Item 6



**RESULTS OF HMIC CHILD PROTECTION INSPECTION**

**1.0 PURPOSE**

* 1. Between October 2011 and March 2013, HMIC was involved, on a multi-agency basis, in a number of child protection inspections. Along with evidence of strengths and effective practice, these inspections highlighted areas for improvement, in particular: the quality of joint investigations; the identification of risk; dealing with domestic abuse; and the detention of children in custody.
  2. To address these issues, HMIC decided to conduct a programme of single agency inspections of all police forces in England and Wales, this took place in West Yorkshire in August 2014. The aims of the inspection programme are to assess how effectively police forces safeguard children at risk, make recommendations to police forces for improving child protection practice, highlight effective practice in child protection work and drive improvements in forces child protection practises.

**2.0 KEY FINDINGS**

* The force has devolved responsibility for child protection to the five districts rather than managing it centrally; this has resulted in inconsistent practice across the force.
* The force has action plans in place to meet the PCCs priorities; the Chief Constable and Chief Officer Team are committed to improving services for children.
* There was mixed response to child MISPERs; where high risk the response was good but where low risk a police officer would not even be sent to investigate report (although it would be reviewed after 72hrs).
* Overall HMIC was concerned about the standard of CSE investigations.
* Force has an inconsistent approach to CSE, better in areas with established partnerships such as Bradford but less in Leeds where the service was largely reactive. Officers in Kirklees had nearly double the volume of sex offenders to manage compared to officers in Calderdale (one officer responsible for 100 sex offenders in Kirklees compared to 58 in Calderdale).

**3.0 KEY RECOMMENDATIONS**

**3.1**  Initial contact

* WYP immediately undertakes a review with relevant agencies to ensure that they are fulfilling their statutory responsibilities set out in *working together to safeguard children.*

- This should at least cover attending the initial child protection conference and recording and communicating decisions reached.

* Provides information to other agencies before multi-agency risk assessment conferences take place.

**3.2** MISPERS

* Within three months WYP should take steps to improve practice in cases of child MISPERS, including improving staff awareness, information sharing and identifying appropriate responses.

**3.3** Investigations

* Within three months the force should improve standards of investigation to include staff awareness, knowledge and skills; supervision; and regular auditing of investigations.
* Take steps to reduce delays with regards to the high tech unit.
* Identify and review all child abuse investigation cases that have taken more than three months to investigate.

**3.4** Decision Making

* Within three months WYP should take steps to ensure all relevant information is properly recorded and is readily accessible.

**3.5** Children in Detention

* Within three months WYP should review (jointly) how it manages the detention of children, ensuring only detained where absolutely necessary.

**3.4 FORCE UPDATE**

**3.5** West Yorkshire Police have in consultation with partners produced an action plan that fulfils the requirements of the recommendations brought out in the HMIC child protection inspection.

**3.6** This action plan has been quality assured by the regional HMIC team and has been submitted to the National Team within the required time frame.

**3.7** All Districts and the Safeguarding Central Governance Unit are currently working to deliver each recommendation. This process will be managed through the Strategic Safeguarding Board chaired by ACC Foster and feature as a standing agenda item. Sitting below this is underpinning HMIC action plan meeting chaired by a Detective Superintendent.

**3.8 PCC UPDATE**

* Protecting our children is of vital importance as I have made absolutely clear in the Police and Crime Plan and have discussed regularly with the Chief Constable.
* All agencies have a responsibility to work together to safeguard children and an action plan has been developed following a series of meetings I initiated with Police and partners to identify what more needs to be done collectively
* Last February I made an extra £3.5million available to the police for increased capacity to deal with CSE, Human Trafficking and Cyber Crime.
* Recently, £1.5million of that money paid 25 specialist investigators to progress enquiries in the growing number of reported offences. This is all around strengthening our safeguarding response in West Yorkshire.
* On the back of the Rotherham report published in September, I called an urgent meeting with all the safeguarding experts from across West Yorkshire to ensure we are sharing best practice and see what can be done better in West Yorkshire.
* I have made an additional £467,000 commitment to initiate further work to address CSE which aims to increase awareness in schools and to offer more support to victims including the creation of the Help for Victims website. The money will also fund the creation of a Safeguarding Advisor post to co-ordinate the work that all safeguarding experts are doing to ensure we are all working collectively and consistently to protect children across the county.

**3.9** The HMIC Child Protection Inspection Report can be found at:

[**http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/news/news-feed/west-yorkshire-police-inspected-on-child-protection/**](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/news/news-feed/west-yorkshire-police-inspected-on-child-protection/)

**and a copy of my response can be found at** [**http://www.westyorkshire-pcc.gov.uk/news-events/news.aspx**](http://www.westyorkshire-pcc.gov.uk/news-events/news.aspx)