

Additional issues raised by the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) at the Community Outcomes Meeting 24.11.14

COMPLAINTS AND ALLEGATIONS TO WEST YORKSHIRE POLICE

Public complaint cases have seen an increase of 15% in the last year, with 543 complaint cases recorded between April to September 2014 compared to 471 cases in the same period last year. This increase has been explained as being due to a change in guidance from the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) as to what constitutes a complaint. Previously a complaint was only something that related to misconduct, the threshold has been lowered meaning quality of service issues and dissatisfied customers can now be classed as complaints and therefore there has been an increase in the number of allegations being recorded as a public complaint. I am assured that the police are fully complying with the latest IPCC guidance.

Number of complaints	April-Sept 13	April-Sept 14	% change
Bradford	76	117	54%
Calderdale	48	47	-2%
Kirklees	65	78	+20%
Leeds	142	160	+13%
Wakefield	56	66	+18%

There are key differences in levels of complaints across districts and departments with Kirklees having the highest number of allegations per 100 staff (30 compared to 24 in Leeds). Similarly some areas have seen much larger increases in the number of complaints such as Bradford (up 54% to 117 complaints) compared to Leeds (up 13% to 160). Whilst the differences in complaint rates and increases across districts is not yet understood, there appears to be an issue, especially in Leeds, with a high number of appeals being upheld. It was identified that the quality and standard of communication with the public around complaints could have been better, which has been addressed. The police have stated that further work and education will be undertaken with districts to assess and improve the situation around the increase in complaints relating to lack of fairness and impartiality, which have increased by 79% over the past year. There is also a pilot around the use of local resolutions to resolve complaints taking place, which has resulted in 40% of complaints being locally resolved. The results of this pilot will be communicated to me at a later date.

The police continue to analyse complaint data to understand better why 31% of complainants are from a black and minority ethnic background, as reported for the year to June 2014. Initial work has identified that the majority of these complaints are around failure or neglect of duty, unlawful arrest and oppressive conduct, but more work is needed to find out why this difference exists and identify any action that is needed. This will be reported back to me at a later date.

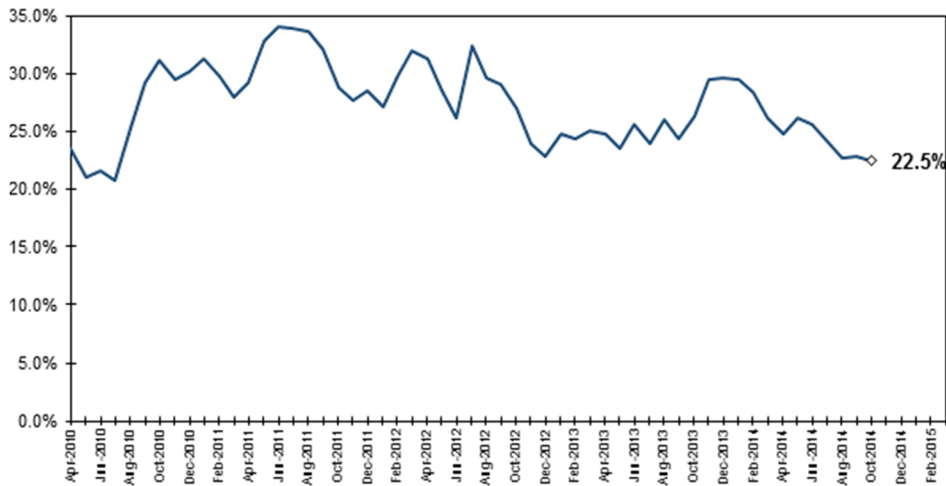
SICKNESS ABSENCE

Within West Yorkshire Police 3.5% of available hours (both police officers and police staff) are now being lost to sickness and this is steadily increasing in all districts. I have previously asked about the staff sickness levels and was told that work is being undertaken to understand stress, anxiety and depression figures, specifically to see if there are any trends and to gain a better understanding of the underlying issues. During recent roadshows across West Yorkshire held by the Chief Constable a number of issues were raised about police policies around absence management, especially in relation to promotion and opportunities to move jobs. An intense review of all policies linked to absence management is being undertaken through the Programme of Change and details of sickness absence are considered at each local accountability meeting. Details of this work will be fed back to me as soon as it is complete.

SERIOUS SEXUAL OFFENCES

The serious sexual offences outcome rate remains lower than for similar police areas (comparison for the year to June 2014) and stands at 24.0%, which is an increase of 2.6 percentage points on the previous 12 month period. An outcome is a case where an offender is either charged, cautioned, had the offence taken into consideration, given a fixed penalty or agreed to undertake a community resolution. The outcome rate is the proportion of offences recorded that result in such an outcome.

**Serious Sexual Offences outcome rate
12-monthly rolling rates**

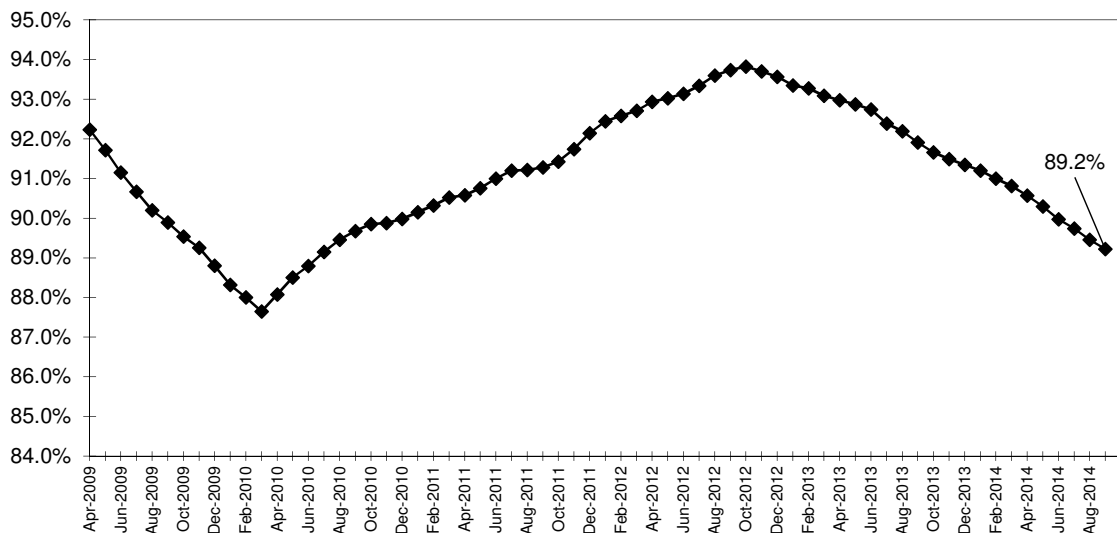


There has been a change in recording of serious sexual offences which has resulted in a 31% increase in offences over the July to September 2014 period compared to the same period last year (increase to 804 offences in this quarter). The new recording process ensures that any reports of rape or other serious sexual offences will be recorded as a crime at first point of contact, no matter how or where the crime is reported. The police are confident that they are now recording crimes as they should and that this is in line with other police forces. Crime auditing shows that the compliance rate for converting sexual offence incidents to crimes rose from 85.2% in August 2014 to 91.3% in September 2014, which shows good progress. I have been assured that the remaining crime recording issues will be addressed, and that victims are receiving the care and service that they should.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE INCIDENTS

The percentage of emergency incidents that have been attended within 15 minutes has decreased slightly from 89.2% (12 months to September 2014) to 88.4% (6 months to September 2014). However over 60% of these 'missed' incidents were attended within 5 minutes of the target time. The downward trend is particularly noticeable in Leeds following the introduction of the new operating model. I asked for more details of why this had occurred.

**TRENDS IN EMERGENCY RESPONSE INCIDENTS
12-monthly figures**



As part of the new operating model the Leeds district went from 3 divisions to 1 district and as a result many of the functions merged including the District Control Room. This was also seen to a lesser extent in Bradford. Staffing issues arose with a lack of posts filled and high sickness levels within the control rooms, and shift patterns being worked that did not align to incoming demand. More staff have been recruited to ease this pressure and the Programme of Change team is now looking at how to improve capacity within control rooms, through extra recruitment and getting those people with the right skills set. Significant improvements have already been seen in recent weeks and will continue to be monitored closely.

Following a number of complaints into my office and in the press about the 101 non-emergency number service, I have asked the police to review this service and provide a report to me focusing on where improvements can be made and addressing the specific complaints made.

MAKING OFF WITHOUT PAYMENT

Making off without payment is when someone leaves a scene or premises having not paid for the goods supplied or service they have received or taken. It is commonly associated with petrol forecourts. There has been a 4% increase in make off without payment offences for the April-September 2014 period (an increase to 1,594 offences).

I have previously enquired whether this increase is associated with a particular district or provider. The police told me that the number of these offences can often go up due to economic factors. The police has been working with businesses to try to encourage fuel providers to charge up front however this can create difficulties for some of the smaller retailers and can result in the loss of sales of other items (such as groceries). Theft of number plates – often used in such offences – has also increased. The police will be considering this in more depth at a future internal accountability meeting, and will report back to me after that time.