



WEST YORKSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

9 March 2018

RESPONSE TO ABUSE OF POSITION FOR SEXUAL PURPOSE HMICFRS INSPECTION

1.0 Purpose

1.1 To provide members of the Police and Crime Panel with the PCC's response to the HMICFRS Inspection on 'abuse of position for a sexual purpose'.

2.0 HMICFRS Inspections 2016 and 2017

2.1 As part of the 2016 PEEL legitimacy inspection conducted by HMICFRS, all police forces were assessed on how well they were preventing and seeking out corruption, in particular with a focus on how the problem of abuse of position for sexual purpose was being tackled. The assessment within the full 2016 report included the following;

Cause of concern¹

HMIC is concerned that some police counter-corruption units do not have the capability or capacity to seek intelligence on potential abuse of authority for sexual gain. This means that forces are not able to intervene early to safeguard potential victims and tackle unacceptable and potentially corrupt behaviour.

Recommendation

To address this cause of concern, HMIC recommends that:

- Within six months, all forces should have started to implement a plan to achieve the capability and capacity required to seek intelligence on potential abuse of authority for sexual gain. These plans should include consideration of the technology and resources required to monitor IT systems actively and to build relationships with the individuals and organisations that support vulnerable people.
- 2.2 HMICFRS also called for forces to do more for employees to recognise and understand the problem and highlighted the need for a coherent and comprehensive national policing response.²
- 2.3 Police forces were asked to submit their plans and any supplementary documents in response to the recommendation by mid-March 2017. Following agreement of the NPCC's national strategy in April, forces were then given the opportunity to re-submit

¹ Page 37 *Police legitimacy 2016: A national overview*, HMIC, December 2016. Available at:

<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/peel-police-legitimacy-2016.pdf>

² Page 5 Abuse of position for a sexual purpose; a review of forces' plans in response to our PEEL legitimacy 2016 national report recommendation. Available at:

<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/abuse-of-position-for-a-sexual-purpose.pdf>

updated plans by the end of May 2017. Plans were received from all 43 force areas, however for the purpose of this inspection Merseyside and Derbyshire were not considered as they had been assessed in 2016 as having adequate capability and capacity.

2.4 Whilst HMICFRS did not set out the specific content expected from the plans, the inspection during 2017 considered the credibility and achievability of addressing the original recommendation. The criteria assessed included:

- reference to each aspect of the recommendation: achieving the capability and capacity to identify potential abuse of authority for sexual gain; monitoring IT systems; and building relationships with the individuals and organisations that support vulnerable people;
- a gap analysis or clear understanding of the original force position compared with the requirements of the recommendation;
- a present position update, if work had already commenced;
- clear actions, with owners; and
- timescales for implementation.³

2.5 The national overview report assessed forces against 3 question areas;

- Does the plan include improving the force's capability and capacity to identify potential abuse of position for a sexual purpose?
- Does the plan include improving the force's capability and capacity to monitor systems to identify potential abuse of position for a sexual purpose?
- Does the plan include improving the extent to which it seeks intelligence from organisations that support vulnerable people?

2.6 The following table shows the outcome of the assessment of all forces plans⁴

	Capability and capacity	IT monitoring	Links with agencies	Overall
Insufficient information to assess plan	21	9	6	11
Plan in place but implementation has not yet commenced	9	14	14	15
Plans in place and implementation has commenced	11	16	21	15
Not assessed (all aspects already in place)	2	4	2	2

³ Page 15 Abuse of position for a sexual purpose; a review of forces' plans in response to our PEEL legitimacy 2016 national report recommendation. Available at: <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/abuse-of-position-for-a-sexual-purpose.pdf>

⁴ Page 19 Abuse of position for a sexual purpose; a review of forces' plans in response to our PEEL legitimacy 2016 national report recommendation. Available at: <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/abuse-of-position-for-a-sexual-purpose.pdf>

3.0 Assessment of West Yorkshire

- 3.1 The letter from HMICFRS in October 2017 outlining their assessment of West Yorkshire during June 2017 is attached as Appendix A. At that time the plans were assessed as not reflecting the national strategy and the assessment highlighted information had not been provided to assess certain areas of work. The feedback did acknowledge improvements to IT monitoring capabilities were ongoing but had not yet been implemented.
- 3.2 Through existing governance arrangements all HMICFRS inspections are regularly discussed and monitored by the PCC and his Executive with the Chief Constable and Chief Officer Team. Following receipt of the letter, the PCC requested a response from West Yorkshire Police based on HMICFRS findings and sight of the action plan currently being followed. The PCC's response to the Home Secretary and HMICFRS following his review of activity and progress against the recommendations is attached as Appendix B.
- 3.3 In addition to the activity highlighted in the letter from the PCC, additional engagement and reinforcement of the national strategy and expectations of all officers/staff within West Yorkshire has taken place. This has included a series of videos to provide key messages from the new strategy, the reason for it and the implications for behaviour below expected standards and completion of an online iLearn package in relation to abuse of position by all personnel. To date approximately 91% of the workforce have completed this package. An internal communications campaign has also run across the force which includes posters and screensavers raising awareness of the national strategy. The strategy was officially launched in West Yorkshire in July 2017.
- 3.4 A section on the national strategy and relevant case studies now form part of the input from the Professional Standards Department (PSD) in training of new recruits including; students officers, PCSOs, custody officers, detention officers and Special Constables.
- 3.5 Inspectors from PSD have also delivered a specific input on the new strategy to all Senior Leaders and Supervisors at a district level. All supervisors have received a check list of signs to look out for and action to take when sexual misconduct is suspected or identified by members of staff. In total over 350 officers have been captured and this has now been cascaded down to an estimated 1327 staff within districts. Working in partnership, WYP have also delivered a presentation on this subject to all staff at the Fire Headquarters in Kirklees.
- 3.6 PSD have developed and are in the process of implementing annual Integrity Health Checks for all officers and staff which will form part of their PDR, commencing April 2018. This includes questions to check knowledge and understanding of sexual misconduct and key vulnerability policies.
- 3.7 All PSD/ OPCC/Legal Services staff have been given training from a specialist barrister in relation to Whistleblowing to understand the rights and obligations under the policy. The Confidential Reporting Policy is in the process of being updated and rebranded as the Force Whistleblowing Policy and this has been promoted through Intranet items and screensavers. The policy will be out for consultation with trade unions and the Federation during early March and finalised at the end of March. There has also been a relaunch of Anonymous Messenger as well as the Confidential Line as part of the wider communications strategy around this subject.

- 3.8 The external WYP website now has a dedicated section on the abuse of position national strategy for members of the public. This explains why the strategy was necessary and gives a helpful checklist of signs to look out for when they are concerned about an officer's behaviour towards them, plus various ways of reporting this type of behaviour. The outcomes of sexual misconduct cases are routinely publicised across the force via the PSD Newsletter and the external website.
- 3.9 External engagement has taken place with partners across West Yorkshire and the Corporate Communication team have been developing a leaflet for distribution amongst vulnerable community groups during the next month. A number of local providers of support services for vulnerable victims have been by given information on the national strategy and reporting mechanisms. In conjunction with the Central Safeguarding Unit, PSD have been collating a database of agencies across the county in order to take advantage of any further engagement/awareness raising opportunities.
- 3.9 HMICFRS have indicated progress against their recommendations will form part of inspections from 2018. Implementation and adherence to local plans and the national strategy will be monitored by both the PCC, Chief Constable and the Professional Standards Department ahead future inspections.