



Report to: Police and Crime Panel

Date: 8th April 2022

Subject: HMICFRS PEEL Inspection Report – West Yorkshire Police

Report of: Alison Lowe, Deputy Mayor of West Yorkshire

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1. To update the panel on the recent PEEL inspection and the Areas for improvement which came out of the inspection..
- 1.2. PEEL reports are published by HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS), and are the primary public assessment of a police service's efficiency and effectiveness in preventing crime and providing the best service to its victims. All 43 police forces within England and Wales are assessed against this framework.

2. INFORMATION

- 2.1. The November 2021 report was the first WYP PEEL inspection to be published since March 2020, and reflects a new methodology which underpinned the inspectors' evaluation of the operation of police services.
- 2.2. In previous years, PEEL reports have assessed performance under three headings; Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Legitimacy. Each characteristic was graded on a four point scale (Outstanding, Good, Requires Improvement, or Inadequate). Within each category of performance, specific recommendations, 'areas for improvement', or 'causes of concern' could be identified.
- 2.3. The new methodology expanded the three areas of assessment to 10 new titles, which provide greater transparency to important aspects of a police service's functions and performance.

- 2.4. The new report also grades performance across five headings, adding 'Adequate' to the four 'Outstanding to Inadequate' headings previously used.
- 2.5. In the previous report, West Yorkshire Police received 'Good' grades for Effectiveness and Legitimacy, and an 'Outstanding' grade for Efficiency. These positive headlines slightly hid the critical elements of the report, which included a 'Cause of Concern' notification for how WYP performed in investigations which included vulnerable individuals.
- 2.6. In this year's report, the inspectors have identified much stronger performance from West Yorkshire Police. The inspectors have awarded 4 'Outstanding' grades, four 'Good' grades, and two 'Adequate' grades, and the report was published with a note of congratulations from HM Inspector of Constabulary, Andy Cooke QPM
- 2.7. HMICFRS have recognised outstanding performance in areas such as preventing crime, treatment of the public, and disrupting serious and organised crime, whereas the 'adequate' grades applied to performance in investigating crime and supporting victims.
- 2.8. Within this positive report, HMICFRS have still identified 6 'areas for improvement' (AFIs) which WYP will need to address:
 - The force should ensure that requirements for call handlers to provide advice about the preservation of evidence and crime prevention are clearly understood.
 - The force should ensure that an auditable record is made of a victim's decision to withdraw support for an investigation, or of their wishes for an out-of-court disposal.
 - The force should ensure that call handlers provide an effective assessment and structured triage that is consistently applied, and that all risks are identified and recorded on force systems
 - The force should take action to ensure that investigators work with and support victims and witnesses to understand their needs. They should consider, record, and provide victims and witnesses with any appropriate special measures.
 - The force should ensure that when it is sharing information with children's social care organisations about vulnerable children, a full picture of information is shared.
 - The force should ensure that the workforce understands the relevance of the internal ethics panel, and that its findings are better communicated.
- 2.9. The report at Appendix A looks at these areas for improvement and sites the work that is taking place in West Yorkshire to address these.

3. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION BENEFITS AND IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1. One of the new 10 strands of the PEEL inspection framework is 'building, supporting and protecting the workforce' which includes a number of areas in relation the equality, diversity and inclusion agenda including:
- The force has an ethical and inclusive culture at all levels
 - The force understands the wellbeing of its workforce and uses this understanding to develop effective plans for improving workforce wellbeing
 - The force is supporting the workforce to become resilient
 - The force understands its recruitment needs
 - The force is taking action so that its workforce better reflects its communities

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. None

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. WYP will act on the recommendations and area for improvement identified in the report, and will be assessed on their progress by HMICFRS at a future date.
- 5.2. The Mayor and DMPC will also assess WYP's progress on these issues through their usual governance arrangements.

6. EXTERNAL CONSULTATION

- 6.1. HMICFRS reports aim to provide information to allow members of the public to scrutinise the performance of their local police services. A number of PEEL reports have been released through HMICFRS's website:
<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/police-forces/police-forces/>

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1. That the panel note the report

BACKGROUND PAPERS AND APPENDICES

Appendix A – West Yorkshire PEEL Inspection – AFI update

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Title: Police and Crime Panel - West Yorkshire Police PEEL Inspection – AFI update

1. Summary

1.1 This report provides an update in relation to current activity to address the Areas for Improvement identified in the West Yorkshire Police PEEL inspection report 2021/22.

2. Area for improvement: The force should ensure that requirements for call handlers to provide advice about the preservation of evidence and crime prevention are clearly understood.

2.1 Work has been completed through the Force's Principle Crime Prevention Officer: refresher briefings have been delivered to Contact staff and the unit's knowledge database, Sergei, has been updated with information relating to scene preservation and crime prevention advice.

2.2 This area will also be included in the unit's audit protocols to ensure compliance.

2.3 A full thematic audit will be completed in May 2022 and then again 3 months later to ensure that call takers are providing the relevant information around preservation and prevention to callers.

3. Area for improvement: The force should ensure that an auditable record is made of a victim's decision to withdraw support for an investigation, or of their wishes for an out-of-court disposal.

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3.1 The Force has collaborated with the Crown Prosecution Service and created an Evidence Led Prosecution aide memoire to empower our staff to really drive through these investigations.

3.2 The CPS have delivered training for supervisors and Evidence Review Officers on Evidence Led Prosecutions which is available on the Investigation I-learn portal and can be accessed by all staff.

3.3 Organisationally, quality assurance is provided to this aspect of work through regular reviews of ongoing investigations – by first line supervisors through to Superintendent level reviews depending on the length of time under investigation - as is outlined in the Force’s Investigation and Released Under Investigation policy.

3.4 Further governance is provided by the Victim’s Journey Delivery Team who reality check and quality assure work through thematic or holistic investigative reviews.

3.5 Further work is ongoing, and plans are in place for an ‘investigation Intensification’ month in May. Each day during the month of May there will be a new key message relating to investigations. The intensification month will include specific training and briefings to officers and staff. The ‘victim’s journey’ will be central to the work. It will be focussing on the treatment of victims, ensuring they are updated in a timely way, and that their voice is heard – and recorded - at all stages of the investigation.

3.6 A new officer update template for our crime recording system has been launched and the first prompt question for officers to record is: “Victim’s Voice – what are the victim’s wishes?”

3.7 In addition, the force has facilitated numerous training days and events where we have highlighted 3 key messages which are:

1. If it isn’t written down, it hasn’t happened (record everything on the crime recording system)

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2. Ensure a rationale for decision making – what you are doing and why and what you are not doing and why – this includes a rationale for victims wishes
3. Victim's Voice – what are their wishes in the investigation

4. Area for improvement: The force should ensure that call handlers provide an effective assessment and structured triage that is consistently applied, and that all risks are identified and recorded on force systems.

4.1 Significant work has been undertaken on re-establishing THRIVE principles within the force Contact Unit.

4.2 A new iteration of the subject on the Sergei knowledge database has been completed, after a remedial plan was agreed with HMICFRS. All staff have been trained in this area, with training continuing into Re-THRIVE, which was identified as another area for development within Call Handling. This subject is also covered in-depth within initial training of officers and staff.

4.3 An independent audit, completed by the Force's internal audit team and mirrored by our Professional Development Unit (PDU), revealed positive results: both audits revealed the same improvement outcome as a cross check.

4.4 Face to face training on THRIVE and the removal of the THRIVE matrix from call handling has already generated positive improvements.

4.5 Another internal audit will take place at end of March 2022, and further audits will be completed by the PDU to ensure sustained improvement, consistency, and compliance.

4.6 The introduction of a Customer Records Management (CRM) system in November 2022 that forms part of the Critical Communications Infrastructure programme (CCI) will further enhance our capability in this area, ensuring a risk-based approach to call handling. Previous inspections in this area had resulted in several “outstanding” ratings and we are aiming to return to that level.

5. Area for improvement: The force should take action to ensure that investigators work with and support victims and witnesses to understand their needs. They should consider, record, and provide victims and witnesses with any appropriate special measures.

5.1 As part of our ongoing work to improve practices and processes to better support victims and West Yorkshire Police officers and staff, a new approach to the victim Initial Needs Assessment and victim contact has been developed and is due to roll out at the end of March 2022.

5.2 The Initial Needs Assessment (INA) will become the Victim Needs Assessment (VNA) and victim contact will move to victim updates that are bespoke to the needs of each individual victim and investigation.

5.3 Every victim of crime will have their needs assessed in the initial stages of an investigation i.e. upon police attendance or upon commencement of a telephone investigation. This needs assessment will continue throughout the victim’s journey, recognising that needs may, and often do, change throughout an investigation. This ongoing assessment should always be clearly recorded, and the refreshed Victim Needs Assessment process supports and promotes this.

5.4 The Victim Needs Assessment includes an early review of language and other communication needs, victim vulnerability, enabling the offer and explanation of support services and consideration of special measures at the earliest opportunity. Assessment/review of victim needs, is continually reviewed throughout the investigation.

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5.5 There will be several changes to our crime/investigation recording system templates, including those used by investigators and supervisors. They have been designed to ensure that we consistently capture key information, allowing us to support victims and progress investigations to the very best of our ability.

5.6 All the refreshed crime recording system templates feature guidance to support officer and staff understanding and enhance the quality of information we record.

5.7 Victim contact will move from the current 10/20/30 day VCOPs process, to 'Victim Updates', an approach centred around the individual needs of the victim and investigation. There will be a continued emphasis on providing the victim leaflet, ease of contact, explaining what happens next, and the offer of Victim Support and contact throughout the investigation, as agreed with the victim.

5.9 Whilst Victim Updates will be bespoke to each investigation, contact will, in every case, continue to take place after a custody event, this includes:

- interview under caution (including voluntary attendees),
- arrest,
- release without charge,
- release on bail or RUI, changes to or cancellation of bail or RUI,
- any out of court disposal,
- a charging decision (including decisions not to charge / not to deal with via out of court disposal) made by Police or CPS.

5.10 The officer in the case will also receive reminders to ensure contact with the victim post-charge, through to conclusion of a court case.

5.11 Prior to launch of this new approach, a comprehensive training package and support materials are being rolled out force wide.

6. Area for improvement: The force should ensure that when it is sharing information with children's social care organisations about vulnerable children, a full picture of information is shared.

6.1 A key piece of review work that will help West Yorkshire Police and partners to meet this aim is already nearly complete, this being the rollout of Public Protection Notice (PPN). PPN is a more accountable, immediate, consistent, and auditable system. It is now adopted in four of our five districts with the Bradford rollout having taken place in early February. Over the next two months, it will go live in Leeds and we will then have the same consistent process for submitting child and adult at risk referrals in all five areas. The scope of this piece of work should not be underestimated.

6.2 The next steps are encapsulated in the Force-wide MASH/Front door partnership review that is due to commence soon. In this, the partnerships aim to ensure that referrals into the MASH/Front Door are as complete a picture as possible and that they take cognisance of cumulative risk. The HMICFRS also commented (but without an associated recommendation) that they perceived there to be a lack of clarity about working practices in the five areas. Put simply, they did not see consistency of approach between agencies and the five geographical districts.

6.3 A Terms of Reference was set out for the review which will focus solely on child MASH working arrangements in response to HMICFRS recommendations. However, in light of recent events that have highlighted concerns about some of our county's Children's Social Care arrangements, it is prudent to review these initial terms of reference in partnership with colleagues at CSC across all five areas to ensure they are fit for current purpose.

6.4 Work has taken place across the five Districts with social care partners to scope out existing MASH structures/working arrangements and processes. We have succeeded in contacting key partners and gaining their support, forming a working group at ADS level across the five local authorities. The focus of the group, which will also incorporate the

statutory partner of Health and broadened to Education, will be to address standardisation of working practices wherever possible and share and develop a best practice plan for West Yorkshire.

6.5 To further inform and assist in this review a National working group focusing on MASH/Front door improvement and reform is underway. West Mercia Police ACC Rachel Jones is currently leading a working group looking at national recommendations on best practice. West Yorkshire Police is represented by SCGU. Humberside Police, led by their Detective Supt for Safeguarding, have the regional lead for this working group to co-ordinate learning and inform best practice on behalf of the Region. We work closely with them.

6.6 From initial benchmarking and Force contact and clarity with the HMICFRS, WYP is not behind other Forces in the findings on MASH processes and arrangements and we aim to develop best practice that can be shared across other forces.

6.7 A new DCI will shortly join the department as the MASH Review Lead and this work will be picked up in consultation with ACC Khan.

7. Area for improvement: The force should ensure that the workforce understands the relevance of the internal ethics panel, and that its findings are better communicated. During our last inspection, the force was issued with an area for improvement about its internal ethics panel.

7.1 A Communications Plan has been developed which ensures that we can improve awareness of the Ethics Committee, improve the engagement of the workforce in the work of the Committee and ensure we are more open and transparent with the Committee's findings.

7.2 A meeting took place on 16th March with the trade unions and staff associations to consult with them on ensuring people are aware of the Committee and how to use it. The Ethics Committee is on the agenda for the next quarterly meeting with the Staff Networks who represent the various minority groups across the force, to ensure they know about the

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Committee and how to signpost people to it. The force is looking at how we can include the Ethics Committee in the induction programme for new starters and is also creating some posters to advertise the Committee across the wider organisation.

7.3 We are refreshing the training we offer about the Ethics Committee and planning to deliver this as a Bitesize Symposium, through our District training days, and as part of our Professional Development Network sessions. Additionally, the force is ensuring that outcomes of the Ethics Committee are published, not just as an Intranet article, but also via the online chat forum 'The Buzz' and to the trade union, staff association and staff network representatives.