

**Drusilla Sharpling, CBE**

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary

Mr P. Vaughan, QPM  
Chief Constable  
South Wales Police  
Cowbridge Road  
Bridgend  
CF31 3SU

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Dear Peter

**Core business: An inspection of crime prevention, police attendance and use of police time**

Between January and April 2014, HMIC carried out inspection fieldwork across all 43 forces in England and Wales. This inspection, called 'Making best use of police time' (now known as 'Core business: An inspection of crime prevention, police attendance and use of police time') assessed three areas of police work. These were:

- how well forces are preventing crime and anti-social behaviour;
- how forces respond to reports of crime, including investigating crime and bringing offenders to justice; and
- how well forces are freeing up the time of their staff so they can focus on core policing functions.

Attached is an embargoed copy of the national thematic report for this inspection which will now be published by HMIC on Thursday 4 September 2014 at 00:01. This must not be published until this date and time.

The findings that specifically relate to your force are included in this letter. The initial findings were previously sent to you for factual accuracy checks and, where appropriate, have been amended following your response.

The majority of the inspection findings contained in the national thematic report do not identify individual forces. However, electronic versions of the national report will link to the HMIC website where data on each force can be viewed.

We will revisit some of the evidence gathered during the 'Core business' inspection as part of the crime inspection for HMIC's Police Efficiency, Effectiveness and Legitimacy (PEEL) interim assessment.

All forces will be given the opportunity to provide an update. This updated evidence will be considered as part of the PEEL interim crime inspection, which is due to be published at the end of November.

## Preventing crime

- Although South Wales Police does not have an overarching crime prevention strategy, HMIC did find references to crime prevention and reduction in some of the force's plans and documents. At the time of our inspection, the force was in the process of writing a crime prevention strategy which should provide greater clarity to officers, staff and the public, of the importance the force places on preventing crime and anti-social behaviour and how improvements will be achieved.
- HMIC found a positive culture among staff seeking to reduce crime and deliver appropriate interventions to prevent crimes from happening. Prevention activity is taking place at a local level both in reactive and pre-planned activity, including Cardiff after Dark; Street Pastors providing support to the vulnerable; Taxi Marshalls and a street accident and emergency (A&E) 'field hospital triage' every weekend in Cardiff and Swansea. These approaches seek to reduce demand on the police, the ambulance service and accident and emergency units. Data from some of these initiatives is being analysed to enable predictive and preventative approaches to be taken and to inform future deployment options.
- No formal crime prevention training has been delivered to staff who frequently deal with victims of crime and anti-social behaviour, other than to new recruits. HMIC considers that by providing focused training, the force would be able to make better use of opportunities to prevent crime and thereby provide a better quality of service to the public.
- The force operates a daily management meeting (DMM) process to provide oversight of demand and resource allocation. HMIC found that basic command unit (BCU) DMM were undertaken independently at different times to the force level DMM which is held at the beginning of each day. This approach has the potential to affect any subsequent tasking and deployment of resources at a force level, as the collective understanding of threat, harm and risk across the force at that time will be restricted.
- The force does not have a repository for sharing of good practice. As a result, the options available to staff to deal with prevention activity and build on previous successes are limited. There is no systematic evaluation of initiatives and dissemination of learning.
- The force website does not provide any crime prevention advice, guidance or contact information for members of the public or staff to access. Provision of this information would make both staff and members of the public aware of appropriate crime prevention measures and explain how to put them in place.
- The force has dedicated crime prevention design advisors who are involved in the national 'Secured by Design' (SBD) initiative, working with local authorities and planners. The SBD scheme is a national police initiative to guide and encourage those involved in the design and security for new and refurbished homes, commercial premises and car parks to adopt crime prevention measures. HMIC found that the force also has tactical crime prevention advisors located within each basic command unit (BCU), supporting local officers in providing crime prevention advice and undertaking initiatives. For example Operation Textbook; a crime prevention initiative involving student volunteers, council, police and Neighbourhood Watch staff visiting student accommodation offering crime prevention advice and community safety messages to students.

- The force is working in partnership with the Universities' Police Science Institute (UPSI) partnered with Cardiff University, which provides an important link between academics and the police. This partnership offers not only independence and academic rigor to surveys, but provides evidence based methods which can be used to inform and underpin approaches to a wide range of policing activities, including both prevention and community policing. Recent work has been undertaken to establish what affects the feeling of safety within communities. This work involves using intelligence-based neighbourhood security interviews (iNSI) undertaken by police community support officers (PCSO).

### **Crime recording and attendance**

- HMIC found that following a previous analysis of demand, the force has made significant investment in a public service centre (PSC), for call management and incident deployment. This has changed the way the public accesses policing services, ensuring calls can be addressed at source or directed to the most appropriate person at the earliest opportunity.
- The force has adopted a 'task not ask' philosophy in relation to the deployment of resources. The main purpose of this approach is to assign the nearest resource to an incident. HMIC found evidence that this philosophy is not consistently applied, with a disparity amongst PSC staff in its application. Local supervisors seek to override the autonomy of the PSC to deploy resources. In addition, officers' use of the Airwave radio to book on and off duty and provide updates on their availability is inconsistent. This inhibits the ability of the PSC to deploy the most appropriate available resource.
- HMIC found clear policies and procedures within the PSC to enable staff to identify vulnerable and repeat victims of crime and anti-social behaviour, to ensure an appropriate level of response at the earliest opportunity.
- The force uses resource location software (iR3) in support of a 'right people, right place, right time' approach. The system also provides data to inform the force's understanding of officer patrol history and time in the community, which in turn has led to an increase in PCSO visibility.
- Crime is recorded by the force, initially by creating an incident on the command and control system and then subsequently entering the details onto the crime recording system. It also has the ability to record some cases directly onto the crime recording system, without the need to create an incident on the command and control system. The force has systems in place to identify how many crimes it attends.
- During the inspection, HMIC reviewed a number of crime investigations, including reports of crimes that were not attended. In certain cases, for crimes such as burglary dwellings, there was clear evidence of investigation and supervision. For other offences, such as theft, many of which were not attended, the force makes an assessment on the available solvability factors and investigative opportunities as well as vulnerability in each case to inform its decision to deal with a reported crime by telephone.
- HMIC found evidence of clear governance structures for the Integrated Offender Management scheme (IOM), supported at a local level through co-location and associated computer access for both police and probation staff, ensuring that those offenders whose crimes cause most damage and harm to their communities are

managed in a co-ordinated way. There was, however, an absence of analytical assessment or evaluation of the outcomes and benefits of the model.

- The force was able to provide HMIC with the number of named suspects yet to be arrested or interviewed, as well as those who had failed to answer police bail.
- The force operates an initiative known as 'TRICK' which focuses staff on delivering the key elements of services that matter to victims. (TRICK - Time – arrive at the agreed time, Reference – give a crime number and your details, Inform – the victim of everything you've done, Complete – once all enquiries are concluded tell the victim, Keep - the victim at the heart of everything we do). HMIC found evidence that the force effectively captures and analyses data in relation to this initiative to improve service delivery to the public. The force has recently seen a significant change in its public satisfaction position nationally, and is now in the top ten of forces for satisfaction and whole experience.

## Freeing up time

- HMIC identified that the force has a good understanding of demand, and is taking steps to build up a more sophisticated understanding, particularly around how its resources are distributed. Its approach includes analysis of different types of incidents and policing activity. The creation of the PSC has reduced command and control and public contact centres from seven down to one. This has led to separate savings and efficiencies, but more importantly allowed the force to be assured of the total demand for services as all calls for service are routed through this one service centre.
- The force has carried out some work with other agencies to identify and address those tasks that are not the sole responsibility of the police.
- The inspection found that the force does not have a thorough understanding of how staff are spending their time. While the force has made significant progress in terms of IT, in particular regarding the ability to identify the location, past and present, of staff and assets, the force does not yet possess the ability to identify how police officers spend their time while on duty.
- The force has some understanding of the amount of savings in staff time that have been made as a result of changes or new technology. The iR3+ system is able to provide accurate information on vehicle location, driver identification and mileage travelled which has translated into both cashable efficiencies and increased operational effectiveness. Linked to this software system is the use of the 'Dallas key' in vehicles which enables the force to identify the driver, the journey, and manner of driving, in support of accident investigations or complaints. Since the introduction of this system the force has seen a reduction in police accident figures for the period 2012/13 of 42 per cent from the 2009 starting point. The data also support a reduction in insurance premiums as a direct result of the reduction in police vehicle accidents and greater driver accountability.
- The force has made a clear investment in the use of mobile devices, (such as tablets and mobile phones) to enable officers to access force systems while on patrol. We also found evidence that the force is working towards a 'one system'

ethos to integrate various IT platforms into one system in order to free up police time.

- HMIC found evidence of PCSOs being utilised to undertake some low-level crime investigations. This does not accord with their primary function of engagement, reassurance and intelligence gathering. The force has advised HMIC that PCSOs may on occasions deal with 'TRICK' issues, but are not used in an investigative capacity.
- HMIC found the use of special constables and volunteers across the force is limited. The force should explore opportunities to use these resources more effectively in public service roles.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dr Sharpling', written in a cursive style.

**Drusilla Sharpling**  
Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary  
Wales and Western Region