



Promoting improvements
in policing to make
everyone safer

PEEL: Police legitimacy 2016

An inspection of South Yorkshire Police



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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.

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%20FINAL_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 South Yorkshire Police.

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

Force in numbers



Workforce

Total workforce as of 31 March 2016

4,483

Total workforce breakdown as of 31 March 2016



Ethnic diversity

Percentage of BAME in workforce 31 March 2016

overall workforce

3.0%



Percentage of BAME in local population, 2011 Census

9.4%



Gender diversity

Percentage of females in overall workforce 31 March 2016

43%

51%

South Yorkshire Police

England and Wales population, 2011 Census

Percentage of females by role 31 March 2016





Public complaints

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



Grievances

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



Victim satisfaction

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



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 judgment³



Requires improvement

South Yorkshire Police requires improvement in the way it interacts with the communities it serves and its workforce. Enabling fair treatment is a stated priority for the force, but recent changes in the way it operates have had an adverse effect on how it understands and is able to respond to its communities and the morale of its workforce.

The force has a good understanding of threats to its integrity. Most of the systems to ensure integrity in the workforce are good, and it communicates with the public well about misconduct hearings and their outcomes.

Overall summary

South Yorkshire Police's stated priority is to treat everyone it serves fairness and respect. Despite this it could do more to reassure itself it is obtaining feedback from all the communities it serves.

The recent change in the force's operating model has led to a reduction in involvement with many communities. We found good examples of specific engagement, and the force also has a substantial and active social media following. It does not, however, collate or analyse feedback to develop a complete picture. South Yorkshire Police ensures that its workforce behaves ethically and lawfully. It has a good understanding of most of the risks to the integrity of the organisation, informed by well-managed intelligence from a wide range of sources, and in the main has good systems in place to secure the integrity of the organisation.

The force communicates effectively with the public; it advertises misconduct hearings and publishes the results on the internet. Although it shares the results of misconduct hearings with the workforce, not all officers and staff were aware of the cases or what had been learned from them.

The force should treat its workforce with greater fairness and respect. It uses a range of methods to assess how members of the workforce feel they are treated, but not frequently and consistently enough for a full understanding. The force has made some changes in response to feedback, increasing measures to support wellbeing

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

and introducing a new electronic individual performance assessment process (PDR), but the workforce does not see how these changes relate to its feedback. The new electronic PDR is a forward-looking tool for development and wellbeing, but at this early stage we cannot say that it ensures consistent and fair assessment and development for the workforce.

Low morale is a problem throughout the force. The command team recognises this and is working to alleviate the pressures on leave and rest days.

Recommendations

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

Areas for improvement

- The force should improve how it seeks feedback from the people it serves about their experiences (or perceptions) of how the police have treated them.
- The force should improve how it identifies and understands the issues that have the greatest impact on public perceptions of fair and respectful treatment.
- The force should ensure that it acts on learning and feedback to improve how it treats all the people it serves.
- The force should improve how it clarifies and reinforces standards of behaviour to its workforce, in particular when dealing with vulnerable people, including victims of domestic abuse.
- The force should ensure it complies with all aspects of the current national guidelines for vetting.
- The force should ensure that it has the capability and capacity to monitor all its computer systems to identify risks to the force's integrity.
- The force should improve how it identifies and understands the issues that have the greatest impact on workforce perceptions of treatment.
- The force should improve how it communicates the action it has taken in response to issues identified by the workforce.
- The force should review the arrangements that allow staff and officers to take annual leave, to minimise excessive carry-over of leave.

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.⁴

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.⁵ 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 understood by the workforce.

Organisational values

South Yorkshire Police understands the importance of treating people with fairness and respect. The force’s FIRST principles (fairness, integrity, respect, standards and trust) are central to the force’s vision and values. The FIRST principles are well known to the majority of officers and staff, who recognise the importance of the link between the way they treat members of the public and the trust and confidence the public has in the force, particularly in the light of adverse national media reporting.

⁴ *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

⁵ *Ibid.*

Enabling fair and respectful treatment is an integral part of the force's monthly organisational business day, which focuses on how the force can improve its service to communities in South Yorkshire.

In HMIC's PEEL legitimacy inspection in 2015,⁶ we found that South Yorkshire Police had effectively promoted an ethical culture and standards through its FIRST principles. In our PEEL 2016 inspection, we were pleased to find that the workforce, including volunteers, has a good understanding of the Code of Ethics.⁷ Since our last inspection, the force has continued to embed the Code of Ethics into operational activity through training and changes to policy. For example, the importance of the national decision-making model and of the Code of Ethics principles is reinforced by including them as integral parts of the 'day books' used by staff and officers. The books are numbered and registered, and must be signed off in a similar way to police officer pocket notebooks.

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

South Yorkshire Police uses a range of methods to seek feedback and challenge from the communities it serves about how fairly and respectfully it carries out policing functions. However, structural changes to policing and reduced capacity in local teams have meant a reduction in some former community activities. The force's core understanding of its legitimacy has been undermined by this reduction in involvement with individuals and communities at a local level.

At force level, South Yorkshire Police uses victim satisfaction and 'your voice counts' (YVC) surveys to seek feedback from its communities on matters of fair treatment.⁸

⁶ See: HMIC legitimacy inspection report 2015 – South Yorkshire Police. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/police-legitimacy-2015-south-yorkshire/

⁷ 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

⁸ 'Your voice counts' is a quarterly survey carried out by South Yorkshire Police. It includes general questions about how respondents view the force and questions on the police response to specific issues, such as vehicle crime.

The force also works well with the police and crime commissioner's (PCC's) strategic independent advisory panel for minority communities, the independent ethics panel and the newly created independent protests panel. Each forum enables a positive exchange of views between community representatives and the force leadership, and supports the force in reaching out to individuals and groups who are unable or reluctant to communicate with it.

The corporate communications branch is a vibrant team. As well as its nationally recognised media campaigns such as Operation Makesafe, it has developed strong levels of social media engagement,⁹ which help the force gather feedback and assistance from the community. The force's website also enables members of the public to give a compliment or make a complaint about the service that they have received.

In HMIC's legitimacy inspection in 2015,¹⁰ we reported that the force was effective in using a wide range of approaches to the diverse communities it serves. However, since that inspection the force has made a number of changes to its operating model.¹¹ At a local level it has reduced the resources dedicated to neighbourhood engagement and problem solving and limited the involvement of local policing team officers in these activities. As a result, the force is now less able to gather feedback consistently from all its communities about how fairly and respectfully they are treated.

Identifying and understanding the issues

South Yorkshire Police is able to identify and understand some of the issues affecting the public's confidence in the force to treat people fairly, but it does not have a central repository where all the feedback is collated and analysed. This limits the force's ability to understand all the issues about fair treatment and service to the public.

The force monitors social and conventional media reporting, together with the victim satisfaction and YVC survey results, to identify confidence levels in policing across the communities of South Yorkshire. Although the force reported that confidence fell

⁹ Operation Makesafe is South Yorkshire Police's response to child sexual exploitation and includes internal and public campaigns focused on spotting the signs of children at risk.

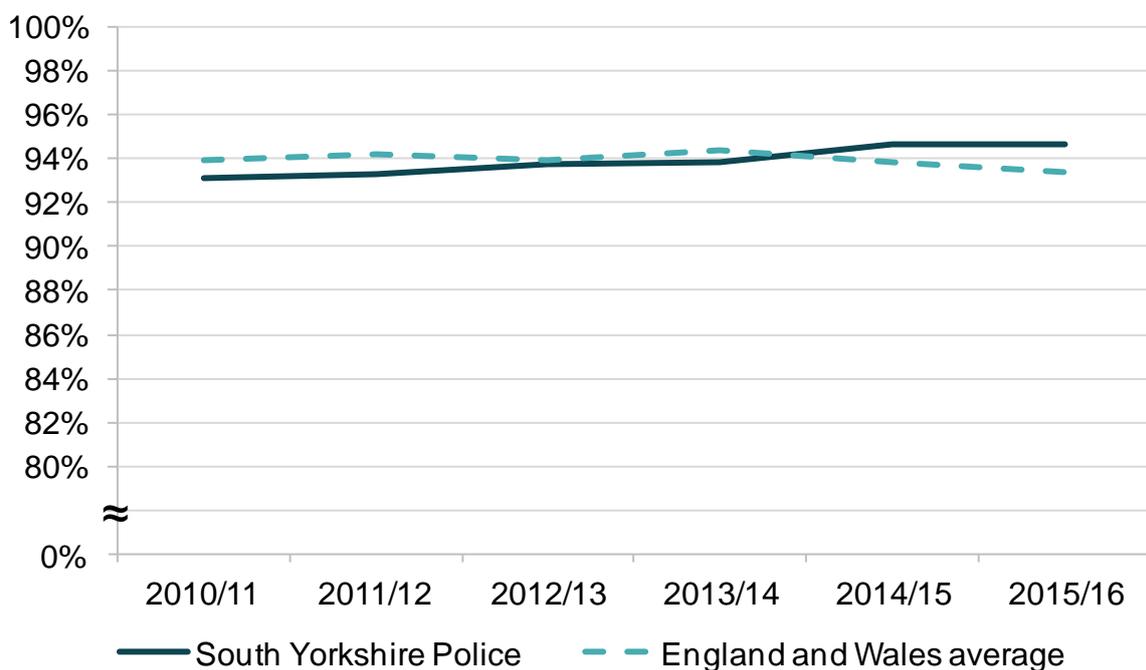
¹⁰ See: HMIC legitimacy inspection report 2015 – South Yorkshire Police. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/police-legitimacy-2015-south-yorkshire/

¹¹ Operating model – the way in which a police force is organised in terms of its structure and the processes it has adopted and operates in order to achieve its objectives.

following key events, such as the release of Professor Jay’s report into child sexual exploitation in Rotherham and the Hillsborough inquest verdicts,¹² levels quickly stabilised in line with the long-term trends.

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 South Yorkshire 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, 94.7 percent of all victims of crime (excluding hate crime) who responded to the victim satisfaction survey were satisfied with the overall treatment provided by South Yorkshire Police, which was broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 93.4 percent; and in line with the 94.7 percent who were satisfied with the overall treatment that the force provided in the 12 months to 31 March 2015.

Victim satisfaction levels, where people who have used police services comment on their experience of South Yorkshire Police, are broadly in line with the England and Wales average, but the force reports that the results of the crime survey of England

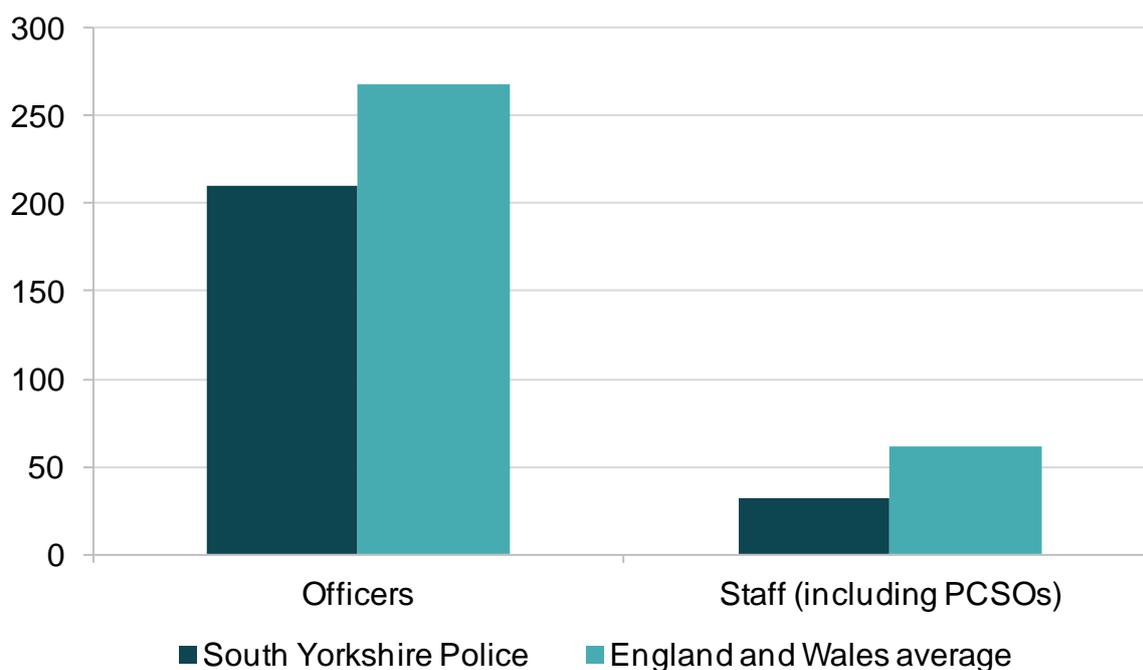
¹² See: www.rotherham.gov.uk/download/.../id/.../independent_inquiry_cse_in_rotherham.pdf

and Wales in the 12 months up to March 2016¹³ suggest confidence in the police among the general public is relatively low.

Independent custody visitors (who conduct unannounced visits to custody suites) told us that they have a positive relationship with officers and staff in police custody suites. They report that in the main detainees are treated fairly and custody staff deal with any areas for improvement in the treatment of detainees on the spot, wherever possible. Any recurring issues which the lay visitors identify are resolved during regular meetings with senior custody managers.

Each force in England and Wales is required to record 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 South Yorkshire Police compared with England and Wales, in the 12 months to 31 March 2016



Source: HMIC Legitimacy data collection

For further information about the data in figure 2 please see annex A.

¹³ Crime survey England and Wales perception and anti-social behaviour data by police force area, year ending March 2016

www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/adhocs/005928csewperceptionand asbdatapoliceforceareayearendingmarch2016

In the 12 months to 31 March 2016, South Yorkshire Police recorded 210 public complaint cases per 1,000 officers, which was lower than the England and Wales average of 268 cases per 1,000 officers. During this period, the force recorded 32 public complaint cases per 1,000 staff (including PCSOs), which was lower than 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 South Yorkshire Police are 'other neglect or failure in duty' and 'incivility, impoliteness and intolerance'.¹⁴ It is important to note, however, an issue identified during our 2014 inspection on police integrity and corruption;¹⁵ 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.

In the 12 months to 31 March 2016, the number of public complaints about police officers and police staff (including PCSOs) in South Yorkshire was lower than the England and Wales average. It is not known if this is because of the good conduct of officers or because of a lack of confidence among communities in South Yorkshire to make a complaint. The force has tried to make it easier for the public to register complaints through introducing an online system and it is working with the PCC's independent ethics panel to understand the experience and perception of complainants from minority communities.

In August 2014, following HMIC's 2013 inspection on the effective and fair use of stop and search powers,¹⁶ the Home Office published guidance to police forces on how to implement the Best Use of Stop and Search (BUSS) scheme.¹⁷ 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

¹⁴ Independent Police Complaints Commission data is available at: www.ipcc.gov.uk/reports/statistics/police-complaints/police-performance-data

¹⁵ *Integrity matters*, HMIC, January 2015. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/integrity-matters/

¹⁶ *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/

¹⁷ Best Use of Stop and Search Scheme, Home Office, August 2014 www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/346922/Best_Use_of_Stop_and_Search_Scheme_v3.0_v2.pdf

legitimacy inspection¹⁸ 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 the scheme

The reduced levels of involvement with communities at a local level and the absence of a central collection point for feedback on how people feel they are treated mean that the force cannot be confident it fully understands issues of fairness affecting all individuals and groups.

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

South Yorkshire Police does act on feedback from the public, but the absence of a central repository for collating and analysing information from the public means that the force is missing out on wider learning from the causes of public concern. That makes introducing consistent and comprehensive improvements at force and local level difficult.

The force has responded to feedback from local communities particularly affected by far-right demonstrations in Rotherham. Working with the PCC's independent protests panel and local authorities, the force has been able to improve its understanding of community concerns about safety and of the disruption to lives and businesses caused by protests. Senior officers have explained the force's legal responsibilities to enable peaceful and lawful protest, and the absence of powers for the police service to ban demonstrations; not all members of the affected communities understood this. Listening to the community has also enabled the force to change the content of its communications to protest groups before parades, to reduce the effect of these events on local people and businesses.

The PCC's independent protest panel has also reviewed how accessible policing services are to minority groups in communities affected by demonstrations. The force is also working with the independent ethics panel to make improvements in service, particularly in terms of language and cultural barriers.

¹⁸ *PEEL: Police legitimacy 2015 – A national overview*, HMIC, February 2016. Available at: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/police-legitimacy-2015/

At a local level, officers and staff were concerned about not being able to make a lasting difference in local communities. We found that the force no longer supported a number of activities to enhance involvement with former mining communities and with minority and ethnic communities. Officers and staff saw this type of involvement as being integral to improving perceptions of the police, which have been damaged by incidents such as Orgreave, or which are negative in any case in communities that are distrustful of the police. In one area experiencing gang violence and anti-social behaviour, officers held monthly meetings to listen to residents' views. However, those who attended were mainly white European, and, though the meetings were useful, officers recognised the need to do more to reach people from all the affected communities.

The force consistently shares lessons learned from complaints and Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) investigations through professional standards champions' meetings, the intranet, poster campaigns and email communications. An inspector in the force's professional standards department (PSD) is responsible for making any changes in policy suggested by the learning from investigations and legal cases involving the force.

Demonstrating effectiveness

South Yorkshire Police does not consistently communicate with the public about changes it has made to its policy and operational activities as a result of feedback from the public about their concerns. The force has an effective dialogue with its 134,000 Facebook and 89,000 Twitter followers. It has learned from feedback to offer comprehensive information in a less formal tone, so that it can enter into a dialogue more effectively with its social media followers. The social media accounts are used by trained staff to gather information and update members of the public on specific issues. The accounts are monitored centrally. However, there is no identifiable location on the force website where the public can find out about changes to force policy, structures and practice, and there is nowhere for the public to provide feedback on the effectiveness of such changes.

The force has reduced the number of formal police and community meetings since the creation of local policing teams. It has, however, increased the number of other opportunities for getting involved with the community, such as at supermarkets, post offices and similar premises. The effectiveness of these activities differs between areas, and their purpose is to identify vulnerability and provide crime prevention information rather than to receive and respond to feedback on fair and respectful treatment. The force has demonstrated that it can listen to, and work with, local communities. It is developing third-party procedures for reporting hate crime and responding to right-wing demonstrations through the PCC's independent advisory panel. These advisory groups hold the force to account for its fair and respectful treatment of local communities.

Summary of findings



Requires improvement

Although South Yorkshire Police treats people with fairness and respect, it could do more to reassure itself it is obtaining feedback from all the communities it serves. The force understands the importance of treating people with fairness and respect and its FIRST principles (fairness, integrity, respect, standards and trust) are central to the force's vision and values. Enabling fair and respectful treatment is also an important strand of the force's monthly organisational business meeting, which focuses on how the force can improve its service to communities in South Yorkshire.

However, the recent change in the force's operating model has led to a reduction in its involvement with many communities. This means that the force is not receiving the level of feedback that was apparent in our inspection last year. Centrally and in local districts we found good examples of specific engagement activities and the force has a substantial and active social media following. It does not, however, collate or analyse feedback from these and other areas to provide a complete picture of community experiences. The basis for change in force activities lacks substance, feedback to the public is limited and the force undertakes little analysis of whether the changes it makes are improving the treatment of the people it serves.

Areas for improvement

- The force should improve how it seeks feedback from the people it serves about their experiences (or perceptions) of how the police have treated them.
- The force should improve how it identifies and understands the issues that have the greatest impact on public perceptions of fair and respectful treatment.
- The force should ensure that it acts on learning and feedback to improve how it treats all the people it serves.

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.¹⁹ 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.²⁰

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 the workforce is recruited, one of the best ways to prevent corruption from occurring 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.²¹ 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.

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

²⁰ *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

²¹ *Promoting ethical behaviour and preventing wrongdoing in organisations*, College of Policing, 2015. Available at:
http://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/150317_Ethical_leadership_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

South Yorkshire Police broadly has in place the systems needed to ensure its workforce behaves ethically and lawfully, although we found some gaps. The force vets all new applicants, including volunteers and contractors, to national vetting standards. However, the vetting unit does not demonstrate an understanding of how vetting practices may affect the recruitment of a more diverse workforce by analysing the reasons why applicants are rejected. Analysis of vetting failures for diverse groups would provide a better understanding of why candidates have failed the vetting. The force may then provide alternative opportunities, such as a change of address, to support candidates who may otherwise fail vetting.

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

South Yorkshire Police clarifies and reinforces acceptable standards of behaviour consistently across its workforce through continuing activities to embed the Code of Ethics in the work of the force, the development and application of policies to support integrity, and training.

The force has a strong focus on ensuring its workforce understands and complies with the Code of Ethics. It has a Code of Ethics action plan, and the force lead for the code reports on progress to the PCC's independent ethics panel. The plan was developed through focus groups with officers and staff and is built on peer-to-peer training, involving discussion of ethical dilemmas led by locally based 'ethics champions' in the workforce. At the time of the inspection, 1,600 officers and staff had received the training, at a rate of 100 per week. We found that the majority of officers and many police staff had a good understanding of the FIRST principles and the Code of Ethics. Some police staff were confused about the status of the Code of Ethics, its relevance to them, and whether it was supported locally by the unions representing police staff.

The force policies on declaring gifts and hospitality, business interests and notifiable associations²² set out the boundaries of acceptable behaviour, and the majority of officers and staff know about them and understand them.

²² 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.

South Yorkshire Police publishes on the force website details of gifts and hospitality offered to, and received by, its leadership team. The force has procedures to assess and monitor reported business interests, gifts and hospitality, and notifiable associations. The force has provided guidance to officers and staff on appropriate use of force and personal social media accounts.

The force also recognises the importance of ensuring volunteers understand and comply with the Code of Ethics. For example, special constables receive specific training on the code and how it should be applied as part of their initial and their continuing training.

Each district and department in the force has a professional standards champion, usually a superintendent or police staff equivalent. The force holds professional standards champions' meetings on a monthly basis, where the head of PSD shares learning from internal and IPCC investigations, identified trends in complaints and associated ethical and legal dilemmas with the champions and representatives from the police federation and police staff unions.

In addition to handling peer-to-peer briefings and those from PSD champions, the corporate communications department also works with PSD to share messages about standards and behaviour through the intranet, email and posters.

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.²³ 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.

²³ *Integrity matters*, HMIC, January 2015. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/integrity-matters/

Identifying and understanding risks to integrity

South Yorkshire Police has a good understanding of the risks to the integrity of the organisation. The force has an anti-corruption strategic assessment identifying local threat and risk, together with a control strategy to mitigate those risks. Officers and staff in PSD are familiar with the risks identified in the assessment, and use the intelligence requirement to focus their intelligence-gathering activity on those risks that present the greatest threats to the integrity of the organisation.

The majority of officers and staff we spoke to understand their responsibility to notify the force of business interests and notifiable associations. The force publishes the gifts and hospitality register for its senior leaders, and its internal auditors, based at Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council, provide an independent audit of the entries against senior officer calendars and diaries. However, the number of entries on the register detailing the gifts and hospitality that have been accepted and, particularly, declined appears to be relatively low. The force should reassure itself that all officers and staff are aware of and comply with the requirements of the gifts and hospitality policy.

The PSD uses fair and effective systems and processes to assess business interest applications, considering each one in the context of the applicant's employment history, anti-corruption intelligence, complaint history and sickness records. The force refuses applications for interests incompatible with force values or where information about the applicant means that approval would not be appropriate. Similarly, it assesses and records notifiable associations, gifts and hospitality on the register in compliance with the Code of Ethics. The PSD records business interest applications and notifiable associations on a database. The system generates regular reminders for the force to review business interests and notifiable associations to find out whether individual circumstances and interests have changed. It also prompts PSD to check that members of the workforce have not pursued business interests for which approval was not given. These findings are consistent with HMIC's report into police integrity and corruption in 2014.

Although initial vetting of new recruits is broadly effective, we found that South Yorkshire Police has not vetted a significant part of its workforce to the 2012 national vetting standards. There is a backlog of approximately 3,000 police officers and police staff recruited before 2006, which presents a risk to the operational and organisational integrity of the force. The force vetting unit has not identified and assessed which posts in the force require enhanced levels of vetting. It is reliant on the assessment of local managers, who do not have professional knowledge of vetting standards, to assess the level of vetting required for their workforce and notify the vetting unit. This approach means that some post holders may not be vetted to the required level, risking operational integrity, or conversely that some may be over-vetted, resulting in unnecessary costs to the force. The bespoke vetting IT system

which the force introduced 18 months ago prompts annual reviews for people who have been vetted. The vetting unit is undertaking these reviews, but this task has increased the demands on its capacity.

We were reassured to find that the force does vet officers and staff in specialist roles in intelligence and that it carries out vetting health checks on officers and staff before promotion or transfer. However, it still needs to improve its vetting practice to ensure the physical safety of staff, the security of its infrastructure and its operational integrity.

Intervening early to manage risks to integrity

South Yorkshire Police has some systems for monitoring individuals who, based on the multiple or complex demands they place on the force, may present a risk to the integrity of the organisation. Support is available through human resources (HR) structures for welfare matters and the deputy chief constable oversees misconduct matters. However, it recognises it could do more to identify and support individuals at an earlier stage.

The network of professional standards champions provides South Yorkshire Police with an effective means of swiftly identifying organisational risks and intervening early to address them. For example, we observed a discussion at the champions' meeting about an increase in complaints from witnesses who had recorded incidents and then had their mobile telephones seized by officers. While the meeting recognised that the devices potentially held good evidence and definitely contained material relevant to any prosecution, it acknowledged that officers would not always have power to seize the phone of a witness. Professional standards champions were directed to share guidance about this with their officers, and the training department was asked to incorporate this advice into the training of recruits and supervisory officers.

The force holds meetings of HR, vetting and legal staff to consider jointly complex personnel cases, including sickness, overtime, misconduct and integrity issues, in order to support the workforce's attendance, productivity and integrity. The force recognises that, although this process works for individuals who are known to the force, it does not help to identify members of staff whose difficulties or misconduct may not be apparent to their supervisors at an early enough stage. The force has looked for the best way to meet this challenge and is planning to introduce an intervention and support programme as used in another force. The programme collates and analyses personnel, finance and professional standards information on all members of the force and then calculates an individual risk score that indicates one of four levels of response. These are: no action required; local management support; a meeting and PSD action plan; and the final level of PSD investigation. PSD champions support the programme and it is awaiting approval from force command.

Looking for, reporting and assessing intelligence on potential corruption

The force gathers intelligence from a wide range of sources. Officers and staff in the intelligence development section of the anti-corruption unit (ACU) assess it and take action on it effectively. These findings are consistent with those for the force in HMIC's report on police integrity and corruption in 2014. It also has the capability to use monitoring software to support intelligence-led corruption investigations. In cases where it uses the software, the ACU has good evidence-gathering capability. In HMIC's 2014 inspection of police integrity and corruption, we reported that there were limits to the retrospective audit capability in the force. The evidence gathered from audits often complements investigations into the misuse of police systems. The force recognises this and in 2015 explored the possibility of procuring a comprehensive network-wide monitoring and auditing solution. However, the costs were considered prohibitive.

The ACU actively screens telephone data recovered from organised crime group members for contacts in the police service to identify potential corruption and maintain the operational security of organised crime investigations. The ACU also has a calendar of activities linked to the force's corruption threat assessment and intelligence requirement.²⁴ For example, this includes specific work to identify and address sexual misconduct in the workforce and planned activities to identify any abuse of older vulnerable people by police officers or police staff for financial gain. The use of a calendar of planned and prioritised activities is an effective approach to integrity issues for a team with limited capacity.

The force maintains a widely used confidential email and telephone reporting system for staff to report their suspicions about potential misconduct by colleagues, which they can do anonymously if they wish. The force has a well-developed and widely used system to support people reporting wrongdoing as well as those under investigation. Officers and staff, including special constabulary officers, are trained as volunteer welfare support officers (WSO) in standards of professional behaviour, equality matters (including institutional racism), IPCC guidance and the force's expectations of WSOs.

In HMIC's report into police integrity and corruption in 2014, we found a reduction in the number of random drug and alcohol tests in 2014 compared with previous years. HMIC suggested the force review this, because a higher number of tests would have a greater chance of identifying drug and alcohol misuse in the workforce and be more likely to send a strong preventative message. The force has responded by increasing the number of tests and associated messages to the workforce. In 2015/16 the force carried out 135 random and 241 pre-employment checks. These

²⁴ The intelligence requirement sets out the areas where the force plans to gather further intelligence and information to develop its understanding for the purposes of prevention and investigation.

random tests resulted in a positive indication of cocaine use by an officer, which the force progressed through arrest and further testing. At the conclusion of the case, the force plans to use the opportunity to issue preventative messages.

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 Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) published *The abuse of police powers to perpetrate sexual violence*.²⁵ 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 consideration of how it should be investigated.

The *Code of Ethics* – 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.²⁶ HMIC’s 2015 report *Integrity matters*²⁷ 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.

²⁵ *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

²⁶ 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.

²⁷ *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

South Yorkshire Police recognises police abuse of authority for sexual gain as serious corruption and has highlighted this to the workforce and public. It refers its investigations into reported sexual offences by police officers and police staff to the IPCC appropriately. The force analysed intelligence reports about sexual misconduct by members of the workforce as part of the current corruption threat assessment. Based on the low number of reports and limited results, it did not identify sexual misconduct as a key threat. However, in recognition of the risks to individuals and the reputation of the force, PSD includes sexual misconduct in its intelligence requirement and has conducted audits of contact with vulnerable people as part of its 2016 calendar of activities.

The force carried out a similar audit of telephony in 2013, Operation Pigeon, based on the findings of national reports and the experiences of police forces in other areas. The analysis and investigation resulted in the dismissal of a number of officers and the recent conviction of one officer for misconduct in public office and making indecent images of children. Although the force did publicise to the workforce the outcomes of Operation Pigeon, we were disappointed more staff we spoke to were not aware them. Officers and staff clearly identified the abuse of authority for sexual gain as serious misconduct and the force should ensure in the future that the outcomes of such operations are clearly communicated to, and understood by, the workforce as a means of reinforcing the expected standards of behaviour.

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

South Yorkshire police has a record of taking positive action to identify and dismiss those who abuse their position for sexual gain. It plans further audit activity to identify potential sexual misconduct and to raise awareness later in this calendar year. It could do more to look for intelligence about sexual misconduct by officers and staff. The force has included sexual misconduct as part of its intelligence requirement, but, although this identifies the areas of interest for PSD, it does not cover the signs of abusive behaviour that officers and staff should be looking for. The force is not currently approaching voluntary groups representing potentially vulnerable victims, such as women's refuges and sex worker support organisations, which could provide information. The force has established a protocol with the NSPCC to share information about any reported exploitation of children by law enforcement officers. This is a welcome development, but as yet the NSPCC have not supplied any reports.

We examined force systems to judge how the force has dealt with intelligence about possible sexual misconduct and concluded that the reports had been properly recorded, assessed and progressed.

Taking action to prevent abuse of authority for sexual gain

The force, through its strategic assessment, does have some understanding of reported sexual misconduct by the workforce. However, the limited range of activities used to gather information and the fact that an audit of telephony has not taken place since 2013 mean that the force may have failed to identify criminality and misconduct. Where sexual misconduct is identified, the force pursues it, and it has communicated the results of criminal and misconduct findings arising from Operation Pigeon to the workforce and public. It could do more, though, to ensure that the workforce generally and supervisors in particular are all alert to the warning signs of possible abuse of vulnerable victims and witnesses by officers and staff.

Building public trust

The force seeks to rebuild public trust by publicising cases where officers have been convicted of offences involving sexual behaviour with vulnerable victims, including victims of harassment and domestic violence.

In October 2015, a former South Yorkshire police constable pleaded guilty to misconduct in public office and making indecent images of children. The force, through the then deputy chief constable, described the officer's behaviour as disgraceful and highlighted the vigorous nature of the police investigation, supervised by the IPCC, which had brought him to justice.²⁸

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 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.²⁹ 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.

²⁸ See: www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/news/yorkshire-police-officer-guilty-of-inappropriate-contact-with-vulnerable-women-1-7507205

²⁹ *Literature review – Police integrity and corruption*, HMIC, January 2015. Available at: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/integrity-matters/

Working with the public

The force works closely with the public about the outcomes of misconduct cases. It publicises the details of misconduct hearings and streams footage of them to accessible locations online. The force's website contains details of the results of misconduct hearings and meetings for the last 12 months. Details of cases from the last three years are accessible to the public through an archive facility.

The force publishes details of the gifts and hospitality offered to its senior officers on its website and works with the PCC's independent ethics panel to develop trust and confidence in the ethical behaviour of the workforce.

Working with the workforce

The force publicises details of all misconduct cases that result in a disciplinary outcome, and 'lessons learned' are easily accessible on the PSD section of the intranet. It also shares emerging risks with professional standards champions, and gives advice on how to share lessons learned with staff. Despite this, it is clear from our inspection that knowledge of, and access to, the results of misconduct cases and the learning from them are inconsistent across the force. In some districts and departments, learning from internal investigations is shared effectively; in other areas, officers and staff rely on word of mouth and are not aware of where they can find this information on the intranet. Although individuals have some responsibility for keeping their own knowledge up to date, the force has work to do to ensure that all officers and staff are well informed about misconduct.

Summary of findings



Good

South Yorkshire Police acts effectively to ensure that its workforce behaves ethically and lawfully. The force clarifies and reinforces acceptable standards of behaviour. It has a good understanding of the risks to the integrity of the organisation, informed by intelligence from a wide range of sources. This intelligence is assessed and progressed appropriately by the anti-corruption unit. The force has systems to ensure that the integrity of the organisation and its workforce is not compromised by inappropriate business interests or associations. The force vets recruits effectively, but needs to ensure that the whole workforce is vetted to an appropriate standard in line with national guidance.

The force takes abuse of authority for sexual gain seriously when it is identified, but should do more to ensure it is gathering all the available intelligence about such behaviour.

South Yorkshire Police communicates effectively with the public: it advertises misconduct hearings and publishes the results of hearings on the internet. The force shares learning from misconduct cases internally through its PSD champions' meeting, the intranet and internal publicity campaigns. Many staff receive this information from the force, but others are less clear about where to find it and rely on the media or information from colleagues.

Areas for improvement

- The force should improve how it clarifies and reinforces standards of behaviour to its workforce, in particular when dealing with vulnerable people, including victims of domestic abuse.
- The force should ensure it complies with all aspects of the current national guidelines for vetting.
- The force should ensure that it has the capability and capacity to monitor all its computer systems 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.³⁰ 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.³¹ 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.

³⁰ *Fair cop 2: Organisational justice, behaviour and ethical policing*, College of Policing, 2015.

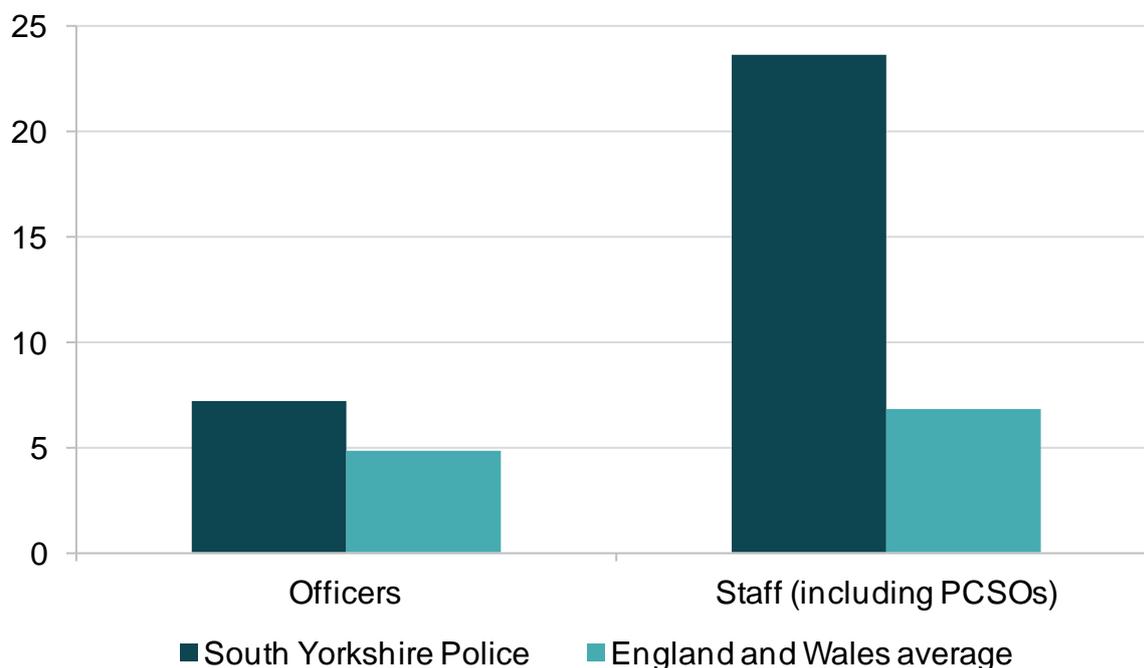
Available at:

http://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/150317_Fair_cop%202_FINAL_REPORT.pdf
f 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

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



Source: HMIC Legitimacy data collection

For further information about the data in figure 3 please see annex A

In the 12 months to 31 March 2016, South Yorkshire Police finalised 7.2 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 23.6 formal grievances raised by staff per 1,000 staff (including PCSOs), which was higher than the England and Wales average of 6.8 per 1,000 staff (including PCSOs).

The force has a limited understanding of the issues that affect the perceptions of fairness and respectful treatment in the workforce. The last full workforce survey took place in 2014/15. Senior team involvement with some officers and staff individually and in groups has supplemented the learning from the survey. Although the force told us the survey only had a response rate of 28 percent, it clearly identified staff concerns, particularly about under-performance and attendance management, talent development, low morale and lack of confidence in the senior leadership. The majority of the officers and staff we spoke to continue to be concerned about these issues and told us low morale has become an issue, pointing to high workloads and difficulties in taking rest days and annual leave as contributory factors. The force also recognises that sickness levels are higher than the England and Wales average. It plans to carry out a comprehensive workforce cultural survey this year.

Some of the officers and staff we spoke to did not have a clear understanding of the purpose of the grievance procedure. Those who had not used it were concerned that it was ineffective and could harm career prospects. However, the majority of people we spoke to with direct experience of the grievance procedure were positive about the process and outcome. South Yorkshire Police offers exit interviews to those leaving the force, and around half of leavers agree to an interview.

Making improvements and demonstrating effectiveness

The force is continuing to make improvements in its practices and procedures as a result of the findings from its 2014 workforce survey but acknowledges that the workforce may not recognise how these changes link to the results of the survey. The force also accepts that it has not monitored its response to the survey and that it is important to evaluate and communicate what has changed before asking the workforce to get involved in further planned survey work.

The force established three working groups, each led by an officer from the command team, to tackle issues raised by the 2014 survey: staff development, leadership, and communication. Sixty-five officers and staff from across the force volunteered to work on the groups. The staff development group responded to the concern that performance was not managed effectively by introducing attendance management training. Though it is mandatory for all supervisors and clearly linked on the intranet to feedback from the staff survey, this link has not been recognised consistently by staff across the force. There was some recognition among the workforce of the wellbeing toolkits that are now present on the intranet as a result of the survey findings. The absence of an effective communications strategy means that much of the work in response to the survey is not recognised by the majority of the workforce. Officers and staff have limited knowledge of the increasing development opportunities and wellbeing provision available to them.

Findings from the survey have also informed the development of a number of continuous professional development opportunities as well as the introduction of a new individual performance assessment (PDR) process. The force is testing a bursary scheme for individual personal and professional development, and the career services team is providing a range of events to support personal development, including reflective practice, communication skills and assessment skills for line managers. The leadership group is also working with outside agencies in an effort to enhance leadership skills within the force.

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

HMIC's legitimacy inspection in 2015³² found that South Yorkshire Police took wellbeing seriously. The force, through its strategic partnership, has governance structures and an action plan to promote wellbeing – 'Well together' – which considers both the physical and mental wellbeing of staff and takes account of national research.

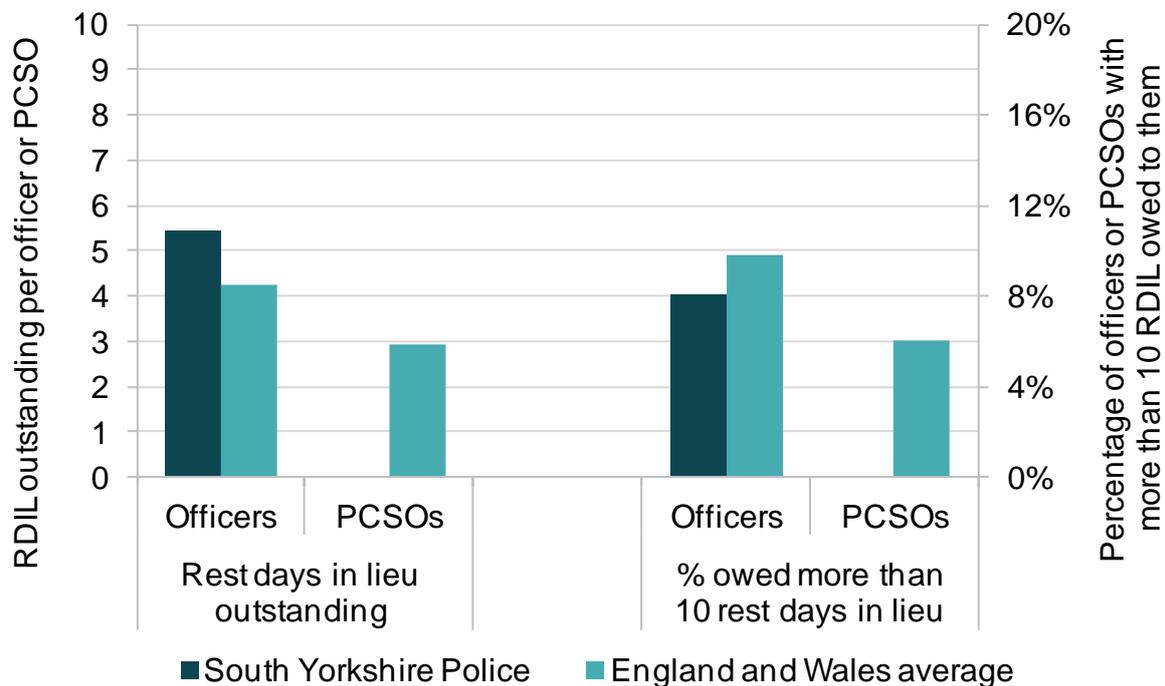
The HR governance structures examine performance information on sickness and attendance management and will monitor completion rates of the new PDR. Supervisors we spoke to were confident about the training they had received to identify welfare needs, but some supervisors, officers and staff were not clear about the full range of measures that were available to support the workforce.

Identifying and understanding the workforce's wellbeing needs

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.

³² See: HMIC legitimacy inspection report 2015 – South Yorkshire Police. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/police-legitimacy-2015-south-yorkshire/

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 South Yorkshire 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.

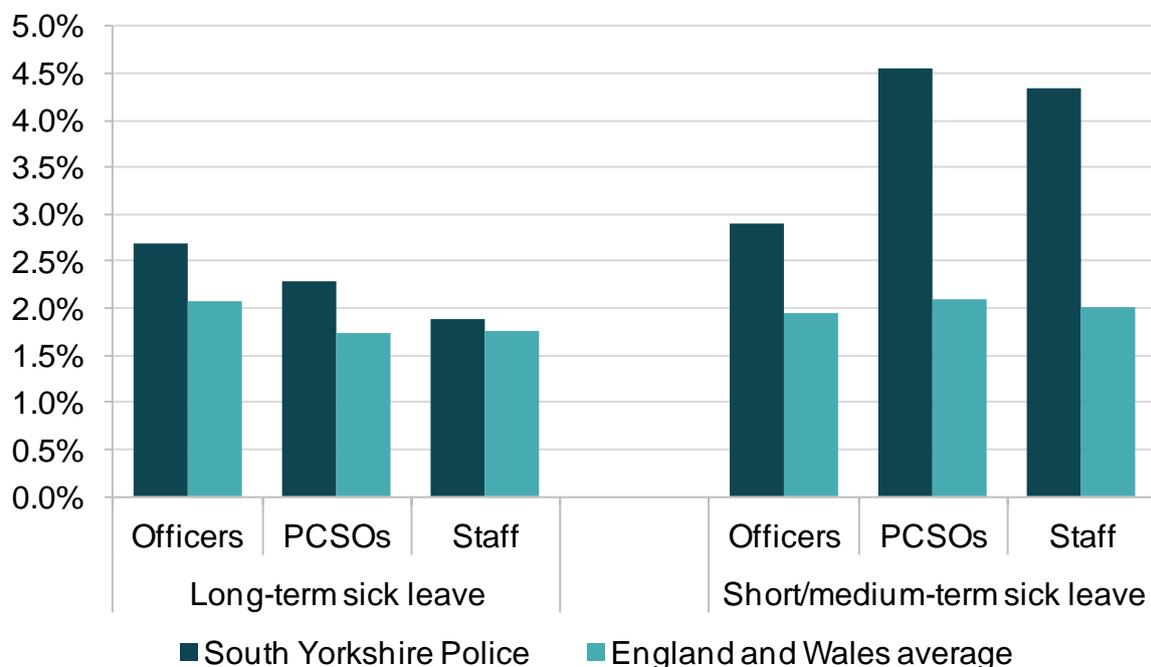
As at 31 March 2016, there were 5.4 rest days in lieu outstanding per officer in South Yorkshire Police, which was broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 4.2 days per officer. South Yorkshire Police could not provide data for rest days in lieu outstanding for PCSOs as at 31 March 2016. On the same date, the England and Wales average was 2.9 rest days in lieu outstanding per PCSO. As at 31 March 2016, 8.1 percent of officers in South Yorkshire Police had more than 10 rest days in lieu owed to them, which was broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 9.8 percent. South Yorkshire Police could not provide data for the percentage of PCSOs owed more than 10 rest days in lieu as at 31 March 2016. The England and Wales average was 6.0 percent of PCSOs.

The force is able to understand the wellbeing needs of its workforce through the results of the 2014 survey, internet communications, roadshows, and question and answer sessions with workforce involving chief officers. It is aware that the introduction of the new operating model has increased concerns about inadequate staffing levels. Officers and staff are finding it difficult to take leave during peak holiday periods and cancelled rest days are causing some officers to submit leave requests for Friday to Monday to preserve a rota weekend off. Embargoes on leave for force-wide training on a new IT system have contributed to the pressure. Many staff therefore question whether their wellbeing really is a priority for the force.

Among those who are aware of the increased wellbeing provision there is a feeling that the force should focus more on solving the issues contributing to stress than on increasing support for people when they have been 'broken'. HR data and feedback from staff show that wellbeing concerns are most acute in the public protection unit and in the force contact management centre. Both areas experience high levels of staff sickness. The force has provided bespoke support for supervisors to address the causes of sickness and to encourage officers and staff to return to work.

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 South Yorkshire 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.

- 2.7 percent of officers were on long-term sick leave, which is higher than the England and Wales average of 2.1 percent.
- 2.9 percent of officers were on short or medium-term sick leave, which is higher than the England and Wales average of 2.0 percent.

- 2.3 percent of PCSOs were on long-term sick leave, which is broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 1.7 percent.
- 4.6 percent of PCSOs were on short or medium-term sick leave, which is higher than the England and Wales average of 2.1 percent.
- 1.9 percent of staff were on long-term sick leave, which is broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 1.7 percent.
- 4.3 percent of staff were on short or medium-term sick leave, which is higher than the England and Wales average of 2.0 percent.

Taking preventative and early action to improve workforce wellbeing

The force has measures to identify stress and ill health at an early stage and encourages timely action to maintain wellbeing. Individuals can use the wellbeing toolkit, roadshows, employee assistance programme and occupational health support either on their own initiative or on referral by supervisors. Many officers and staff we spoke to are frustrated that the wide range of products available does nothing to address what they perceive to be the causes of ill health and, in particular, stress: a high workload relative to the available resources. These concerns are widespread among contact management staff, in local policing teams, and in the serious crime department, particularly the public protection unit (PPU). The pressures in the PPU are exacerbated for many officers by a high number of long-running complaint investigations that the IPCC is carrying out independently.

The force has taken steps to support officers and staff in the PPU. It has offered the workforce psychological screening, supported supervisors and managers in developing return-to-work plans for the workforce and is working with the IPCC to make investigations timelier. This has resulted in a reduction in sickness absence, particularly in Rotherham, although officers have not all returned to roles within public protection. The force is also looking to introduce fixed-term tenure in public protection to reduce the cumulative pressures from long-term deployments to stressful posts.

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.³³ HMIC assessed how fairly and effectively the force manages the

³³ *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

individual performance of its officers and staff, including the extent to which the process aligns with guidance produced by the College of Policing.³⁴

The performance assessment process

At the time of the inspection, South Yorkshire Police was moving from its previous performance management system, a paper-based annual assessment of historical performance, to an electronic system (ePDR), introduced in June 2016, that requires supervisors to have regular structured conversations with their staff about objectives, wellbeing and professional development. Supervisors must also complete annual assessments of performance on the anniversary of the date of joining or most recent promotion. This new approach was developed with working groups of officers and staff in response to the staff survey in 2014 and other feedback. Broadly, those members of the workforce who have started to use the new ePDR system commented favourably on the forward-looking and developmental nature of the ePDR, which differed from the previous PDRs, widely perceived as being used only in cases of poor performance or to support promotion.

There is an online toolkit to support supervisors in having conversations with members of the workforce, including difficult discussions about necessary improvements in performance. Some supervisors and members of the workforce raised concerns about the viability of the new ePDR system for those with responsibility for large numbers of people and about the risk of the new process becoming a tick-box exercise and falling into disrepute, like the previous system.

The results of performance assessment

The force recognised that the previous PDR was not meeting the requirements of the organisation or the workforce. It was seen by many as a backward-looking tick-box exercise that did not support individual development or wellbeing. The force monitored the submission rates of the final assessments, but there was little evaluation of whether assessments were fair to the individual and consistent across the force. It is too early to evaluate whether the new ePDR process is operating effectively and fairly to develop the workforce and improve service to the public. There is scope for the new ePDR to be used for talent management and for assessment of the force's capacity and capabilities, but the force was not clear about how to achieve these objectives through the ePDR. The force should monitor the new ePDR to ensure that it is embedded in the organisation, and this may require more input than the planned dip samples of ePDRs by HR for quality and fairness.

³⁴ 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

Summary of findings



Requires improvement

The force needs to treat its workforce with greater fairness and respect. It uses a range of methods to assess how members of the workforce feel they are treated, but not frequently or consistently enough to gain a full understanding. The force's last full workforce survey took place in 2014. The force told us that the response rate for the survey was 28 percent. Although this response rate is quite low, the force identified important issues, and involved officers and staff in working groups to develop solutions.

Recognising the importance of improving wellbeing, the force has developed a range of resources to support the workforce. However, some staff are unaware of the increased provision and many who were aware of it did not realise that it had been introduced in response to staff feedback. The new electronic PDR introduced to the force was also a response to concerns raised by the workforce. The new system is a forward-looking development and wellbeing tool, but at this early stage we cannot say that it ensures consistent and fair assessment and development.

Morale is an issue throughout the force; the command team recognises this and is working to alleviate the pressures on leave and rest days. It plans a further staff survey later this year.

Areas for improvement

- The force should improve how it identifies and understands the issues that have the greatest impact on workforce perceptions of treatment.
- The force should improve how it communicates the action it has taken in response to issues identified by the workforce.
- The force should review the arrangements that allow staff and officers to take annual leave, to minimise excessive carry-over of leave.

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.³⁵

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.

³⁵ *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