Item 5



**HMIC CRIME DATA INTEGRITY INSPECTION: SIX MONTHS ON**

**1.0 BACKGROUND**

1.1 In 2014 Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) carried out an inspection into the way the 43 police forces in England and Wales record crime data, with a view to establishing whether police-recorded crime information could be trusted. A report on the inspection of West Yorkshire Police was released on 28 August 2014, and found the following strengths and weaknesses:

**Strengths**

* The force is aware of the threat and risks involved with crime data integrity and has begun to make improvements, examples of which can be seen in the auditing capabilities, IT Management and the development of the Force Crime and Incident Registrar.
* The Chief Officers and Senior Management are positively encouraging accurate crime recording.

**Weaknesses**

* There are clear failings in the way that the force records crimes in relation to vulnerable victims.
* The under recording can be put down to a range of factors including; misunderstanding of counting rules and recording standards, performance pressures, and investigate-to-record tendencies.
* There are current processes in place which allow for no-crime recording which go against the counting rules and recording standards, examples include the use of District Decision Makers which are not independent from performance.
* Out-of-court disposals are often used where not suitable due to the offender’s previous history or without consideration for the victim’s wishes.
* There is a strong and improving policy to deal with rape no-crimes however this is not widely known and rarely applied in the correct way meaning that rape no-crime incidents are often recorded in a way that is not compliant with counting rules and recording standards.
* The Chief Officer’s direction regarding crime data integrity is positive however it is lost in the lower ranks.

**2.0 WEST YORKSHIRE POLICE UPDATE**

2.1 Since the last update, a number of measures have been introduced and many others have firm plans in place.

**Gold Group**

* After publication of the national Crime Data Integrity (CDI) report, a Gold Group was formed. Chaired by the temporary Deputy Chief Constable, and with attendees from all districts and departments involved in crime recording, the group has to date met on three occasions. Its purpose is to improve the standard and accuracy of recorded crime in West Yorkshire and ensure victims are provided the best service.
* A force action plan has been developed which incorporates local and national HMIC recommendations, the content of which has been agreed by the Deputy Chief Constable.
* Five strands have been identified and leads have been appointed (the strands are: no crime; incident to crime; directly recorded crime; out of court outcomes; multi agency information requests).

**No crime**

* Following on from the 62% compliance rate reported in West Yorkshire by the HMIC, a plan is in place to reassess the current cadre of Dedicated Decision Makers (DDM’s) across the force. The dedicated decision makers are responsible for deciding when something is “no crimed”.
* A reduction from the current number (more than 40), selection procedures, formal training, feedback facilities and performance management are all to be addressed within the plan, to be introduced in force in the coming weeks/months.
* These immediate measures will inform the (Programme of Change) review of the Crime Evaluation function, which incorporates DDM arrangements.

**Incident to crime**

* Addressing the 67% headline conversion rate in West Yorkshire from incident to crime, a pilot started on 26th January 2015 at Bradford district, focussed on the recording of crime at the earliest appropriate point. Drawing on existing resources in the District Control Room, call centre staff and Crime Evaluators, the aim is to record all standard grade and appointment calls for service prior to attendance. This should enable a revisit of the deployment decision and assessment of the potential gains in customer service, crime recording compliance and reduction in unnecessary deployments.

**Directly recorded crime**

* When recording crimes at the time of the victim calling in (by the Customer Contact Centre), the HMIC found that the conversion rate was good, at 94%. The only failures in this area were in cases where a call required more than one crime to be recorded, but this had not been identified by the call taker.
* In light of the above, it is clear that conversion is improved by the recording of crime at first contact, and this has been extended in the CCC to serious sexual offences. This has again been found to be successful, and consideration is now being given to extending the range of offences dealt with in this manner, subject to resourcing and training.

**Out of court outcomes**

* Building on the current roll out of the “Two tier” pilot across West Yorkshire, this strand seeks to standardise the processes across the force to ensure that victims are consulted and only appropriate suspects receive an out of court outcome, and only in circumstances which are suitable.

**Multi agency information requests**

* In the constantly developing world of Safeguarding, and the advent of Multi Agency Safeguarding Hubs across the force, new arrangements are necessary to capture all information coming into police possession, and to assess if a crime record is required. The HMIC found that where twenty-four crimes were required, only three were recorded. The inspection has allowed a greater understanding of when a crime is required to be recorded in force, and a new process where all information is formally assessed for this purpose and recorded on NICHE (crime input computer system) is currently being piloted at Wakefield district.
* As well as the potential gains to CDI the pilot hopes to provide a clearer audit trail for disclosure of police information to partners, providing defensibility in Data Protection and management of Police Information (MOPI) queries.

**Audit**

* The temporary CDI audit team previously put in place has been authorised to continue through the first part of 2015, and their long term future will form part of the ongoing Programme of Change review.
* The knowledge base of the audit team staff is developing, and continues to be supplemented by external expert moderation.
* Monthly audit results for Local Accountability Meetings are now routinely produced, and reported alongside other performance indicators, a process which continues to be further refined.
* Other risk based audits are also now conducted, informing managers of areas of concern at an early stage.

**IT opportunities**

* A number of reports and searches which will assist in management of STORM logs (STORM is a computer system used by WYP to record calls for service from the public) through the crime recording process have been identified after benchmarking with other forces nationally. Five such IT solutions are currently being pursued, including management reports as well as a facility to automatically send crime incidents across to the NICHE computer system at a predetermined time after report, offering to assist in the elimination of failures in compliance on timeliness grounds.

**Training plans**

* Two training plans are being developed for all staff involved in the crime recording decision making process.
* The first, a Power Point based, district/departmental delivery product will be rolled out across the force over the next three months. This training is focussed on common failings and lessons learned from the inspection, with scenarios and “myths” section to begin the process of culture change.
* The second, a more detailed and long term package, will be delivered later in the year. It is planned that the training will be supported by external experts, who will ensure that the national standard and understanding are being consistently reinforced to all staff.
* In addition a bespoke training input was delivered to over 60 Safer Schools Officers to ensure the force is dealing with incidents reported within schools consistently in line with national guidelines.

**Policy/process reviews**

* The DCC has directed that all districts and departments, supported by the Force Crime and Incident Registrar, are to review policies and process, including local working practises to ensure non-compliant instructions are not being imposed on staff.
* All districts are working through their arrangements, and have assured the DCC that this work is nearing completion.

**Crime Evaluation Review**

* In December, a review of Crime Evaluation and Crime Clerical functions, to include Dedicated Decision Makers, was authorised by the Programme of Change Board. A central theme to the review will be to complement the work in hand to improve Crime Data Integrity, to which end some of the staff are involved in pilot schemes as outlined above.

2.2 All staff and staff associations are fully engaged in the review process.

**3.0 USE OF INTERNAL AUDIT**

3.1 The joint Internal Audit team will be undertaking a couple of pieces of work around data integrity to provide me with some of the assurances I need that West Yorkshire Police is making the necessary improvements to its crime recording processes.

3.2 One piece of work will be to look at the West Yorkshire Police action plan, in response to the HMIC inspection of crime recording and data integrity. This will review progress made to date and seek evidence that the recommendations have been implemented.

3.3 The team has also been discussing involvement in some practical work with the Force Crime and Incident Registrar. From early March 2015 a new process will be implemented that will reperforming the test used by HMIC during its inspection, using the same sample sizes, crime types and systems. Internal Audit will pick the sample to be audited, and will then accompany the police audit function in undertaking some of the reality testing across a range of crime types. This will allow the establishment of a new baseline figure for crime recording compliance that will be comparable with the previous HMIC inspection. An Audit Manager will be attending training around counting rules and crime recording standards to ensure staff involved in this testing have a basic understanding of the technical aspects involved in such processes.