

## Cambridgeshire Constabulary judged as 'good' at legitimately keeping people safe and reducing crime – HMIC

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) has assessed how legitimate Cambridgeshire Constabulary is at keeping people safe and reducing crime. This is the second year running HMIC has carried out inspections of this kind, which makes up part of HMIC's annual PEEL inspections.

HMIC considers a police force to be legitimate if it has the consent of the public, and if those working in the force consistently behave in a way that is fair, ethical, and within the law.

To assess this, HMIC has inspected how well forces treat the people they serve; ensure their workforce acts ethically and lawfully; and treat their workforces with fairness and respect. The findings of this inspection are included in a report, published today.

This inspection also included, for the first time, an assessment of how well forces tackle the problem of abuse of authority for sexual gain by members of its workforce. This serious form of corruption betrays the trust of the public and, while we identified some examples of good practice, there remain significant areas where forces must improve. The service needs to be more proactive in seeking out and preventing this form of corruption, and referring cases of abuse of authority to the IPCC.

HMIC found that Cambridgeshire Constabulary:

- is good at acting on feedback and learning to improve the way it treats all the people it serves;
- is good at treating its workforce with fairness and respect; and
- has failed to implement recommendations from HMIC's 2014 integrity and corruption report.

### **HM Inspector of Constabulary Zoë Billingham said:**

“Cambridgeshire Constabulary has performed well in this inspection. The force's alliance with Bedfordshire Police and Hertfordshire Constabulary is proving to be successful in a number of areas that we have inspected, allowing the forces involved to share resources, which provides real benefits.

"We found that treating people fairly and respectfully is integral to the Cambridgeshire Constabulary's mission and values, and most officers and staff understand its importance. In our previous inspection in 2015, we found that the force was not complying with certain aspects of the Best Use of Stop and Search scheme. As HMIC reported earlier in the year, I am pleased to say that the force has taken steps to improve this area and is now compliant.

"Cambridgeshire Constabulary also treats its workforce with fairness and respect, with a positive approach to staff wellbeing. More emphasis has been placed on supervisors offering support to their teams as opposed to relying on HR professionals, which is starting to become day-to-day practice.

"It is not all positive news however. I am concerned that Cambridgeshire Constabulary had failed to take action on some of the HMIC Police Integrity and Corruption recommendations made in 2014. It took the collapse of a court case to prompt the force and its alliance partners to address the areas of concern we identified.

"The force needs to do more to prevent officers and staff from abusing their position for sexual gain (taking advantage of their position of power to exploit vulnerable victims of crime). It needs to communicate to its workforce how serious an offence this is. In addition, a proactive approach to gathering intelligence is needed if the force is to successfully guard against the rare occasions when officers seek to abuse their authority. I am encouraged that the force recognises this issue and is already taking steps to address its deficiencies in this vitally important area.

"Taking all the work that the force is doing to engender a culture of legitimacy and respect, and in particular in the way in which officers and staff deal with members of the public, I have judged that overall Cambridgeshire Constabulary is 'good' in how legitimately it keeps people safe and reduces crime. I will continue to monitor how the force performs in this area."

HMIC has also published individual assessments of the leadership within each police force in England and Wales. This, along with individual reports on the legitimacy of all forces in England and Wales, is available on HMIC's website.