provide services, while also making necessary cost savings.

This year we found that the force had made considerable progress. Its plans are detailed, based on a good understanding of both current and future demand and the savings needed over the next three years. The force's careful approach to financial and change management should position it well for dealing with future challenges.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the force's performance in this area.

Assessing future demand for services

Staffordshire Police is effective at assessing future demand for its services. Current work on future demand is informed by both police data and information from other organisations. The force uses the [Management of Risk in Law Enforcement](#) model effectively to identify strategic priorities and the threats most likely to affect communities. This helps it understand future demand and assess any gaps in its ability to respond.

The force has conducted research and analysis of five years of data to predict future demand. This is now reflected in the priorities of its policing plan and five strategic objectives. It has taken positive steps to identify emerging and hidden demand.

The force anticipates more demand from [vulnerable people](#). This is due to a rise in reports of domestic abuse, [county lines](#) drugs networks and growth in cyber-related crime. To address this, the force has invested in a range of early intervention initiatives such as harm reduction hubs. It has also restructured and recruited to its investigation teams to ensure it has the capacity and skills to meet this growing demand.

The force uses 'profiler methodology' to design its operating model. This is software that allows it to plan services according to its demand. The force regularly repeats the methodology to test demand against the operating model and evaluate its effectiveness and efficiency.

This also helps it identify where demand is changing. The force reviews resource levels against this information and changes it according to the results. We saw examples of the force using benchmarking data to work out whether the level of resources for each service area was appropriate.

For example, from its analysis of future demand, the force identified it needed greater investigative capacity. When it changed its operating model, it took the opportunity to increase the number of officers in the investigations teams and create a specialist child protection and exploitation team.

The force has considered the impact of technology and its potential to drive efficiencies and increase the effectiveness of its workforce. It has an ambitious digitisation plan supported by a realistic ICT strategy. The force ICT lead is a member of each of the directorate boards.

This ensures it doesn't miss an opportunity to consider the potential benefits of digitisation. Frontline officers and staff who use mobile technology speak positively about the quality of equipment supplied by the force. Staff see this as a major contributor to efficient working. Frontline officers are equipped with, and regularly use, [BWV](#) to capture evidence at incidents.

Understanding public expectations

The force has a good understanding of public expectations and has engaged and consulted communities to understand how their expectations are changing.

It sees consultation as an ongoing process between the force and the public. The force is committed to finding out local people's experiences and opinions. Examples include a digital 101 survey which established 35 percent of callers to the 101 number would have used self-service had it been available. The force's resolution centre also ran an engagement exercise that found some victims don't want an officer to visit them when reporting non-violent, low impact crimes. When appropriate, call handlers now ask callers in this situation if they want a visit.

The force monitors Twitter and Facebook for views and feedback on its activities. It has ambitious communication plans shaped to reflect the changing use of the internet and social media.

For example, the communications and engagement team is working with the control room to develop streamlined digital contact through online forms. Staffordshire Police predicts that 23 percent of current calls will move to digital and social media channels. This will happen when the national single online home platform allows people to contact the force and report non-emergency incidents online.

Neighbourhood policing teams focus a lot of their daily activity on public engagement activities. Officers and staff attend community events to encourage people who may have concerns or lack trust in the police, to share their views. The force has introduced engagement panels in each local policing area to give a platform where community representatives can share views and discuss expectations.

Some PCSOs have received engagement training. Those working in neighbourhood and community harm reduction hubs encourage partner organisations to raise concerns on behalf of the community.

The force receives feedback from service users through a variety of partner organisations. It uses this information to review and adjust the services it provides, like the domestic abuse perpetrator programme featured earlier in our report.

The force's planning process is linked with the Staffordshire Commissioner's. There is an increasing focus on engaging with the community. The Staffordshire Commissioner has established an outside ethics, transparency and audit panel (ETAP) which includes community representatives. The panel examines and scrutinises service provision. Also, quarterly performance events, led by the Staffordshire Commissioner and attended by the chief constable, are held via webcast to engage directly with the community.

Prioritising

The force manages many competing priorities effectively. Its priorities are informed by its understanding of both future demand and changing public expectations.

The priorities in the police and crime plan for 2018-21 are consistent with recent structural changes the force has made. It has connected policing to local public and partner needs and reduced demand at source.

For example, the force has invested £1.9m to improve the capacity and capability of the missing persons investigations team, roads policing unit and disruptions team, which aims to crack down on criminal activity across Staffordshire such as serious and violent crime. It has also improved analysis, digital investigation and cyber capability.

The strategic planning cycle is governed by the executive team with outside scrutiny from both the Staffordshire Commissioner's Office and ETAP. This allows a regular refresh of data and knowledge. All relevant directorate leads are involved in developing the policing plan. Financial and workforce plans are linked accordingly. We saw evidence of co-ordination between finance, human resources and those responsible for leading change to develop the force.

The force uses a continuous improvement approach. Where it sees demand changing, it focuses on what can be done differently to effectively meet that demand.

For example, the force's domestic abuse working group has reviewed how it provides services to victims. The force is also looking at how it is working with Northumbria Police to adopt the multi-agency tasking and co-ordination (MATAC) principles into its new [MARAC](#) process. Good governance structures exist to co-ordinate all change projects. There is a clear link between public consultation, planning and allocating resource.

Future workforce

The force's workforce planning is robust. Detailed monitoring ensures that the right people with the right skills are in the right place at the right time. The force's 'people first' strategy focuses on modernising the workforce and creating a learning culture.

The force has worked hard to predict the skills and capabilities it needs now and in the future. It is well placed in terms of resilience, capability and capacity to identify existing demand and prepare for future challenges.

The force identifies essential skills for every post in the organisation. It puts in place comprehensive training to maintain the skills needed. The training plan is appropriately resourced and is connected to the workforce plan and budget.

The force has a good understanding of where gaps in skills and experience will happen in the future. Succession planning is part of the people strategy. A monthly workforce planning meeting provides oversight and co-ordination of vacancies and promotion requirements as part of the broader corporate planning process.

Where skills shortages are identified, the force takes action to understand and address the gap. For example, the force reviewed investigation and digital capability to understand the skills needed by officers and staff working on investigation teams. This involved an in-depth review of crime data and changing complexity in investigations. As a result, the force offered development and mentoring opportunities to encourage officers and staff to get the right skills for the future.

The force is responding to the growing impact of cyber and digital crime on its communities.

Its demand analysis predicts growth in the number of victims of digital crime, and it has invested in the skills it needs to protect the public from harm. There are several digital investigation development programmes under the governance of the deputy chief constable's digital policing board.

For example, the force has outside funding to increase its capability and capacity for cyber-related crime. The money has funded specialist training for four staff and specialist equipment to enable an effective response to incidents.

The force supports [Fast Track](#) and [Police Now](#) candidates. It has made considerable efforts to improve the diversity of the workforce through outside recruitment. It doesn't use [direct entry](#) for inspector and superintendent ranks, although it has considered doing so. The force has developed a diversity and difference delivery plan including the [National Police Chiefs' Council](#) (NPCC) diversity toolkit.

The force uses social media to encourage applications from under-represented communities. These messages include positive statements about the force's recruitment policies and encouragement to apply for jobs. It has also assigned a PCSO in Burton upon Trent to work with local communities and promote policing as a career.

Finance plans

Financial plans are built on realistic, sound assumptions of future funding levels, inflation and council tax as agreed with the Staffordshire Commissioner. The force has also considered the possible impact of changes to the national funding formula. It has presented a range of options to meet a reduced budget if necessary. The financial plans are linked to planning priorities, demand analysis and workforce and training plans.

The force has benefited from recent increases in council tax which has allowed it to stabilise finances and invest in change programmes. Together with planned efficiency savings, this has enabled the chief constable to invest in areas such as crime prevention and investigations.

The force's medium-term financial plan strikes a good balance between required savings and investment in priority areas. These include neighbourhood policing, public protection, estates and ICT reform. The force's proven savings record since the beginning of austerity brings certainty to its financial position. There is a clear link between the Staffordshire Commissioner's plan, the force's medium-term financial plan and workforce planning.

The force continues to develop better understanding of where it needs to improve workforce capabilities to meet future demand. It meets savings requirements through improvements to working practices and internal efficiencies.

The force's monthly business change meeting and a bi-monthly transformation board oversee the force's business change programme. This has 59 initiatives to improve services and make savings – potentially creating a saving of £5.7m during 2019/20.

In the past, the force has used its reserves to fund transformation. These reserves now need to be topped up. The force has transferred £1.3m into its reserves, bringing them up to 3 percent of the budget at the start of the current financial year.

It predicts general reserves are around £6m or 2 percent of the force budget. Total reserves of £9m are held at the beginning of 2019-20. These include specific reserves for transformation of around £2m. The force expects total reserves to stay at around that level.

The capital programme totals £23.2m in 2019-20, £6.9m in 2020-21 and £4.3m in 2021-22. ICT investment is the largest part of the capital programme: £16m in 2019-20 and a further £5.7m in 2021-22.

In 2016 and 2018, the government announced it would reduce the discount rate it uses to set contribution rates for unfunded public service pension schemes. These include the police's pension scheme.

A lower discount rate will mean employers pay more into pensions. The official notification in September 2018 didn't give [police and crime commissioners](#) (PCCs) enough time to include this in their financial planning.

In December 2018, the government announced a pension grant for 2019/20 for each PCC. It allocated funding to each force to specifically help the police pay for

these increased costs in the next year. PCCs must now plan how they will finance the increased costs in the future. They need to assess the effect on officer numbers and their ability to provide effective and efficient services.

Leadership and workforce development

The force's leadership development underpins its strategic approach to build public trust and confidence in policing. The force identifies leaders in each part of its 'people first' strategy which explains how it develops its workforce.

The force wants to be a modern and transformed police service able to address both existing and future demand. The force has good processes in place to identify talent, develop its workforce and reinforce the attitudes and behaviours expected by the public.

The force's leadership and management development programme, aSPire, is open to existing and aspiring managers. It aims to build confidence and give officers and staff the skills they need to make rational judgments and decisions. The learning and development team, along with internal and outside specialists, provide facilitated learning sessions and workshops to improve the workforce's skills.

Workforce planning is well developed and accepted in the organisation. The force effectively plans for future workforce requirements in a methodical way to develop the skills of officers and staff.

The force recognises that developing people and keeping their skills is important. It has a good plan that focuses on supportive leadership and wellbeing. The aSPire leadership development programme includes a series of interactive sessions and workshops, leadership reflections (external inspirational and motivational speakers), [CPD](#) events and specific development courses.

Anyone can nominate themselves for a work-based assessment to ensure they are suitable to participate in the leadership programme and identify development needs. The officers and staff we spoke with explained they have opportunities to work with other teams to learn about different roles and develop new skills.

Ambition to improve

The force has a clear vision and ambition for the future, alongside a comprehensive understanding of current and future demand. The force's medium-term financial and workforce plans are based on credible and sensible assumptions. This includes a summary of expected funding and using reserves.

It is linked to budgeted posts for police officers, staff and PSCOs. Following changes to the force's operating model in July 2018, it has developed a culture of continuous improvement. It regularly looks to both the public and private sector for innovation and new approaches to improve efficiency. Its medium-term financial plans include initiatives across its directorates.

For example, creating a knowledge hub to help staff share data and intelligence with partner organisations, and introducing a single online platform for enquiries.

All projects and change programmes include realising benefits. These benefits are tracked and monitored at the monthly business change meeting and bi-monthly transformation board, chaired by the deputy chief constable.

The force uses its knowledge hub to evaluate and carry out early testing of change programmes, and to identify learning. It has made great efforts to understand what the workforce needs to be digitally competent and capable. The force sees ICT as an enabler with the potential to transform the way it works.

The force has invested in a replacement for its records management system: NICHE RMS. This replaces 12 existing systems to create a single platform to improve data collection and analysis. Staff have been trained and data is ready to transfer to the new system.

Staffordshire Police is committed to seeking and responding to ideas, innovation and different ways of working to reduce demand and improve its services.

Examples include the pilot of the telephone-based first response to domestic abuse, described earlier in this report. Plus the £220,000 from business rates giving the force more resources to tackle business crime in 2019/20.

The force is constantly looking for opportunities to collaborate with local public sector organisations and the private and voluntary sectors to increase its efficiency and reduce demand at source. Examples include a [mental health triage](#) service, multi-agency harm hubs and the [MASH](#) – all of which are covered in this report.

The force collaborates with other forces in the region on counter-terrorism and to tackle the threat from organised crime. It shares licensing procedures with West Midlands Police to issue certificates to people who hold authorised firearms and shotguns. The force is also part of the central motorway police group which jointly polices motorways in the region.

The force is collaborating with Staffordshire University, and West Mercia and Warwickshire police forces to implement the new, professional framework for the training of police officers and staff (Policing Education Qualifications Framework).

The force is recruiting police officers in new ways this financial year. These 'new routes' include police constable degree apprenticeships and the degree holder entry programme. These methods have changed the force's employment models. Extensive workforce planning and recruitment has been necessary to ensure they are successful.

Staffordshire Police and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service now use a single governance model, under the Staffordshire Commissioner. Following this move, the service is looking at more opportunities for working together. This includes opportunities across human resources, estates, finance and procurement, communications, legal services, learning and development, and business intelligence.

The service will look at sharing accommodation and facilities across the police and fire estates. It aims to be much more efficient, while improving the services provided to the public.

Legitimacy



Force in context

Comparison of Staffordshire workforce ethnicity with local population

as of 31 March 2019

	Staffordshire proportion	Local population proportion
Black, Asian and minority ethnic as % of those with stated ethnicity	2.5%	5.9%
White as % of those with stated ethnicity	97.5%	94.1%
Not Stated as % of total	0.7%	

	Staffordshire proportion	England and Wales proportion
Proportion of female officers in post as of 31st March 2019	28%	30%

Stop and search by ethnicity

12 months ending 31 March 2019

	Staffordshire disproportionality		
Stop and Search likelihood of BAME individuals compared to white individuals	3.8		
Stop and Search likelihood of Black or Black British individuals compared to white individuals	8.7		
	Staffordshire rate		England and Wales rate
Number of stops and searches per 1,000 population 12 months ending 31 March 2019	3.8		6.4

How legitimately does the force treat the public and its workforce?



Good

Summary

Staffordshire Police's leaders are positive ethical role models. Officers and [staff](#) understand the force's values. Leaders use these values when they make decisions.

Leaders promote a no-blame culture where the force tries not to blame people for mistakes, but instead learns from what went wrong. Officers and staff feel that the force supports them if they make mistakes.

The force needs to improve how people refer ethical concerns for discussion. This includes giving regular feedback about the decisions the force makes.

The force has vetted all officers and staff. Only a small number of the workforce need their vetting refreshed.

The force has effective ways of telling all officers and staff about the standards of behaviour it expects. It manages and identifies any risks of corruption.

Officers and staff understand the harm caused by [abuse of authority for a sexual purpose](#). The force has trained supervisors to recognise the warning signs of this type of serious corruption.

Treating the public fairly



Good

This question was not subject to inspection in 2018/19, and our judgment from the 2017 legitimacy inspection has been carried over. However, we reviewed a representative sample of 182 stop and search records to assess the reasonableness of the recorded grounds. We found that 74 percent contained reasonable grounds. Our assessment is based on the grounds recorded by the searching officer and not the grounds that existed at the time of the search.

In our [2017 legitimacy report](#), we recommended that all forces should:

- monitor and analyse comprehensive stop and search data to understand reasons for disparities;
- take action on those; and
- publish the analysis and the action by July 2018.

We found that the force has complied with some elements of this recommendation. It monitors and analyses stop and search data to understand reasons for disparities.

However, it does not identify the extent to which [find rates](#) vary between people from different ethnicities and across different types of searches (including separate identification of find rates for drug possession and supply-type offences).

It also isn't clear that the force monitors enough data to identify the frequency of possession-only drug searches or the extent to which these align with local or force-level priorities. We reviewed the force's website, but we couldn't find information on, or analysis of, the reasons for the disparities or any explanation of action it may have taken to address the imbalance.

In our last legitimacy inspection of Staffordshire Police in 2017, we identified three areas of improvement.

These were:

- the way the force records and scrutinises use of force;
- how it promotes learning opportunities; and
- making sure all frontline officers have a thorough understanding of how to use all coercive powers fairly and respectfully.

Although not specifically inspected this year, we are pleased to report that the force has addressed these areas for improvement.

It has improved both its recording and scrutiny of use of all types of force. It has introduced a system to record incidents accurately. This allows the force staff safety steering group to review and scrutinise the use of force effectively.

Outside scrutiny is provided by both the Staffordshire Commissioner's Office scrutiny group and at scrutiny panels in each of the local policing areas. This enables the force to identify trends and any learning opportunities to improve officers' understanding and ensure that the powers are used fairly and respectfully.

The force has introduced specific learning modules to its officer safety training sessions. This includes the appropriate use of force and effective communication skills. The force highlights good practice and the footage from [BWV](#) is used to reinforce learning. The force also provides refresher courses for officers where a performance issue has been identified.

Ethical and lawful workforce behaviour



Good

Leaders in Staffordshire Police act as positive, ethical role models. Officers and staff understand the force's values and ethics well.

Force policies and procedures about business interests and notifiable associations (people staff know who might compromise their work) support an ethical approach. The workforce understands them.

The force needs to improve the workforce's understanding of the process for referring ethical concerns for discussion.

We found that the force has made considerable progress in meeting national vetting standards. It has ensured that almost all members of the workforce have received at least the lowest level of vetting clearance for their roles.

Staffordshire Police identifies and manages organisational corruption risks adequately. It has completed a counter-corruption strategic assessment and control strategy.

Staffordshire Police has an effective, confidential system for its workforce to submit information about corrupt behaviour.

The force has effective methods of telling all officers and staff about the standards of behaviour it expects. It manages and identifies any risks of corruption. But the [counter-corruption unit](#) (CCU) does not have enough capacity to proactively monitor all workforce systems.

Areas for improvement

- The force should ensure that it uses an effective process for its workforce to refer ethical concerns. This includes giving regular feedback about the decisions the force makes, to encourage more submissions of ethical dilemmas, and support individual and organisational learning.
- The force should monitor its vetting decisions, to identify disparities and disproportionality (e.g. BAME groups) and act to address those as necessary.
- The force should ensure that its counter-corruption unit:
 - has enough capability and capacity to counter corruption effectively and proactively; and
 - can fully monitor all of its computer systems, including mobile data, to proactively identify data breaches, protect the force's data and identify computer misuse.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the force's performance in this area.

Maintaining an ethical culture

Staffordshire Police's leaders consistently promote the force's values and the [Code of Ethics](#). They are well understood by the workforce.

The chief constable and other members of the executive leadership team regularly give clear messages reinforcing the importance of high standards of ethical behaviour. The force uses its What if? and Crossing the Line campaigns to increase awareness of professional boundaries and threats to the workforce's integrity. These campaigns refer directly to the Code of Ethics. High standards of behaviour are reinforced at training events and in communications published on the force's intranet. The workforce holds the chief constable and other senior leaders in high regard. They are visible, accessible and engage with the workforce well.

During our inspection, we examined how far supervisors and staff understand the Code of Ethics and the force's values. They were able to describe the force's expectations, their use of the national decision model and the importance of fairness and accountability in policing.

We identified strong examples of the workforce challenging and reporting inappropriate behaviour. The force gives good levels of support to those who are affected by the investigation of misconduct cases.

Despite the workforce's appreciation of the principles of the Code of Ethics, we didn't find examples of difficult ethical dilemmas being discussed among teams. Nor was there a strong level of awareness of how ethical issues could be raised, other than with local line managers.

The force does not use an ethics board. Its view is that enough alternative forums exist that provide opportunities where the workforce can refer difficult ethical issues.

These include ETAP and the strategic service improvement board. We acknowledge that these provide ways for referrals to be made. However, knowledge of their existence among the wider workforce was limited. The force could do more to communicate the results of their decisions. This will encourage more people to submit ethical dilemmas and support organisational learning and continuous improvement.

Staffordshire Police encourages learning through experience, rather than blaming and punishing people.

The chief constable provides clear messages about the importance of trust in policing and how the force is enabling supervisors to make decisions without referring to more senior managers.

We confirmed that the [professional standards department](#) (PSD) has a proportionate approach to handling complaints and conduct cases. They are assessed for seriousness and referred promptly to supervisors. This means minor underperformance issues are resolved more swiftly.

The force does not use a yearly performance appraisal system. Instead it relies on periodic 'check in' meetings between line managers and the people they supervise to discuss performance and wellbeing.

Complementing this is an annual [integrity health check](#). This reminds officers and staff of their obligations to report business interests, gifts and hospitality, and associations with members of the public who could compromise their integrity.

However, we found that this is not being used consistently. The force is reviewing its approach. Reassuringly, we found that supervisors are vigilant to influences on wellbeing or integrity. Officers and staff have a thorough understanding of their obligation to tell the force of changes to their personal circumstances.

Officers and staff say the force will support them if minor mistakes are made in good faith. They explained the reasons for their decisions well. They apply the national decision model to ensure their decisions are accurate and they understand the standards of professional behaviour expected of them.

The force's policies include references to diversity and have clear references to the Code of Ethics. This means the force is more likely to maintain an ethical culture, which will help communities have confidence in its legitimacy.

During our 2017 effectiveness inspection, we considered how far the force was developing and maintaining an ethical culture through effective vetting procedures. We found not all the workforce were vetted to national standards.

This time, we were pleased to find that the force has made considerable progress in this area. The force has ensured almost all the workforce has received at least the lowest level of vetting clearance for their roles. Twenty-two need to have their vetting refreshed.

The force reviews vetting decisions made by its vetting unit. These decisions are taken without information relating to [protected characteristics](#) (such as age, gender or disability). This reduces the chance of [unconscious bias](#) influencing the decision maker.

The unit's manager consults with the force's diversity and inclusion officer when making decisions. If cases are appealed, these are forwarded to the deputy chief constable for assessment. Vetting forms do not differentiate applicants who are of black, Asian or minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds. So the force is unable to monitor the outcomes of its decisions to determine if under-represented groups are disproportionately affected by them.

The force meets its obligations to provide details to the [College of Policing](#) for the barred and advisory lists. These stop people who have left the service under investigation, or have been dismissed, from re-joining or working in law enforcement.

Staffordshire Police clarifies and reinforces standards of behaviour. The results and lessons learned from local and national cases are shared throughout the force. This includes specific messages given by the chief constable and emphasised in the weekly newsletter, *The Beat*, published on the force's intranet.

The PSD shares information in a twice-yearly newsletter that describes the lessons learnt and outcomes of cases.

The force makes easily accessible information about risks to integrity, including the reporting requirements relating to gifts and hospitality, available on its intranet. The PSD also provides input to all new police officers, police staff members and transferees about the expected standards of professional behaviour. This includes police cadets and volunteers.

During our inspection, we tested the workforce's knowledge of risks to integrity. There was widespread appreciation of these risks and the consequences of not following expected standards of behaviour. This shows the force's approach is effective.

Tackling corruption

Staffordshire Police takes steps to identify and manage internal corruption risks. However, its ability to identify and respond to these risks is limited because it cannot monitor all its ICT systems. Also, the capacity of its CCU is limited.

The force has completed a counter-corruption strategic assessment and control strategy. This influences the force's management of corruption risks. But it would benefit from more analysis of local case studies, to allow greater comparison between local and national corruption threats.

We identified that the force draws together different sources of information to assess corruption risks. For example, data held on its registers of business interests and notifiable associations, to identify members of its workforce who are at risk of corruption.

This approach is mostly reactive. The force doesn't hold a tactical meeting that regularly brings together representatives from different departments to review information and identify and track intervention measures in a structured way.

The force does use early intervention measures to prevent corrupt activity and support people. These measures include referrals to counselling and debt management services, and ethical interviews.

We reviewed 60 cases and found that the initial grading and assessment of intelligence did not consistently follow the [APP](#) guidance. Of the 60 items of intelligence we reviewed, 42 were not categorised in accordance with the national corruption categories. We also found that in a quarter of the cases some lines of enquiry were not pursued, and the force recorded insufficient rationale. However, from early 2019, the force has implemented a practice whereby all incidents are reviewed at detective inspector level prior to closure, to ensure rigour in the quality assessment process. The force has also implemented a review process to ensure all incidents are categorised in line with national corruption categories.

Given these practices are relatively new and not fully established we will revisit this in the future.

The force uses early intervention measures inconsistently. Further lines of enquiry, including ICT audits, would have been more suitable in some cases. However, the CCU has limited ability to monitor use of ICT systems, including hand-held and remote devices.

The force is working with its commercial ICT partner to identify the most suitable tool for mass auditing its systems. This will be an area of further scrutiny by us during future inspections. This is because the force faces challenges to ensure the capability and capacity of the CCU is sufficient to review intelligence and carry out effective investigations.

Reassuringly, the CCU can monitor social media and other public internet spaces. The force has started reviewing the structure of its PSD and CCU to determine how it can increase the CCU's capacity.

The CCU has developed strong links with partner organisations who support [vulnerable people](#), including victims of crime. We identified examples of serious misconduct reported to the force by partner organisations. This shows these communication channels are effective.

The force promotes its whistleblowing policies and anonymous reporting systems to its workforce. Officers and staff were aware of the 'bad apple' reporting line and email system – which they saw as confidential and anonymous – and were prepared to use it.

We also noted that the force's ETAP provided the force with its independent views on how suitable these reporting systems are.

The force uses the [NPCC](#) strategy to respond to the problem of police officers and staff who abuse their position for a sexual purpose. It recognises this behaviour as serious corruption and refers cases to the [Independent Office for Police Conduct](#).

Staffordshire Police is experienced in identifying and pursuing people who abuse their authority. Because the force can't monitor all its ICT systems effectively it hasn't yet achieved our 2016 national recommendation relating to [abuse of position](#). The CCU's capacity to handle intelligence remains an area of risk for the force. It recognises this.

The force acts to prevent inappropriate behaviour. The commitment shown by the CCU in engaging with the workforce using its Crossing the Line campaign videos, case studies and other material highlighting the harm caused to vulnerable people, is notable.

The workforce has a strong appreciation of the harm caused by this type of misbehaviour. Our reality testing confirmed that supervisors are vigilant to the warning signs that suggest someone may be abusing their position for a sexual purpose.

Officers and staff understand the serious consequences if they develop inappropriate relationships with members of the public. The force acts robustly in tackling people who abuse their position. This is shown by the way it handles misconduct cases over the longer term.

[Senior officers](#) comment explicitly on each case, describing the serious harm caused to victims and public confidence. The force actively publicises cases internally and externally to show how it deals effectively with this type of corrupt behaviour.

Treating the workforce fairly



Good

This question was not subject to inspection in 2018/19, and our judgment from the 2017 legitimacy inspection has been carried over. There were no areas for improvement identified from this inspection.

Annex A – About the data

Data in this report is from a range of sources, including:

- Home Office;
- Office for National Statistics (ONS);
- our inspection fieldwork; and
- data we collected directly from all 43 police forces in England and Wales.

When we collected data directly from police forces, we took reasonable steps to agree the design of the data collection with forces and with other interested parties such as the Home Office. We gave forces several opportunities to quality assure and validate the data they gave us, to make sure it was accurate. For instance:

- We shared the submitted data with forces, so they could review their own and other forces' data. This allowed them to analyse where data was notably different from other forces or internally inconsistent.
- We asked all forces to check the final data used in the report and correct any errors.

We set out the source of this report's data below.

Methodology

Data in the report

British Transport Police was outside the scope of inspection. Any aggregated totals for England and Wales exclude British Transport Police data, so will differ from those published by the Home Office.

When other forces were unable to supply data, we mention this under the relevant sections below.

Most similar groups

We compare each force's crime rate with the average rate for forces in its most similar group (MSG). MSGs are groups of similar police forces, based on analysis of demographic, social and economic factors which relate to crime. We could not identify any forces similar to City of London Police. Every other force has its own group of up to seven other forces which it is most similar to.

An MSG's crime rate is the sum of the recorded crimes in all the group's forces divided by its total population. All of the most similar forces (including the force being compared) are included in calculating the MSG average.

[More information about MSGs can be found on our website.](#)

Population

For all uses of population as a denominator in our calculations, unless otherwise noted, we use ONS mid-2018 population estimates.

Survey of police workforce

We surveyed the police workforce across England and Wales, to understand their views on workloads, redeployment and how suitable their assigned tasks were. This survey was a non-statistical, voluntary sample so the results may not be representative of the workforce population. The number of responses per force varied between 0 and 372. So we treated results with caution and didn't use them to assess individual force performance. Instead, we identified themes that we could explore further during fieldwork.

BMG survey of public attitudes towards policing (2018)

We commissioned BMG to survey public attitudes towards policing in 2018. Ipsos MORI conducted a similar version of the survey in 2015–2017.

The survey consisted of about 400 respondents for each of the 43 forces. Most surveys were completed online, by members of online research panels. However, a minority of the surveys (around 750) were conducted face-to-face. These face-to-face surveys were specifically targeted to groups that are traditionally under-represented on online panels. This aimed to make sure the survey respondents were as representative as possible of the total adult population of England and Wales. A small number of respondents were also surveyed online via postal invites to the survey.

Results were weighted by age, gender, ethnicity and indices of multiple deprivation to match population profiles. The sampling method used is not a statistical random sample and the sample size was small, which may be more problematic for larger force areas compared to small ones. So any results provided are only an indication of satisfaction rather than an absolute.

[The findings of this survey, and previous surveys, are available on our website.](#)

Review of crime files

We reviewed police case files for these crime types:

- theft from person;
- rape (including attempts);
- stalking;
- harassment;
- common assault;
- grievous bodily harm (wounding); and
- actual bodily harm.

Our file review was designed to provide a broad overview of how well the police:

- identify vulnerability;
- conduct investigations; and
- treat victims.

We randomly selected files from crimes recorded between 1 June and 31 August 2019 and assessed them against several criteria. We reviewed 60 case files in each force, except for West Yorkshire Police where we reviewed 90.

For our file review, we only selected a small sample size of cases per force. So we didn't use results from as the only basis for assessing individual force performance, but alongside other evidence.

Force in context

999 calls

We collected this data directly from all 43 police forces in England and Wales.

Recorded crime and crime outcomes

We took this data from the October 2019 release of the Home Office [police recorded crime and outcomes data tables](#).

Total police-recorded crime includes all crime (except fraud) recorded by all forces in England and Wales (except BTP). Home Office publications on the overall volumes and rates of recorded crime and outcomes include British Transport Police, which is outside the scope of this HMICFRS inspection. Therefore, England and Wales rates in this report will differ from those published by the Home Office.

Police-recorded crime data should be treated with care. Recent increases may be due to forces' renewed focus on accurate crime recording since our 2014 national crime data inspection.

Other notable points to consider when interpreting outcomes data are listed below.

- Crime outcome proportions show the percentage of crimes recorded in the 12 months ending 31 March 2019 that have been assigned each outcome. This means that each crime is tracked or linked to its outcome. So this data is subject to change, as more crimes are assigned outcomes over time.
- Under the new framework, 37 police forces in England and Wales provide outcomes data through the HODH every month. All other forces provide this data via a monthly manual return.
- Leicestershire, Staffordshire and West Yorkshire forces participated in the Ministry of Justice's out of court disposals pilot. As part of the pilot, they stopped issuing simple cautions or cannabis/khat warnings and restricted their use of penalty notices for disorder for adult offenders. These three forces continued to follow these procedures since the pilot ended in November 2015. Later, other forces also limited their use of some out of court disposals. So the outcomes data should be viewed with this in mind.

For a full commentary and explanation of outcome types please see the Home Office statistics, [Crime outcomes in England and Wales: year ending March 2019](#).

Domestic abuse outcomes

In England and Wales, 29 police forces provide domestic abuse outcomes data through the Home Office data hub (HODH) every month. We collected this data directly from the remaining 14 forces.

Domestic abuse outcome proportions show the percentage of crimes recorded in the 12 months ending 31 March 2018 that have been assigned each outcome. This means that each crime is tracked or linked to its outcome. So this data is subject to change, as more crimes are assigned outcomes over time.

Workforce figures (including ethnicity and gender)

This data was obtained from the Home Office annual data return 502. The data is available from the Home Office's published [police workforce England and Wales statistics](#) or the [police workforce open data tables](#). The Home Office may have updated these figures since we obtained them for this report.

The data gives the full-time equivalent workforce figures as at 31 March. The figures include section 38-designated investigation, detention or escort officers, but not section 39-designated detention or escort staff. They include officers on career breaks and other types of long-term absence but exclude those seconded to other forces.

Spend per head of population

We took this data from the [HMICFRS value for money profiles](#).

These profiles are based on data collected by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy, through the Police Objective Analysis. The spend over time figures are adjusted for inflation. The population figures are ONS mid-year estimates, with the 2019/20 value calculated by assessing the trend for the last five years. [More details on this data can be found on our website](#).

Stop and search

We took this data from the Home Office publication, [Police powers and procedures, England and Wales year ending 31 March 2019](#). Stop and search totals exclude vehicle only searches and searches where the subject's ethnicity was not stated.

February 2020 | © HMICFRS 2020 | ISBN: 978-1-78655-952-4

www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs