

POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR LEICESTERSHIRE POLICE & CRIME PANEL

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| Report of | POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER |
| Date | WEDNESDAY 29 MARCH 2017 |
| Subject | HMIC INSPECTION – PEEL EFFECTIVENESS |
| Author | CHIEF CONSTABLE |

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Panel on the recent HMIC Inspection of Leicestershire Police.

Recommendation

2. The Panel are asked to discuss the contents of the report.

Background

3. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary published its report into the effectiveness of Leicestershire Police on Thursday 2 March 2017. The report sets out HMIC findings of the effectiveness of Leicestershire Police in keeping people safe and reducing crime.

Report Outcomes

4. The report recognised that the Force are good at preventing crime and tackling anti-social behaviour, good at tackling serious and organised crime, and that they work well with their partner agencies. It praises the Force commitment to local, neighbourhood policing and states that officers understand their local communities very well. It describes, among other initiatives, the triple award-winning film "Kayleigh's Love Story", which highlights the dangers of online grooming, as illustrative of how the Force is continually broadening its approach to keeping people safe and preventing crime. And it acknowledges that the increase in overall reported crime in 12 months leading up to the inspection was less than half the national average increase.
5. However, the report also highlights some areas for improvement in performance, many of which the Force itself drew the HMIC's attention to at the time of their inspection in October last year, and which work had already begun

to address, and in conclusion therefore the HMIC give the Force an overall rating of “requires improvement”. This was previously known as “satisfactory.”

The rating

6. The overall rating reached by HMIC is based on inspecting four areas of work, each of which receives its own grade:
- How effective is the force at preventing crime, tackling ASB and keeping young people safe? **Good**
 - How effective is the force at tackling serious and organised crime? **Good**
 - How effective is the force at investigating crime and reducing offending? **Requires Improvement**
 - How effective is the force at protecting those who are vulnerable from harm, and supporting victims? **Requires Improvement**

The context

7. Whilst the population of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland continues to rise inexorably, police funding has continued to fall. As a result, police officer numbers have reduced, by 547 since 2009 – a reduction of 23%. In 2006 the Force had 1 police officer per 430 residents; today, that ratio has risen to 1 in every 599 residents.
8. Against this backdrop, the Force set out on a journey several years ago to change how policing services are delivered, to meet the changing needs and expectations our society, to embrace new technologies, to combat the changing nature of criminality and to make savings – some £38m since 2009.
9. Through change, through collaboration with neighbouring police forces and with local partner agencies, and as a result of prudent financial management, the Force have continued to reduce crime to its lowest ever level. In this year, and in the financial year to come, the Force continue to invest in local policing with additional frontline officers and, through change programmes, enhance the quality of service provided to those who need help.
10. But, and it is a big but, it is unrealistic to expect the growth in calls for police services to be met from an ever-shrinking pot. There is a limit to what can be achieved without more funding and even keeping the status quo is not sustainable long term.

The positives

11. The HMIC report highlights many areas of service and performance where it regards the Force as performing at a good standard. It concludes that Leicestershire Police is:
- Good at preventing crime and tackling anti-social behaviour
 - Fully committed to local policing - Neighbourhood policing teams understand their local communities and work well with partner agencies, such as local authorities;
 - Quick to respond to changes in the composition of local communities;
 - Continually broadening its approach to keeping people safe and preventing crime – the report praises the introduction of Digital PCSOs and

Safeguarding PCSOs, the high-profile CEASE campaign, and the “*highly effective*” film *Kayleigh’s Love Story* to warn young people about the possible dangers of online activity;

- Good at tackling serious and organised crime, works well with partner organisations, and has a good understanding of the threats and risks faced by local communities;
- Undertakes effective engagement activity with the local community and partner organisations and makes good use of social media channels;
- Good at pursuing suspects who present a high risk to others and is particularly good at managing the risk posed by dangerous and sexual offenders;
- Good at preventing people being drawn into serious and organised crime, with initiatives in place with partner organisations; and
- Has good plans to mobilise in response to the threats set out in the Strategic Policing Requirement.

Areas for improvement

12. HMIC highlights a number of areas where it concludes that the force needs to improve its performance, many of which we drew their attention to at the time of the visit and which we had already begin work to address. The majority of these observations fall into two particular areas, and include:

Crime and Incident management

- Improving how the force investigate less serious crime. HMIC found processes to be very complex which hamper ability to investigate crimes effectively and in a timely manner;
- Improving initial investigative response;
- Increasing the proportion of investigations which result in charges and summons;
- Improving and making more consistent initial investigative response;
- Improving attendance in response to reports of crimes; and
- Enhancing the quality and supervision of initial investigations.

Service to victims

- Addressing current delays in contacting some victims;
- Improving the contact with victims during the course of investigations;
- Improving the service provided to some vulnerable people, in particular victims of domestic abuse;
- Improved understanding of why the arrest rate at the time of the inspection for domestic abuse was below the national average;
- Improving officer and staff understanding of the term “vulnerability” and the risk faced by vulnerable people in the community; and
- Addressing the proportion of arrests made at the time of the inspection in Domestic Violence and abuse-related cases.

13. The Force is constantly striving to improve the service it provides to communities to keep them safe and free from harm and it is pleasing that many of the initiatives and developments introduced in the last year have been singled out for praise in the report. However, there is acknowledgement that there remains much work to be done to address the areas highlighted for improvement, not least in how the Force manage cases of domestic violence and abuse, in the initial approach to responding to certain incidents and issues, and in keeping victims updated and informed. The Force have been working hard for several months to tackle these issues and the current performance in these, and other areas, is significantly improved.

Police and Crime Commissioner Oversight

14. Discussions have been held between the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable on the report findings. In a media release of 3 March the Commissioner stated that he had every confidence in the force's ability to deliver the 'improvement'. He added :-

"There is an enormous amount to be celebrated about the Force's performance, about its innovative approach, and the quality of service it provides. The force does a fantastic job. That's why I find it disappointing that the HMIC have failed to place their report into a degree of context. Whilst the population of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland has continued to increase at a rapid pace year after year, the money made available by government to fund policing has continued to diminish and as a result, we now have 547 fewer police officers than we had in 2009. At the same time, the nature and complexity of crime has changed dramatically, with a very significant proportion being committed online, and societal demands and expectations have drastically changed. You can't keep doing more with less. The position becomes unsustainable and cracks begin to show. I've made my views clear on the funding situation and will continue to lobby for a fairer funding deal. The Force has accommodated these changes extremely well, through sound financial management, effective leadership and innovative service delivery. Whilst we will continue to strive to improve and will of course address all the HMIC's observations, it is important that the totality of the services provided by the Force are seen in context."

15. The Commissioner will be kept informed of delivery against action plans to address the areas of improvement through his weekly one to one meetings with the Chief Constable, his weekly meetings with the Chief Officer Team and detailed reports presented to the monthly Strategic Assurance Board meetings.

Conclusion

16. With continued support and the active help from the many partner agencies, the Force are confident that their service to the many diverse communities in Leicester, in Leicestershire and in Rutland will continue to be enhanced in the coming months and years.

Implications

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| Financial : | None |
| Legal : | None. |
| Equality Impact Assessment : | None |
| Risks and Impact : | There is a reputational risk to the force if the areas of improvement in the inspection report are not adequately addressed and future inspections highlight this. |
| Link to Police and Crime Plan : | The findings of the HMIC inspection report would impact upon the Plan if areas of improvement are not addressed. |

List of Appendices

HMIC Inspection report.

Background Papers

HMIC Inspection report

Person to Contact

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