Promoting improvements
in policing to make
everyone safer

PEEL: Police legitimacy 2016

An inspection of Essex Police

Contents

Introduction

As part of our annual inspections of police effectiveness, efficiency, legitimacy and leadership (PEEL), Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) assesses the legitimacy of police forces across England and Wales.

Police legitimacy – a concept that is well established in the UK as 'policing by consent' – is crucial in a democratic society. The police have powers to act in ways that would be considered illegal by any other member of the public (for example, by using force or depriving people of their liberty). It is therefore vital that they use these powers fairly, and that they treat people with respect in the course of their duties.

Police legitimacy is also required for the police to be effective and efficient: as well as motivating the public to co-operate with the police and respect the law, it encourages them to become more socially responsible. The more the public supports the police by providing information or becoming more involved in policing activities (such as via Neighbourhood Watch or other voluntary activity), the greater the reduction in demand on police forces.

To achieve this support – or 'consent' – the public needs to believe that the police will treat them with respect and make fair decisions (while taking the time to explain those decisions), as well as being friendly and approachable.[1] This is often referred to as 'procedural justice'. Police actions that are perceived to be unfair or disrespectful can have extremely negative results for police legitimacy in the eyes of the public.

Police officers and staff are more likely to treat the public with fairness and respect if they feel that they themselves are being treated fairly and respectfully, particularly by their own police force. It is therefore important that the decisions made by their force about the things that affect them are perceived to be fair.[2] This principle is described as 'organisational justice', and HMIC considers that, alongside the principle of procedural justice, it makes up a vital aspect of any assessment of police legitimacy.

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[1] *It's a fair cop? Police legitimacy, public cooperation, and crime reduction*, National Policing Improvement Agency, September 2011. Available at: http://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/Fair_cop_Full_Report.pdf

[2] *Fair cop 2: Organisational justice, behaviour and ethical policing*, College of Policing, 2015. Available at: http://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/150317_Fair_cop%202_FINAL_REPORT.pdf

One of the most important areas in which internal organisational justice and external procedural justice principles come together is the way in which police forces tackle corruption. How this is done needs to be seen to be fair and legitimate in the eyes of both the police workforce and the general public.

HMIC's legitimacy inspection assessed all of these areas during 2016. More information on how we inspect and grade forces as part of this wide-ranging inspection is available on the HMIC website (www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/peel-assessments/how-we-inspect/). This report sets out our findings for Essex Police.

Reports on Essex Police's efficiency and leadership inspections are available on the HMIC website (www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/peel-assessments/peel-2016/essex/). Our reports on police effectiveness will be published in early 2017.

Force in numbers

Workforce

Total workforce as of 31 March 2016

4,951

Total workforce breakdown as of 31 March 2016

officers	staff	PCSOs
2,894	**1,838**	**219**

Ethnic diversity

Percentage of BAME in workforce 31 March 2016

overall workforce

2.4%

officers	staff	PCSOs
2.1%	**3.0%**	**2.3%**

Percentage of BAME in local population, 2011 Census

6.8%

Gender diversity

Percentage of females in overall workforce 31 March 2016

Essex Police	England and Wales population, 2011 Census
43%	**51%**

Percentage of females by role 31 March 2016

Essex Police

officers	staff	PCSOs
29%	**61%**	**58%**

Public complaints

Number of public complaints per 1,000 workforce 12 months to 31 March 2016

	Essex Police	England and Wales force average
Officers	290	268
Staff (including PCSOs)	81	61

Grievances

Number of grievances per 1,000 workforce raised and finalised 12 months to 31 March 2016

	Essex Police	England and Wales force average
Officers	5.5	4.8
Staff (including PCSOs)	8.3	6.8

Victim satisfaction

Victim satisfaction with their overall treatment by the police 12 months to 31 March 2016

	Essex Police	England and Wales force average
	88.5%	93.4%

For further information about the data in this graphic please see annex A

Overview – How legitimate is the force at keeping people safe and reducing crime?

Overall judgment[3]

⬤⬤⬤◯ **Good**

Essex Police has been assessed as good in respect of the legitimacy with which it keeps people safe and reduces crime. Our findings this year are consistent with last year's findings, in which we judged the force to be good in respect of the legitimacy.

The force understands the importance of treating the public and its workforce with fairness and respect. It is good at identifying, understanding and responding to issues that might undermine public confidence and satisfaction. The force has a clear focus on the wellbeing of its workforce.

Overall summary

Essex Police is good at treating the people it serves with fairness and respect. It has clear and well-established vision and values, which are in line with the Code of Ethics,[4] and understood across the workforce. The force seeks feedback and challenge, especially from those who have less trust and confidence in the police or who may be less likely to express their views, and works hard to make improvements. It uses a wide variety of methods to communicate with the public, including through its website and meetings with the community, independent advisory groups and the organisation Victim Support, and makes good use of social media.

The force is determined to understand the issues that are important to its communities. Lessons learned are shared widely across the force and are used to inform training. Victim satisfaction with overall treatment by the force is lower than

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[3] HMIC judgments are: outstanding, good, requires improvement and inadequate.

[4] *Promoting ethical behaviour and preventing wrongdoing in organisations*, College of Policing, 2015. Available at:
http://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/150317_Integrity_REA_FINAL_REPORT.pdf
and *The role of leadership in promoting ethical police behaviour,* College of Policing, 2015. Available at:
http://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/150317_Ethical_leadership_FINAL_REPORT.pdf *and Literature review – Police integrity and corruption*, HMIC, January 2015. Available at:
www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/integrity-matters/

the England and Wales average, but the force is striving to improve. The force's stop and search process is scrutinised by independent panels, including a youth panel.

Workforce vetting processes are good. Although there is a vetting backlog, the force has a reasonable plan to deal with this, based on minimising risk. The force provides up-to-date details of disapproved officers to the College of Policing. Acceptable and unacceptable behaviours are emphasised and clarified for the workforce regularly, underpinned by training that includes ethical dilemmas. While the force has the ability to review and manage many risks to the integrity of the organisation, it needs to do more work, including updating its control strategy, before it can be satisfied that it can manage all such risks.

Essex Police and its workforce have a good understanding of abuse of authority for sexual gain (taking advantage of a position of power to exploit vulnerable victims of crime) and it is treated as serious corruption. The force ensures that it publicises the outcomes of misconduct and corruption cases.

The force is good at seeking the views of the workforce, including volunteers, using suggestions schemes, face-to-face meetings and staff surveys. However, it is slow to publicise the actions taken in response to surveys. Officers and staff can obtain advice and guidance around issues of unfairness.

With a clear focus on wellbeing, that is perceived to be authentic by the workforce; the force uses a variety of measures to support workforce wellbeing, including both mental and emotional wellbeing, and to prevent problems escalating. For example, wellbeing training aims to develop individual resilience by equipping staff with strategies and tools to deal with the everyday pressures of life and work. The force has effective personal performance arrangements in place, but the use and quality of these is mixed and could be improved. The performance improvement unit, however, provides an excellent support service for performance and attendance issues.

Recommendations

HMIC has not identified any causes of concern and has therefore made no specific recommendations.

Areas for improvement

- The force should ensure that it has the capability and/or capacity to monitor all its computer systems to identify risks to the force's integrity.

- Annually, the force should produce a local counter-corruption strategic assessment and control strategy, to identify risks to the force's integrity

- The force should improve how it communicates the action it has taken in response to issues identified by the workforce.

- The force should improve how it manages individual performance.

To what extent does the force treat all of the people it serves with fairness and respect?

College of Policing research suggests that, in the eyes of the public, police legitimacy stems primarily from the concept of 'procedural justice': the expectation that officers will treat the public respectfully and make fair decisions (explaining them openly and clearly), while being consistently friendly and approachable.[5]

While HMIC recognises that police legitimacy stems from much broader experiences of the police than direct contact alone, our 2016 inspection focused specifically on public perceptions of fair treatment. Our inspection aims to assess how far the force can demonstrate the importance it places on maintaining procedural justice; and the extent to which it is seeking feedback to enable it to prioritise and act on those areas that have the greatest negative impact on public perceptions of fair and respectful treatment (e.g. stop and search, surveillance powers or use of force). This should include how the force is approaching those groups that have the least trust and confidence in the police.

To what extent does the force understand the importance of treating the people it serves with fairness and respect?

It is important for the police to understand that it is procedural justice – making fair decisions and treating people with respect – that drives police legitimacy in the eyes of the public, over and above police effectiveness at preventing and detecting crime.[6] HMIC assessed the extent to which the importance of procedural justice was reflected in the force's vision and values, and the extent to which it was it was understood by the workforce.

Organisational values

Essex Police has a clear and well established vision and values which are in line with the Code of Ethics. The vision and values emphasise the importance of fair and respectful treatment and these principles are well reflected in force policies. All new policies and procedures are reviewed by the professional standards department (PSD) to ensure compliance with the code. The force has provided training on the code to staff including special constabulary officers, which was well received and the code understood. Senior members of staff have been involved in facilitating this e-training thereby reinforcing the force's commitment. Overall, the force has solid

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[5] *It's a fair cop? Police legitimacy, public cooperation, and crime reduction*, National Policing Improvement Agency, September 2011. Available at: http://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/Fair_cop_Full_Report.pdf

[6] *Ibid.*

foundations on which to build its legitimacy work and continues to make excellent progress in this area.

How well does the force seek feedback and identify those issues and areas that have the greatest impact on people's perceptions of fair and respectful treatment?

HMIC's 2015 legitimacy inspection found a positive picture of how forces were engaging with communities. This year HMIC's assessment focused specifically on the extent to which forces are working to identify and understand the issues that have the greatest impact on people's perceptions of fair and respectful treatment, including how well they seek feedback and challenge from the people they serve.

Seeking feedback and challenge

Essex Police frequently seeks feedback and challenge in a range of ways from many of the people it serves and consults them on its strategies and plans. This includes encouraging those identified as less likely to have trust and confidence in the police or to complain or take part in traditional forms of engagement, to have a voice. Examples include 111 young people from communities across Essex being asked for their views on the aims of the 'Children and Young Person Strategy', and young people aged 11-17 being involved in the interview process for the force's new 'Children and Young Person Officer' posts. The force has engaged with groups representing deaf people which resulted in changes being made to the technology provided by the force for deaf people to make contact with Essex Police.

The force has sought the help of the independent advisory group[7] (IAG) to develop its approaches to crime prevention and public engagement. This involved dispensing victim support packs among hard to reach communities on the behalf of the force. In another example, together with Victim Support,[8] the force has commissioned a review of hate crime from the victim's perspective in order to find out what works and what does not, what services victims think are available, and to assess the extent of hate crime on public transport.

In respect of its broader public engagement, the force website enables members of the public to leave feedback and it explains how to make a complaint and how that complaint will be managed. The force also uses social media extensively. For instance, it uses Facebook and Instagram frequently to send out messages and

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[7] The IAG is a focus group that brings together, at quarterly meetings, people from across Essex, of all ages, and all strands of diversity, who provide their knowledge and experience to help Essex Police police its communities.

[8] Victim Support is an independent charity for people affected by crime and traumatic events in England and Wales. Its specialist teams provide individual, emotional and practical help people to cope with and recover from the effects of crime.

engage in conversations with communities. The force has reviewed its social media work and estimates that it has engaged with two and a half million people, of which 88 percent are under the age of 55. Essex Community Messaging (ECM) is an established web-based communication system which has 10,000 members across the county. Communities can also have access to the system through the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme. The ECM primarily is used by the force to pass on messages about crime, incidents, or general information; however it also has a facility that allows the public to respond and give feedback.

The force does, however recognise that not everyone in the community is online and that many victims of fraud are elderly. The serious economic crime unit, working with local council partners, has therefore given presentations on fraud and cyber prevention at events that are hosted at community centres or doctors surgeries for older people, to whom they also distributed copies of the 'Fraud isn't a scam' information booklet. Other methods of engagement include radio broadcasts to Polish communities and participation in forums, such as the rural crime forum, where landowners, farmers, church leaders and other rural community groups have a voice. As is the case with most forces, Essex Police also carries out public surveys. In this variety of ways Essex Police has demonstrated that it reaches out to its communities including those who have less trust and confidence in the police.

Identifying and understanding the issues

Essex Police records, monitors and analyses a substantial range of information on police interactions with the public, to identify and understand those issues that have the greatest impact on public perceptions of fair and respectful treatment. The force's quality of service group meets on a six-weekly basis to consider performance data about service delivery, with key issues being identified for further action. Despite this activity, however, the victim satisfaction rate with overall treatment for the force remains lower than the England and Wales average. Recognising this issue, the force commissioned research by Anglia Ruskin University on public confidence in Essex Police. The subsequent report outlined tasks and options for improvements. These included the need to publicise to officers and staff their obligations under the Victims' Code of Practice. As a consequence, the force has emphasised the importance of giving feedback in person to victims and to addressing or correcting what victims have seen as poor service.

All forces are required to conduct victim satisfaction surveys with specified victims of crime groups and provide data on a quarterly basis. The surveys take account of victims' experience of the service provided to them by the police and inform forces' improvements to their service provision, including examining how well victims feel they are treated.

Figure 1: Percentage of victims satisfied with overall treatment by Essex Police compared with England and Wales, from the 12 months to 31 March 2011 to the 12 months to 31 March 2016
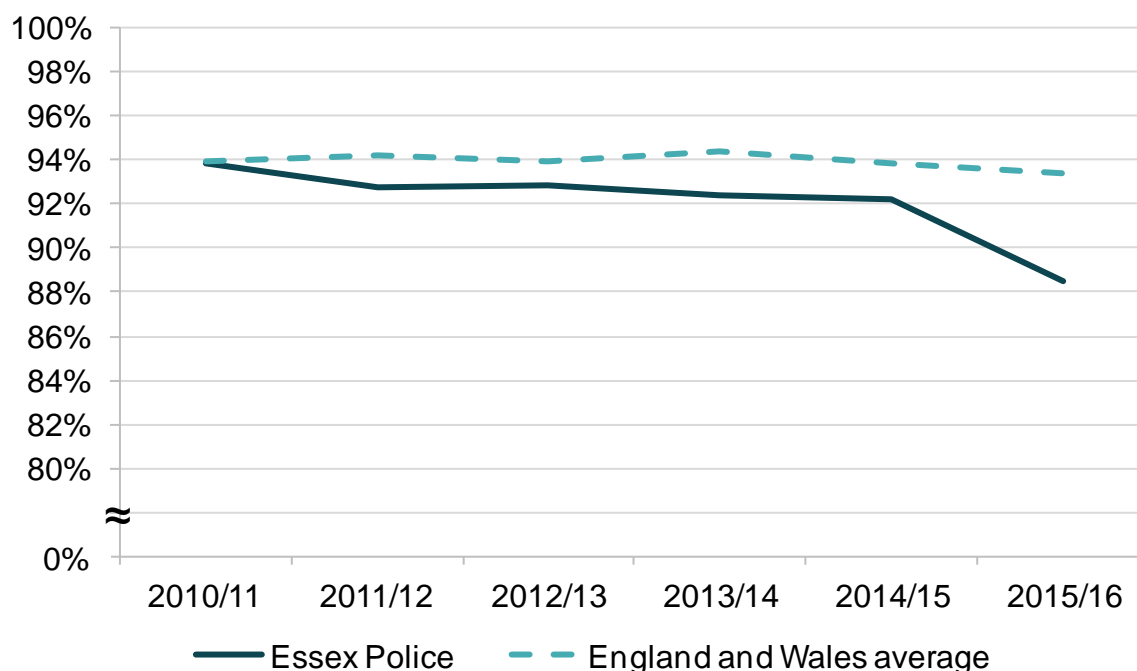

Source: Home Office Annual Data Requirement
For further information about the data in figure 1 please see annex A

In the 12 months to 31 March 2016, 88.5 percent of all victims of crime (excluding hate crime) who responded to the victim satisfaction survey were satisfied with the overall treatment provided by Essex Police, which was lower than the England and Wales average of 93.4 percent; and lower than the 92.2 percent who were satisfied with the overall treatment that the force provided in the 12 months to 31 March 2015, this is a statistically significant difference.

There is an established independent custody visitor (ICV) scheme which reports regularly on how the force is treating detained people, by conducting unannounced visits to custody suites. Members of the scheme told inspectors that they find custody staff to be respectful and fair and that this was also the feedback they received consistently from detained persons. They also report issues which are identified are taken seriously. This includes raising issues which have an impact on national policy or practice. For instance, the force has questioned a requirement for detained females to use paper suits due to suicide risks, during their menstrual cycle and has raised this with the Home Office and the ICV for discussion and solution.

Each force in England and Wales is required to recorded the nature of complaint cases and allegations and be able to produce complaints data annually. The numbers and types of complaints are valuable sources of information for forces and can be used to help them identify areas of dissatisfaction with their service provision, and take steps to improve how they treat the public.

Figure 2: Number of public complaint cases recorded against officers (per 1,000 officers) or staff (per 1,000 staff, including police community support officers) in Essex Police compared with England and Wales, in the 12 months to 31 March 2016
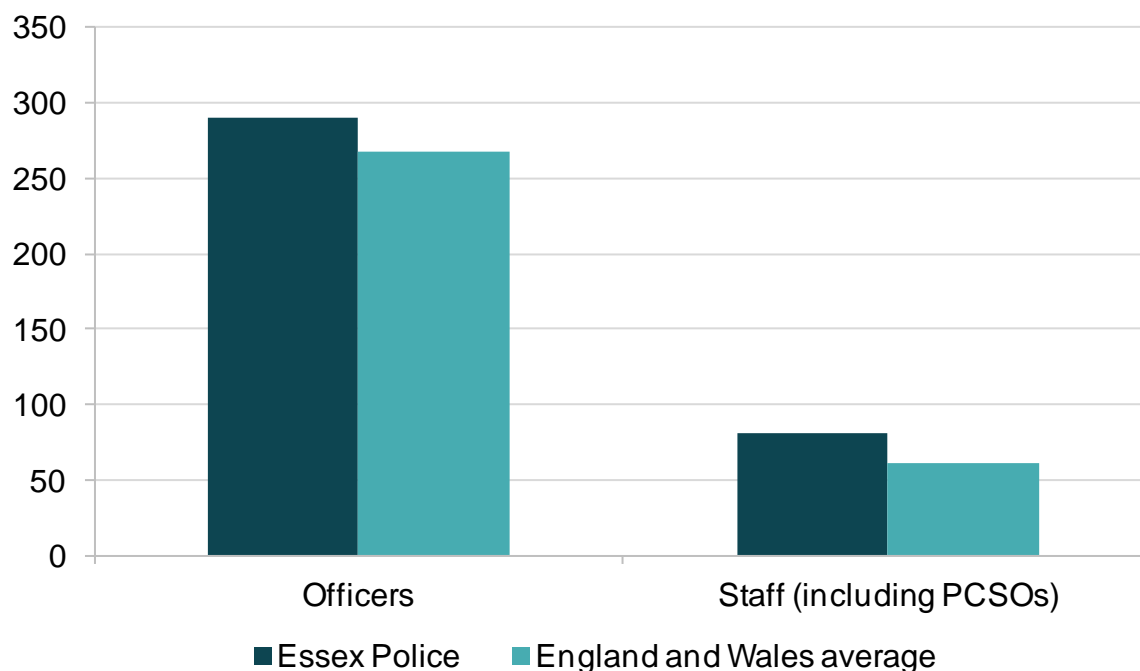
In the 12 months to 31 March 2016, Essex Police recorded 290 public complaint cases per 1,000 officers, which was broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 268 cases per 1,000 officers. During this period, the force recorded 81 public complaint cases per 1,000 staff (including PCSOs), which was broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 61 cases per 1,000 staff (including PCSOs).

The most recent Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) data from forces show that, for April, May and June 2016, the types of complaint most frequently recorded by Essex Police are 'other neglect or failure in duty' and 'incivility, impoliteness and intolerance'.[9] It is important to note, however, an issue identified during our 2014 inspection on police integrity and corruption;[10] complaint allegation categories used by different forces may overlap with each other. For instance, similar allegations might be recorded by one force as 'other neglect or failure in duty', and by another force as 'other irregularity in procedure' or 'lack of fairness and impartiality'. This means there is no definitive way of establishing accurately the number of public complaints about certain behaviours.

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[9] Independent Police Complaints Commission data are available at: www.ipcc.gov.uk/reports/statistics/police-complaints/police-performance-data

[10] *Integrity matters*, HMIC, January 2015. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/integrity-matters/

The force has a small triage team within PSD which assesses all complaints and contacts every complainant within 48 hours and, if appropriate, deals with the complaint. The force received a recommendation in HMIC's 2014 Police Integrity and Corruption report which required the force to introduce a centralised process to monitor the timeliness, effectiveness and management of investigations into public complaints. The force has successfully responded to this recommendation. A centralised process to monitor complaints has been in place since 2015.

The force local policing support unit scrutinises all stop and search records and its independent stop and search scrutiny panel views randomly selected body worn camera footage of stop and search. Furthermore, a young people's stop and search scrutiny panel is also in place that enables feedback to be given to police officers on the conduct and use of their stop and search powers. Any lessons learned and good practice identified is fed back to frontline officers and supervisors.

These arrangements demonstrate that the force is well placed to identify and understand issues that are of concern to its communities.

How well does the force act on feedback and learning to improve the way it treats all the people it serves, and demonstrate that it is doing so?

It is important that as well as actively seeking feedback from the public, the force also responds to that feedback. HMIC assessed the extent to which this response includes changes to the way the force operates to reduce the likelihood of similar incidents occurring in future, as well as resolving individual incidents or concerns, and how well the force communicates to the public the effectiveness of this action.

Making improvements

The force is consistent in the way that it applies lessons learned to improve its services. The force has a number of standing groups whose role it is to explore the feedback and information the force has gathered from the variety of sources identified above. These arrangements include the performance meetings, the change management board, the corruption board, and the PSD management meetings. As a consequence, the force has a good understanding of the important issue of fair and respectful treatment. The force also recognises the importance of recommendations made by the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC). It determines action to address issues and ensures that this takes place through monitoring by chief officer-led gold groups. An example of a gold group effectively leading work on IPCC recommendations is Operation Maple; an investigation into the force's child abuse investigation team in the north of the county. The gold group quickly responded to the issues raised by leading notable improvements in service delivery.

The force works hard to ensure the lessons learned are shared, implemented and, if necessary, incorporated into force training. A variety of methods are used to disseminate the lessons learned to the workforce; these include the Chief's blog, which has a very high hit rate, intranet articles and training. The force's learning and development department frequently communicates to the workforce the lessons learned from community feedback. It also identifies and explains the causes of negative perceptions by using national and local 'learning the lessons' documentation in training sessions. There is a regular meeting between the PSD and the force's training college staff to decide how the lessons learned are best circulated and integrated. Any issue, local or national that is simple and easy to understand without further elaboration, is circulated quickly via the force website, and then backed up with training if required.

The force ran a 'Delivering Quality of Service' focus week during April 2016. Local inspectors and the force's quality of service team reviewed 'live' and 'filed' investigations to assess the extent to which these reflected a victim-focused approach and to determine what contact had been carried out. Some 293 investigations were examined and feedback was sent to staff and supervisors. The process generated new ideas and the force anticipates it will lead to an improved service to the public in the future.

In August 2014, following HMIC's 2013 inspection on the effective and fair use of stop and search powers,[11] the Home Office published guidance to police forces on how to implement the Best Use of Stop and Search (BUSS) scheme.[12] The scheme aims to increase transparency and community involvement, and to support a more intelligence-led use of the powers leading to better outcomes. All police forces in England and Wales signed up to participate in the scheme. In 2015, HMIC's legitimacy inspection[13] considered the extent to which the force was complying with the scheme and found that it did not comply with all features of the scheme. In autumn 2016, HMIC will re-assess the force's compliance with those features of the scheme that it was not complying with in 2015. We will publish our findings in early 2017.

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[11] *Stop and Search Powers – are the police using them effectively and fairly?* HMIC, July 2013. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/stop-and-search-powers-20130709/

[12] *Best Use of Stop and Search Scheme*, Home Office, August 2014. Available at: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/346922/Best_Use_of_Stop_and_Search_Scheme_v3.0_v2.pdf

[13] *PEEL: Police legitimacy 2015 – A national overview*, HMIC, February 2016. Available at: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/police-legitimacy-2015/

Demonstrating effectiveness

The force uses a variety of methods to engage with the public, including many web-based interactions, such as ECM, which is used by the force to inform its work on developing improved working practices and to respond to public concerns about the service provided. It also uses more traditional methods such as phone surveys and face-to-face meetings, including by its local policing teams. The force has built up its social media audience in the last four years. It reports that it has 132,000 Twitter followers with over 100 police officers and members of staff who regularly tweet. There is also a large following on Facebook with the Essex Police page receiving 117,000 'likes'. The force also feeds back progress through police and crime commissioner (PCC) public meetings. Responses to specific complaints are made directly to the complainant through the relevant inspector. The force responds to more general negative publicity, such as criticism of its handling of an unauthorised Travellers' camp, through local media. In this case, the force explained what it had done and why, through local press and radio. The force is taking steps to improve the way it communicates to the public how it is improving its services in response to their concerns.

Summary of findings

Good

Essex Police has a clear and well-established vision and values which are in line with the Code of Ethics and which help to ensure fairness and respect are understood across the workforce. The force is good at identifying and understanding issues that might undermine confidence and satisfaction, including encouraging those identified as having less trust and confidence in the police to express their views and works hard to improve as a consequence. The force uses a wide variety of media to communicate with the public about those issues that have an impact on negative and positive perceptions and experiences. Its use of social media is particularly strong. Lessons learned are shared widely and are used to inform training. Despite these arrangements, the victim satisfaction rate with overall treatment for the force remains lower than the England and Wales average. However, the force continues to strive to improve. A scrutiny of its stop and search process by independent panels, including a youth panel is mature and provides evidence of the force's determination to gain a good understanding of issues that are of concern to its communities.

How well does the force ensure that its workforce behaves ethically and lawfully?

In 2014, HMIC inspected the extent to which the police were acting with integrity and guarding against corruption.[14] Given the continued importance of this topic, we are returning in this question to those national recommendations emerging from the 2014 report from that inspection, that our 2015 legitimacy inspection did not cover. Our inspection focus this year also reflects research showing that prevention is better than cure: the best way to ensure that police workforces behave ethically is for the forces to develop an ethical culture and to have systems in place to identify potential risks to the integrity of the organisations, so that forces can intervene early to reduce the likelihood of corruption.[15]

How well does the force develop and maintain an ethical culture?

One of the first things forces can do to develop an ethical culture is to use effective vetting procedures to recruit applicants who are more likely to have a high standard of ethical behaviour, and to reject those who may have demonstrated questionable standards of behaviour in the past, or whose identities cannot be confirmed.

Once recruited, one of the best ways to prevent corruption from occurring among the workforce is by establishing an ethical working environment or culture. To achieve this, forces need to clarify and continue to reinforce and exemplify acceptable and unacceptable standards of behaviour, including the Code of Ethics.[16] This year, HMIC focused on assessing progress in those areas highlighted for improvement in our 2015 legitimacy inspection and our 2014 integrity and corruption inspection.

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[14] *Integrity matters*, HMIC, January 2015. Available from:
www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/integrity-matters/

[15] *Promoting ethical behaviour and preventing wrongdoing in organisations*, College of Policing, 2015. Available at:
http://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/150317_Integrity_REA_FINAL_REPORT.pdf

[16] *Promoting ethical behaviour and preventing wrongdoing in organisations*, College of Policing, 2015. Available at:
http://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/150317_Integrity_REA_FINAL_REPORT.pdf
and *The role of leadership in promoting ethical police behaviour,* College of Policing, 2015. Available at:
http://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/150317_Ethical_leadership_FINAL_REPORT.pdf *and Literature review – Police integrity and corruption*, HMIC, January 2015. Available at:
www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/integrity-matters/

Initial vetting

Essex Police has comprehensive initial vetting arrangements for officers, staff and volunteers, and is compliant with national police vetting policy.[17] All new joiners to the force; officers, staff, volunteers, partners and contractors are vetted. It recently adapted its process for the vetting of contractors to take account of the specific circumstances and timing of the contract. People transferring into the force from another are vetted before their start date, and no-one can have access to force systems until they have passed vetting. There is currently a backlog of 109 officers waiting to be vetted to bring them up to the standards set by national police vetting policy. . The force has a reasonable plan to deal with the issue by the end of 2016, including an escalation process to minimise risk and all those awaiting vetting are in non-sensitive posts. The force human resource department conducts some monitoring of potential recruits with protected characteristics (such as gender, age or disability) who are screened out through vetting and is developing its understanding of the levels at which these individuals have been screened out.

The College of Policing's 'disapproved register' contains details of those officers who have been dismissed from the service or who either resigned or retired while subject to a gross misconduct investigation where it had been determined there would have been a case to answer. The force complies with its obligations to provide the College of Policing with details of those officers and staff who have been dismissed from the service for inclusion on the current disapproved register.

Clarifying and reinforcing standards of behaviour

Essex Police frequently clarifies and reinforces acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, including through the Code of Ethics which is fully embedded and understood by the workforce. Senior leaders have a comprehensive understanding of the importance of their role as authentic, ethical role models. This understanding is demonstrated in a broad range of ways, including, but not limited to, easily accessible publication of chief officer gifts and hospitality, business interests and pay and reward.

The force continues to clarify and reinforce acceptable and unacceptable behaviour through a variety of means including through the chief officer's road show, and the chief constable's blog, which is widely read. Key messages include that, if people do the right thing, they will be supported by the force, but that inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated. Standards of behaviour and the Code of Ethics are emphasised during a range of training courses including probationary officer foundation training and officer safety training. HMIC found that training sessions frequently include

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[17] ACPO / ACPOS National Vetting Policy for the Police Community, Association of Chief Police Officers, 2012. Available from: www.northants.police.uk/files/documents/Freedom Of Information/ac^ACPO National Vetting Policy.pdf
 ACPO is now the National Police Chiefs' Council.

sections on appropriate behaviour and exploring ethical dilemmas. All promotion processes include questions on ethics and integrity. A recent survey throughout the force found that 96 percent of staff knew how to report wrongdoing. They are assisted by 20 new fair play advisors who have been trained to support and guide staff and supervisors.

There is a good knowledge throughout the workforce of key policies that are designed to ensure officers and staff conduct themselves in a professional manner and with integrity. In our 2015 PEEL legitimacy inspection we found that the Code of Ethics was only partially incorporated into the force's policies and practice and more needed to be done before officers and staff were fully aware and had a good understanding of the Code. This is no longer the case. The force policies and procedures reviewed for this inspection incorporated the Code, including policies relating to business interests, notifiable associations,[18] misuse of police information and inappropriate relationships. Staff including volunteers understand and use the Code of Ethics and they fully understand the required standards of behaviour.

How well does the force identify, understand and manage risks to the integrity of the organisation?

HMIC's 2014 police integrity and corruption inspection emphasised the need for forces to make arrangements for continuous monitoring of their ethical health, through active monitoring of force systems and processes to spot risks to their integrity, including, but not limited to, business interests, gifts and hospitality, and public complaints.[19] These findings reflect the research commissioned by the College of Policing, which highlights the importance of taking a problem-solving approach to preventing wrongdoing, by scanning and analysing police data to identify particular officers or hotspots for targeting prevention activity.

This year HMIC was particularly interested in how well forces – from dedicated anti-corruption units to individual supervisors – are identifying and intervening early to reduce individual and organisational vulnerabilities (i.e. those individuals, groups or locations that may be susceptible to corruption). We also assessed how well forces are seeking and assessing intelligence on potential corruption, with a focus on those areas for improvement identified in our previous inspections.

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[18] A notifiable association policy is designed to identify those individuals who could pose a risk to the integrity of an individual employee or the force itself. It requires the officer or staff member to report such associations which then allows a full evaluation of the risk posed to both the individual and the force to be undertaken.

[19] *Integrity matters*, HMIC, January 2015. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/integrity-matters/

Identifying and understanding risks to integrity

The force has a corruption control strategy; however it is of limited value and requires further development to be comprehensive and effective. The current document amounts to a one-page summary of the three most vulnerable areas, we found that the strategy currently lacks reference to prevention, intelligence-gathering or enforcement. It is therefore incomplete.

A further area of concern is the force's lack of capability and capacity to carry out effective monitoring of the use of every computer systems. This has been identified by the force and is being addressed through a meeting chaired by the deputy chief constable.

The force is, however, effective in identifying a number of threats to the integrity of the organisation through robust and frequent monitoring of workforce compliance with policies, including notifiable associations and business interests. The force conducts business interest checks and reviews both failed applications and dip-samples approved cases. It holds an up-to-date register of notifiable associations and regularly reminds staff what a notifiable association is and what they should do with respect to membership. Details of occasions when officers and staff are offered gifts or hospitality are recorded fully in a centrally-held database, including cases where the offer was refused. There has recently been an increase in notification by staff of both submissions of gifts and hospitality cases and notifiable associations after the force refreshed and promoted the relevant policies. HMIC found that there is a strong understanding among the workforce in Essex Police of their obligations to report both business interests and notifiable associations.

The force complies with the national requirements for aftercare vetting including annual vetting appraisal. When officers transfer to sensitive posts, their vetting status is reviewed to see if a re-vet is required. The force routinely re-vets officers who move to posts with higher vetting requirements, including those on promotion.

Overall, although the force has the ability to review and manage organisational risks it has more work to do in the areas identified above, before it can be satisfied that it can review and manage all such risks.

Intervening early to manage risks to integrity

The professional standards department (PSD) has a comprehensive performance regime that includes information at an individual and organisational level allowing it to track the progress of interventions at both levels. The force publishes themes which have emerged from discipline meetings to explain the issues and to share learning. There is a random drug testing policy which has been used six times this year.

The force has a governance structure and system to understand and monitor risks to the integrity of the organisation. The anti-corruption intelligence unit (ACIU) provides information and analysis for consideration by the integrity and anti-corruption board. This is a bi-monthly meeting chaired by the deputy chief constable and attended by the local police commanders. The board considers a number of issues such as gifts and hospitality, business interests, notifiable associations and matters related to the Code of Ethics and other matters relating to protecting the integrity of the force. The ACIU also reviews and analyses complaints and conduct data and produces a detailed quarterly report which is shared with department heads and senior leaders around the force. The information includes details of officers who are subject to multiple complaints whose details are passed to the force performance improvement unit (PIU) for appropriate action to be agreed with line managers.

Lessons learned from both the force and the IPCC are published on a monthly basis. Subjects covered include: use of force in custody, information management and inappropriate disclosure.

Looking for, reporting and assessing intelligence on potential corruption

The force has a well-managed and accessible reporting mechanism for obtaining information about corruption. Intelligence is collected from a variety of sources and the ACIU maintains a spreadsheet of the different sources of intelligence and uses professional judgment and the national intelligence model[20] to prioritise it. We also found that the ACIU had effective internal tasking arrangements.

There is a confidential internal reporting mechanism which supports the identification of wrongdoing. When officers and staff log on to the force IT systems, they are able to navigate easily to a prominently displayed 'PSD Envelope' page. We were told that staff felt confident that the force would undertake its duty of care to whistleblowers who expose corruption. The force provides support to officers who are subject to investigation, including those who had self-referred, with cases discussed at regular support meetings.

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[20] The national intelligence model is a process used by police forces and other law enforcement bodies to provide focus to operational policing and to ensure resources are used to best effect. The model is set out in a Code of Practice. Code of Practice: National Intelligence Model, Home Office, National Centre for Policing Excellence and Centrex, 2005, paragraph 3.1.1, page 6. Available at: http://library.college.police.uk/docs/npia/NIM-Code-of-Practice.pdf

How well is the force tackling the problem of officers and staff abusing their authority for sexual gain?

In 2012, the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) and the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) published *The abuse of police powers to perpetrate sexual violence.*[21] This report states that "the abuse of police powers for purposes of sexual exploitation, or even violence, is something that fundamentally betrays the trust that communities and individuals place in the police. It therefore has a serious impact on the public's confidence in individual officers and the service in general." The report identified this behaviour as a form of serious corruption that forces should refer to the IPCC for its consideration of how it should be investigated.

The Code of Ethics,[22] which sets out the standards of professional behaviour expected of all policing professionals, explicitly states that they must "not establish or pursue an improper sexual or emotional relationship with a person with whom [they] come into contact in the course of [their] work who may be vulnerable to an abuse of trust or power".

The most recent national counter corruption assessment, in 2013, highlighted corruption for the purposes of sexual gratification as a major threat to law enforcement.[23] HMIC's 2015 report *Integrity matters*[24] identified police sexual misconduct as an area of great concern to the public. We share the public's disquiet and so we looked at this issue specifically as part of our 2016 inspection. Our work was given additional emphasis in May 2016 by a request from the Home Secretary that we inspect forces' response to the issue of officers and staff developing inappropriate relationships with victims of domestic abuse and abusing their position of power to exploit victims.

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[21] *The abuse of police powers to perpetrate sexual violence*, jointly published by IPCC and ACPO (now the National Police Chiefs' Council), September 2012. Available at: www.ipcc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Documents/research_stats/abuse_of_police_powers_to_perpetrate_sexual_violence.PDF

[22] Code of Ethics – A Code of Practice for the Principles and Standards of Professional Behaviour for the Policing Profession of England and Wales, College of Policing, London, July 2014. Available at: www.college.police.uk/What-we-do/Ethics/Documents/Code_of_Ethics.pdf

[23] Every three years, the National Counter Corruption Advisory Group commissions a strategic assessment of the threat to law enforcement from corruption. The most recent assessment was completed in June 2013 by the Serious Organised Crime Agency. The assessment was based upon three years of intelligence reports on possible corruption gathered by forces in England and Wales, supplemented by information from other forces and national agencies.

[24] *Integrity matters*, HMIC, January 2015. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/integrity-matters/

Recognising abuse of authority for sexual gain as serious corruption

The force's anti-corruption strategy includes sexual predation as an identified risk in this and in other respects; it is evident that the force treats the abuse of authority for sexual gain as serious corruption. The force's Operation Pershore which has been run since 2013 is specifically aimed at dealing with abuse of authority for the purposes of sexual gain. Staff are aware of the mandatory requirement for the force to refer serious corruption such as abuse of authority for sexual gain to the IPCC. HMIC found that frontline officers in Essex have a good understanding of the seriousness of abusing their position for sexual gain and were acutely aware of the dangers of conducting inappropriate relationships with vulnerable victims.

Looking for and receiving intelligence on potential abuse of authority for sexual gain

The force has more to do, however, to proactively seek intelligence on potential corruption from a variety of external sources such as women's refuges, sex worker support groups, websites, gyms and local partners. It has completed limited work to encourage potential victims to report suspicious behaviour. Once such behaviour is identified, however, the force moves swiftly to safeguard victims and investigate the matter.

Taking action to prevent abuse of authority for sexual gain

Essex Police has a good understanding of the scale and source of the problem of abuse of authority for sexual gain. They assess that there have been 51 cases that may have included abuse of authority since 2010. From the cases handled under the aforementioned Operation Pershore, both an offender and victim profile have been developed. These enable the force to focus on prevention and proactive work.

Completed cases from Operation Pershore are also used in training and are discussed at the anti-corruption and integrity board. The force has issued two bulletins to the workforce concerning the abuse of authority for sexual gain in August 2015 and again in July 2016. HMIC viewed the guidance and found that it was comprehensive and included clear advice on establishing professional boundaries. The force has supplemented this information with numerous messages via the intranet including one called 'know your boundaries', which included the following warning:

'To establish an inappropriate relationship is an abuse of your position and a breach of the 'Standards of Professional Behaviour' for police officers. It may amount to gross misconduct for police officers and staff, resulting in serious disciplinary action. In some circumstances the breach may even constitute a criminal offence of 'misconduct in public office'.

As a consequence of the dissemination of this information, knowledge among officers, staff and supervisors was very good, with the expectation that all relationships arising from contact with a member of the public in an official capacity must be reported to supervisors. These relationships are then referred to the PSD. HMIC reviewed a number of specific misconduct cases which had been completed and found that they had been handled appropriately by the force.

Building public trust

The force publishes the outcomes of misconduct hearings including cases of abuse of authority for sexual gain and serious sexual offences to the public. In a recent case, a chief inspector was dismissed from the force for serious sexual misconduct for which he received a suspended prison sentence. The force published the full details on the force website and by Twitter and ensured that the local media was able to quickly and accurately report the facts. The force therefore engages positively with the public regarding the outcomes of misconduct and corruption cases, but HMIC considers it could do more to rebuild the confidence and trust of affected groups and the wider community and thereby mitigate the impact of negative news stories both externally and internally.

How well does the force engage with the public and its workforce about the outcomes of misconduct and corruption cases?

HMIC's 2014 literature review on police integrity and corruption emphasised the importance of the collection and dissemination of information about misconduct to the public, on the basis that it shows police forces are taking the problem seriously, and detecting and punishing wrongdoing.[25] This information also forms the basis for deterring misconduct and enhancing integrity within police forces themselves. This year, HMIC looked at how well forces engage with the public online and through police officer misconduct hearings in public, and also more widely following high profile incidents with the potential to undermine public perceptions of police integrity. We also looked at how aware the workforce is of these outcomes.

Working with the public

As mentioned above, the force engages positively with the public regarding the outcomes of misconduct and corruption cases. Evidence from media releases showed that the force proactively produces results of all cases in a timely manner for public consumption. Its webpage contains details of cases including punishments and it contacts local and, on occasion, national media to highlight cases. The force regularly provides details of disapproved officers to the College of Policing, and

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[25] *Literature review – Police integrity and corruption*, HMIC, January 2015. Available at: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/integrity-matters/

regularly publishes details of senior officer gifts and hospitality through the force website. However, as also mentioned above, while officers and staff recognise the impact of high-profile misconduct cases on public trust and confidence, it is surprising that there is no corporate strategy to mitigate the impact of negative news stories both externally and internally.

Working with the workforce

The force engages positively with the workforce regarding the outcomes of misconduct and corruption cases. A wide range of fora is used to report the outcome of cases to the workforce including the chief constable's blog and PSD update reports, which also include details of cases where, although the charge was not found, the judgment was finely balanced. Details of cases, including sanctions are published on the intranet and some cases are subject to specific briefings. While all officers were aware of the publication of results of misconduct and corruption cases on the intranet, few interviewed could identify associated guidance or follow up to explain the reasons for the outcome or could refer to outcomes where officers were found not guilty of offences.

Summary of findings

Good

Vetting processes are good and proactive work is taking place. While there is a vetting backlog, the force has a reasonable plan to deal with the issue, including an escalation process to minimise risk. The force provides up-to-date details of disapproved officers to the College of Policing on a regular basis. Acceptable and unacceptable behaviours are continually emphasised and clarified for the workforce, underpinned by training that includes ethical dilemmas. While the force has a corruption control strategy it requires further development to be effective but nonetheless the force is effective at identifying threats to the integrity of the organisation. However, although the force has the ability to review and manage organisational risks it has more work to complete before it can satisfactorily review and manage all such risks. The force has a good understanding of the scale and source of the problem of abuse of authority for sexual gain and is proactive and determined in its approach to dealing with this issue. The force engages positively with the public and its own workforce regarding the outcomes of misconduct and corruption cases.

Areas for improvement

- The force should ensure that it has the capability and/or capacity to monitor all its computer systems to identify risks to the force's integrity.

- Annually, the force should produce a local counter-corruption strategic assessment and control strategy, to identify risks to the force's integrity.

To what extent does the force treat its workforce with fairness and respect?

A workforce that feels it is treated fairly and with respect by its employers is more likely to identify with the organisation, and treat the public in a similarly fair and respectful way. Conversely, perceived unfairness within police organisations can have a detrimental effect on officer and staff attitudes and behaviours.[26] As such, this concept of 'organisational justice', and its potential impact on 'procedural justice' forms an important part of HMIC's assessment of police legitimacy. As there is no comparative data on how fairly officers and staff perceive forces to have treated them, we focused our assessment on how well forces identify these perceptions within their workforces and act on these findings. In particular, we looked at the extent to which organisational 'fairness' is reflected through the way individual performance is managed, and how 'organisational respect' is reflected through how forces provide for the wellbeing of their workforces, particularly through preventative and early action.

How well does the force identify and act to improve the workforce's perceptions of fair and respectful treatment?

Research suggests that forces that involve officers and staff in decision-making processes, listen to their concerns, act on them, and are open about how and why decisions were reached, may improve workforce perceptions of fair and respectful treatment.[27] On this basis, HMIC assessed how well the force engages with its staff to identify and understand the issues that affect them, and how well it acts on these issues and demonstrates it has done so.

Identifying and understanding the issues

Grievances are concerns, problems or complaints raised formally to employers by officers or staff. Data on numbers and types of grievances provide forces with a useful source of information about the sorts of issues that staff and officers are concerned about.

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[26] *Fair cop 2: Organisational justice, behaviour and ethical policing*, College of Policing, 2015. Available at:
http://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/150317_Fair_cop%202_FINAL_REPORT.pdf *Organisational justice: Implications for police and emergency service leadership*, Herrington C and Roberts K, AIPM Research Focus, Issue 2, 2013. Available at: www.aipm.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Org-Justice-Final.pdf

[27] *Fair cop 2: Organisational justice, behaviour and ethical policing*, College of Policing, 2015, page 11. Available at:
http://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/150317_Fair_cop%202_FINAL_REPORT.pdf

Figure 3: Number of grievances raised by officers (per 1,000 officers) or staff (per 1,000 staff, including police community support officers) that Essex Police finalised compared with England and Wales, in the 12 months to 31 March 2016
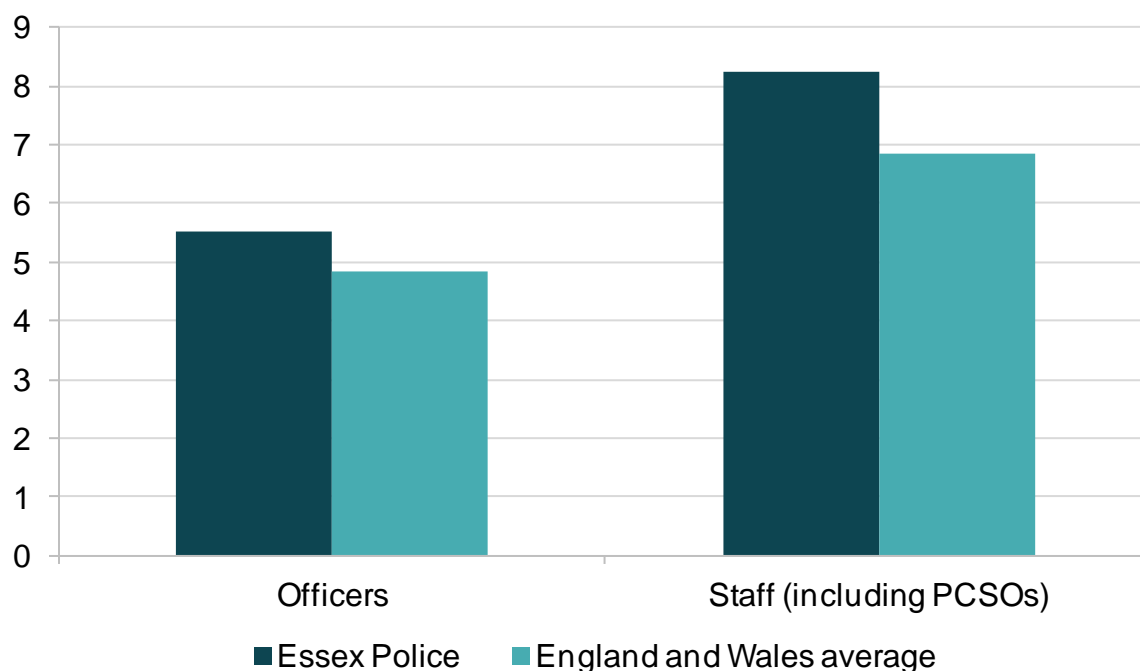
In the 12 months to 31 March 2016, Essex Police finalised 5.5 formal grievances raised by officers per 1,000 officers, which was broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 4.8 per 1,000 officers. During this period, the force finalised 8.3 formal grievances raised by staff per 1,000 staff (including PCSOs), which was broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 6.8 per 1,000 staff (including PCSOs).

Essex Police frequently monitors a wide range of data about issues of concern to the workforce. For instance, the force has a comprehensive understanding of fairness issues, including grievances, complaints and misconduct matters. It also employs effective and trusted methods to seek the views of and challenge from the workforce. These include an informal suggestion scheme and regular workforce surveys, one of which was being completed at the time of HMIC's inspection. However, HMIC found that the publication of findings and of action taken as a result of these surveys was not sufficiently timely and that this was undermining the impact of the surveys on the workforce. The idea of 'you said, we did' is understood by chief officers, but more needs to be done to ensure the workforce feels that staff surveys are achieving improvements and change. Other methods of engagement by which the force seeks the views of, and challenge from, the workforce include the Connect sessions. These are face-to-face sessions between the chief constable and six to eight members of staff, who have the opportunity to question him directly. Staff who have attended these sessions described being able to freely ask questions on topics of their choice

and that the chief constable answered them all in full. This practice has reinforced the view that the Connect sessions are an effective and transparent means for staff to communicate their views and to challenge senior management.

Making improvements and demonstrating effectiveness

While the force has a number of engagement processes in place and identified above, there remains a strong sense that the force is inconsistent in its responses, particular in relation to staff surveys. Improvements are evident, however, such as changes to policy and practice and the force's focus and enhanced response to vulnerability, which were understood by all to whom we spoke. The force seminars on vulnerability were highlighted as being of excellent quality. Staff also saw the fair play advisers, who are available to support officers and staff who need advice and guidance on unfairness in the workplace, as a positive improvement. However, the force needs to show its workforce more evidence of a 'you said we did' approach. The impact of failing to demonstrate tangible change in response to staff feedback risks eroding confidence that there is a genuine opportunity for the workforce to register its perceptions of fair and respectful treatment.

How well does the force support the wellbeing of its workforce?

Police forces need to understand the benefits of having a healthier workforce; a happy and healthy workforce is likely to be a more productive one, as a result of people taking fewer sick days and being more invested in what they do. Last year our inspection was concerned with what efforts forces were making to consider, and provide for, the wellbeing needs of their workforce. This year we looked at the progress the force had made since the last inspection, with a particular focus on preventative activity to encourage wellbeing.

Understanding and valuing the benefits

The force has a clear focus on wellbeing, including good plans and governance arrangements, that together are perceived as an authentic approach by the workforce. There are multiple mechanisms for supporting the well being of officers and staff and preventing escalation of problems. Supervisors we spoke to were aware of wellbeing surveys, TRiM interventions, the availability of support mentors and workshops they could attend for guidance on how to support their staff. Supervisors also said that they are able to grant compassionate leave at short notice, or temporarily reassign staff members showing signs of stress, whereas previously this would have required a human resource department or chief officer agreement; this flexibility has allowed them to intervene early.

In December 2015, the chief constable and police and crime commissioner signed the mental health charity MIND's 'Blue Light Time to Change' pledge through which the force seeks to challenge the stigma surrounding mental health. The force has

also been successful in a Home Office innovation fund bid to provide mental health training. There are 14 volunteer police chaplains in Essex whose main role is to support individuals within the organisation who feel that they are working in a stressful or difficult environment. Wellbeing training such as 'Feel well, Live well', which gives preventative advice, is also available and the force ran an event in May 2016, where officers and staff aged 40 or over were able to book a free health check. Services included a blood pressure and cholesterol check, as well as advice on weight management and how to stop smoking.

Rest days in lieu (RDIL) are leave days owed to officers or police community support officers when they have been required to work on their scheduled rest day due to operational reasons. Long working hours can have a detrimental impact on the health and wellbeing of the workforce, so it serves as a useful point of comparison for assessing the extent to which the force is managing the wellbeing of its workforce. Analysis of the numbers of RDIL accrued, but not yet taken, can be useful tools for forces to identify and understand potential wellbeing concerns for individuals and teams.

Figure 4: Number of rest days in lieu outstanding per officer or police community support officer (PCSO) and the percentage of officers or PCSOs with more than 10 rest days in lieu owed to them in Essex Police compared with England and Wales, as at 31 March 2016
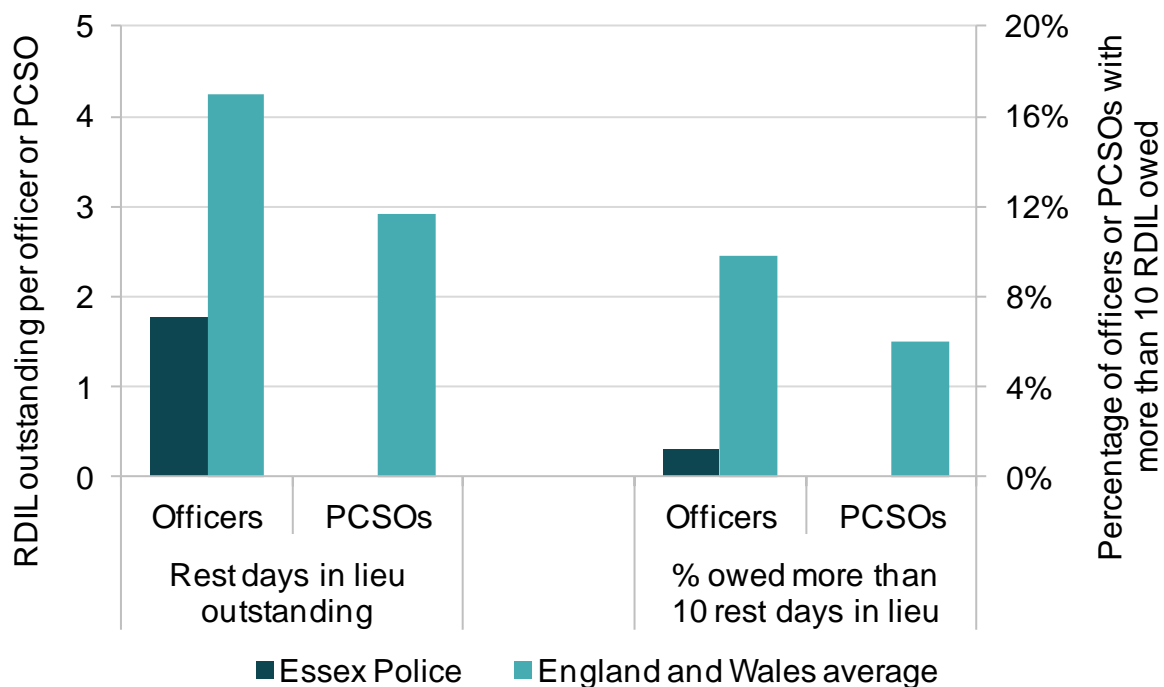
Source: HMIC Legitimacy data collection
Note: For some police forces data about the number of rest days in lieu outstanding are estimated from data on hours owed. For further information about the data in figure 4 please see annex A

As at 31 March 2016, there were 1.8 rest days in lieu outstanding per officer in Essex Police, which was lower than the England and Wales average of 4.2 days per officer. On the same date, there were no rest days in lieu outstanding per PCSO in

the force, which was lower than the England and Wales average of 2.9 days per PCSO. As at 31 March 2016, 1.2 percent of officers in Essex Police had more than 10 rest days in lieu owed to them, which was lower than the England and Wales average of 9.8 percent. As at 31 March 2016, no PCSOs in Essex Police had more than 10 rest days in lieu owed to them. The England and Wales average was 6.0 percent of PCSOs. The data on PCSOs did not allow a comparison with the average.

Identifying and understanding the workforce's wellbeing needs

The force has a good understanding of the risks and threats to the wellbeing of its workforce, and their causes, and gives sufficient weight to mental and emotional wellbeing. At a strategic level the force is able to monitor wellbeing on a daily basis. The force has a demonstrably open and positive approach to supporting lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender staff and officers within the workforce. During the recent PCSO redundancy process, supervisors were given training on welfare so that they had a better understanding of what to look for and what help was available for staff at risk of redundancy. Human resource staff members were available to support when challenging messages had to be delivered. Support was offered to all PCSOs including those not in the workplace. More generally, the force is aware of the levels and potential causes of stress felt by frontline staff, whose workloads can be high. The force transformation programme includes measures designed to reduce demand and the force has initiated other actions to reduce demand such as Operation Quarantine, which seeks to reduce the numbers of crimes being allocated for full investigation, by conducting desktop investigations within the incident management unit on appropriate crimes.

Taking preventative and early action to improve workforce wellbeing

In the 2015 Legitimacy inspection HMIC judged that Essex Police had a clear understanding of the views of the workforce in respect of their wellbeing, and opportunities to make improvements. The force is maintaining a comprehensive range of effective and preventative measures to improve workforce wellbeing. The absence scrutiny board, which is chaired by the deputy chief constable, oversees the force's response to managing absence and wellbeing, including early intervention and support to those reporting absent. The 'Feel well, Live well' programme seeks to develop individual resilience by equipping staff with strategies and tools to deal with the everyday pressures of life and work. Staff also have access to personal health checks and mindfulness training, and they are aware of the blue-light initiative which is aimed at recognising and providing support with mental health issues. Supervisors have received training to recognise warning signs and intervene early to prevent future escalation and were able to give examples of the positive results of their early interventions.

Sickness data can provide a useful point of comparison for assessing the wellbeing of police workforces. Analysis of this data can also help forces to identify and

understand the nature and causes of sickness at individual and organisational levels, and inform targeted activity to prevent and manage sickness.

Figure 5: Percentage of officers, police community support officers and staff on long-term and short/medium-term sick leave in Essex Police compared with England and Wales, as at 31 March 2016
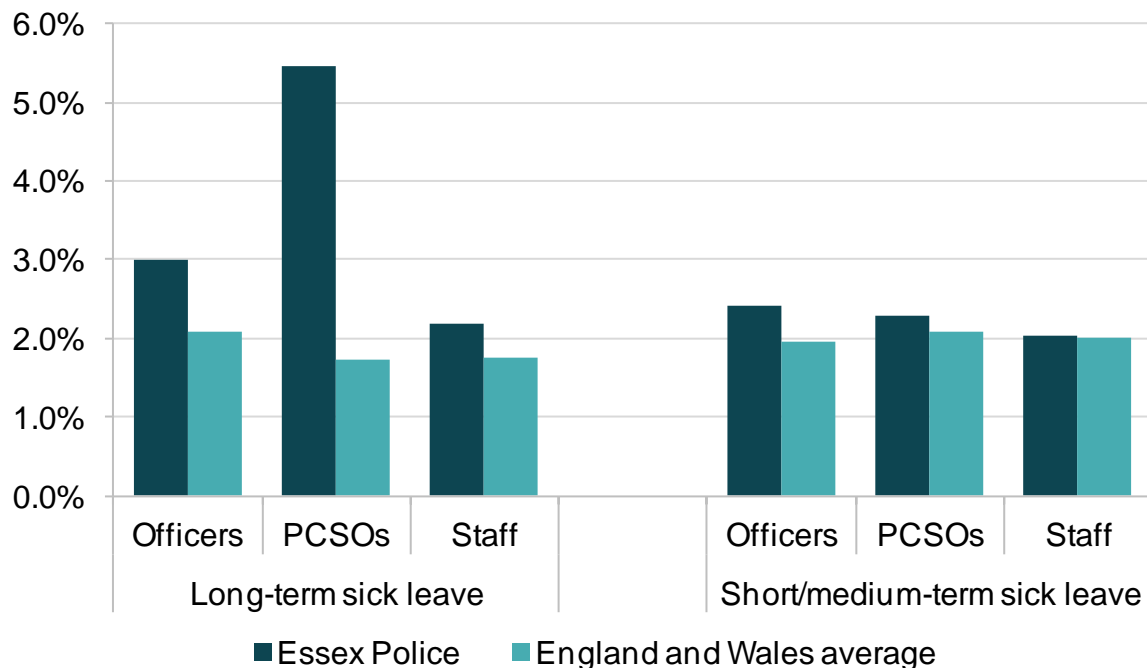
Source: Home Office Annual Data Requirement
Note: Long-term sickness is defined as an absence due to sickness that has lasted for more than 28 days as at 31 March 2016. For further information about the data in figure 5 please see annex A

Figure 5 provides data on the proportion of officers, PCSOs and staff who were absent due to sickness on 31 March 2016.

- 3.0 percent of officers were on long-term sick leave, which is higher than the England and Wales average of 2.1 percent.

- 2.4 percent of officers were on short or medium-term sick leave, which is broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 2.0 percent.

- 5.5 percent of PCSOs were on long-term sick leave, which is higher than the England and Wales average of 1.7 percent.

- 2.3 percent of PCSOs were on short or medium-term sick leave, which is broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 2.1 percent.

- 2.2 percent of staff were on long-term sick leave, which is broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 1.7 percent.

- 2.0 percent of staff were on short or medium-term sick leave, which is in line with the England and Wales average of 2.0 percent.

How fairly and effectively does the force manage the individual performance of its officers and staff?

College of Policing research on organisational justice suggests that lack of promotion opportunities and not dealing with poor performance may adversely affect workforce perceptions of fairness, which in turn may lead to negative attitudes and behaviours in the workplace.[28] HMIC assessed how fairly and effectively the force manages the individual performance of its officers and staff, including the extent to which the process aligns with guidance produced by the College of Policing.[29]

The performance assessment process

The force has an effective personal performance (PDR) policy but the use and quality of PDRs is mixed. Supervisors reported that they reviewed performance twice yearly against objectives and that the use of a 'day book' by officers and staff was an effective method of recording performance and informed development and progression opportunities. However, some staff reported poor completion of PDRs and questioned how effective they were for either career progression or development. We found evidence across the force that supervisors had cut and pasted material from past PDRs or from those of other individuals. The new electronic PDR was recognised as a positive development which was easy to use, as was the recent move to the annual completion being matched to the anniversary of the day the person joined the force. This has helped spread the workload of completing reports across the year and enabled more meaningful performance discussions with staff. The force intranet has a comprehensive PDR section that includes frequently asked questions. The most recent staff survey recorded that 48 percent of respondents believed that 'performance appraisal is applied fairly and consistently'. This is an increase of 24 percent compared to 2014, but the force has more to do before the PDR arrangements are working as well as the force wishes them to.

The results of performance assessment

The force has good arrangements in place to encourage performance improvement, including continuing professional development opportunities for all staff and to manage poor performance. However, HMIC considers that the force could do more to ensure that these arrangements are properly managed and quality assured. All staff and officers interviewed had received a PDR, and supervisors have been given PDR training which is supplemented by the intranet guidance. The performance

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[28] *Fair cop 2: Organisational justice, behaviour and ethical policing*, College of Policing, 2015. Available at:
http://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/150317_Fair_cop%202_FINAL_REPORT.pdf

[29] College of Policing guidance on the police performance development review process is available at:
www.college.police.uk/What-we-do/Support/Reviewing-performance/Pages/PDR.aspx

improvement unit (PIU) offers an excellent service for supervisors to request advice on performance and attendance issues. The unit has advisors who will meet with supervisors to gain a detailed insight into areas of concern and then work with the supervisor to develop an improvement plan for the staff member. The PIU is providing expertise to enable the force to effectively manage performance and attendance issues in a fair and supportive manner. The force holds a central 'live' workload tracker that monitors those who are subject of attendance or targeted performance management. This enables the force to understand the extent of the issues and to ensure that effective action is taken.

Summary of findings

Good

Essex Police seeks regularly the views of and challenge from its workforce, including volunteers by staff surveys, although the actions taken in response to surveys could be publicised more swiftly. Ideas are welcomed from the workforce and fair play advisers are available to support officers and staff who need advice and guidance around issues of unfairness. The force has a clear focus on wellbeing that is perceived to be authentic by the workforce, including good plans and governance arrangement. The force has a demonstrably open and positive approach to supporting lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender staff and officers within the workforce.

The chief constable and police and crime commissioner have signed the mental health charity MIND's 'Blue Light, Time to Change' pledge by which the force will seek to challenge the stigma surrounding mental health. The provision of wellbeing training such as 'Feel well, Live well' is very positive.

The force has a personal performance arrangement in place but the use and quality of these is mixed. The performance improvement unit provides an excellent support service on performance and attendance issues.

Areas for improvement

- The force should improve how it communicates the action it has taken in response to issues identified by the workforce.

- The force should improve how it manages individual performance.

Next steps

HMIC assesses progress on causes of concern and areas for improvement identified within its reports in a number of ways. We receive updates through our regular conversations with forces, re-assess as part of our annual PEEL programme, and, in the most serious cases, revisit forces.

HMIC highlights recurring themes emerging from our PEEL inspections of police forces within our national reports on police effectiveness, efficiency, legitimacy and also leadership. These reports identify those issues that are reflected across England and Wales and may contain additional recommendations directed at national policing organisations, including the Home Office, where we believe improvements can be made at a national level.

Findings and judgments from this year's PEEL legitimacy inspection will be used to direct the design of the next cycle of PEEL legitimacy assessments. The specific areas for assessment are yet to be confirmed, based on further consultation, but we will continue to assess procedural and organisational justice aspects of police legitimacy to ensure our findings are comparable year on year.

Annex A – About the data

Please note the following for the data presented throughout the report.

The source of the data is presented with each figure in the report, and is listed in more detail in this annex. For the source of force in numbers data, please see the relevant section below.

Methodology

Please note the following for the methodology applied to the data.

Comparisons with England and Wales average figures

For some data sets, the report states whether the force's value is 'lower', 'higher' or 'broadly in line with' the England and Wales average. To calculate this, the difference to the mean average, as a proportion, is calculated for all forces. After standardising this distribution, forces that are more than 0.675 standard deviations from the mean average are determined to be above or below the average, with all other forces being broadly in line.

In practice this means that approximately a quarter of forces are lower, a quarter are higher, and the remaining half are in line with the England and Wales average for each measure. For this reason, the distance from the average required to make a force's value above or below the average is different for each measure so may not appear to be consistent.

Statistical significance

When commenting on statistical differences, a significance level of 5 percent is used.

For some forces, numbers described in the text may be identical to the England and Wales average due to decimal place rounding, but the bars in the chart will appear different as they use the full unrounded value.

Where we have referred to the England and Wales average, this is the rate or proportion calculated from the England and Wales totals.

Population

For all uses of population as a denominator, unless otherwise noted, we use the ONS mid-2015 population estimates.

Force in numbers

Workforce figures (based on full-time equivalents) for 31 March 2016

These data are obtained from the Home Office annual data return 502. The data are available from the Home Office's published Police workforce England and Wales statistics, www.gov.uk/government/collections/police-workforce-england-and-wales, or the Home Office police workforce open data tables, www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-open-data-tables. Figures may have been updated since the publication.

Projections for March 2020 are budget-based projections and therefore are likely to take into account a vacancy rate depending on a force's planning strategy. In some instances an increase in budgeted posts may not actually indicate the force is planning to increase its workforce. In other cases, forces may be planning to reduce their workforce but have a current high vacancy rate which masks this change.

Police staff includes section 38 designated officers (investigation, detention and escort).

Data from the Office for National Statistics 2011 Census were used for the number and proportion of black, Asian and minority ethnic people within each force area. While the numbers may have since changed, more recent figures are based only on estimates from surveys or projections.

Figures throughout the report

Figure 1: Percentage of victims satisfied with overall treatment compared with England and Wales, from the 12 months to 31 March 2011 to the 12 months to 31 March 2016

Forces are required by the Home Office to conduct satisfaction surveys with specific victim groups. Victim satisfaction surveys are structured around core questions exploring satisfaction with police responses across four stages of interactions: initial contact, actions, follow up, treatment plus the whole experience. The data in figure 1 use the results to the question on treatment, which specifically asks "Are you satisfied, dissatisfied or neither, with the way you were treated by the police officer and staff who dealt with you?"

When comparing with the England and Wales average, the standard methodology described above has been used. When testing whether the change in percentage of respondents who were satisfied between the 12 months to 31 March 2015 and the 12 months to 31 March 2016 is statistically significant, a chi square hypothesis test for independence has been applied.

Figure 2: Number of public complaint cases recorded against officers (per 1,000 officers) or staff (per 1,000 staff, including police community support officers) compared with England and Wales, in the 12 months to 31 March 2016

The Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) defines a complaint for the purposes of recording as "an expression of dissatisfaction by a member of the public with the service they have received from a police force. It may be about the conduct of one or more persons serving with the police and/or about the direction and control of a police force". A police complaint can be about more than one officer or member of staff and can refer to one or more allegations.[30]

Data used in figure 2 are data extracted from the Centurion case recording and management system for Police Professional Standards data. We were able to collect the majority of this data through an automated database query, written for us by the creators of the software, Centurion (FIS Ltd). Forces ran this query on their systems and returned the outputs to us. This system is used in 41 of the 43 forces inspected. In order to collect the appropriate data from the two forces not using Centurion (Greater Manchester Police and Lancashire Constabulary), they were provided with a bespoke data collection template designed to correspond to information extracted from the Centurion database.

Although the IPCC categories used to record the type of public complaint and the accompanying guidance are the same in all police forces, differences in the way they are used still may occur. For example, one force may classify a case in one category while another force would classify the same case in a different category. This means that data on the types of public complaint should be treated with caution.

Figure 3: Number of grievances raised by officers (per 1,000 officers) or staff (per 1,000 staff, including police community support officers) finalised compared with England and Wales, in the 12 months to 31 March 2016

The data refer to those grievances that were subject to a formal process (not including issues informally resolved with a line manager). Some of the grievances finalised in this period may have been raised in a previous year. Finalised refers to grievances where a resolution has been reached, after any appeals have been completed. Differences between forces in the number of finalised grievances may be due to different handling and recording policies. Data used in figure 3 were provided to HMIC by individual forces via a bespoke data collection in April 2016 prior to inspection.

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[30] *Guidance on the recording of complaints under the Police Reform Act 2002*, Independent Police Complaints Commission. Available at: www.ipcc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Documents/statutoryguidance/guidance_on_recording_of_complaints_under_PRA_2002.pdf

Figure 4: Number of rest days in lieu outstanding per officer or police community support officer (PCSO) and the percentage of officers or PCSOs with more than 10 rest days in lieu owed to them compared with England and Wales, as at 31 March 2016

Rest days in lieu are leave days owed to officers or police community support officers when they have been required to work on their scheduled rest day due to operational reasons. Data used in figure 4 were provided to HMIC by individual forces via a bespoke data collection in April 2016 prior to inspection.

Figure 5: Percentage of officers, police community support officers and staff on long-term and short/medium-term sick leave compared with England and Wales, as at 31 March 2016

Long-term sickness is defined as an absence due to sickness that has lasted for more than 28 days as at 31 March 2016. Data used in figure 5 were obtained from Home Office annual data returns 501 and 551. Data on long-term absences can be found in the Home Office police workforce open data tables: www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-open-data-tables