



Norfolk Police and Crime Commissioner (PCO) response to inspections of Norfolk Constabulary published by His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS)

Section 55 of the Police Act 1996 (as amended by section 37 of the Policing and Crime Act 2017) requires local policing bodies to respond to recommendations in inspectors reports within 56 days.

Inspection Title:

State of Policing: The Annual Assessment of Policing in England and Wales 2022

Published on:

9 June 2023

Publication Types:

Annual Reports

Police Forces:

All local forces in England and Wales

Link to Report:

[State of Policing: The Annual Assessment of Policing in England and Wales 2022](#)

Section 55 Response Deadline:

4 August 2023

Key Findings

As per section 54(4A) of the Police Act 1996, the HMChief Inspector of Constabulary is to produce an annual report to the Secretary of State on the state of policing in England and Wales. On the 9 June 2023 His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Service (HMICFRS) published the HMChief Inspector of Constabulary’s annual report titled ‘State of Policing: The Annual Assessment of Policing in England and Wales 2022’.

The report contains an assessment of the effectiveness and efficiency of police forces in England and Wales, based on the inspections HMICFRS carried out between 1 December 2021 and 31 March 2023. Furthermore, to help form his assessment, the HMChief Inspector of Constabulary wrote to Chief Constables (CC), Police and Crime Commissioners (PCO) and other interested parties to seek their views on the state of policing in England and Wales.

The inspectorate found that the police are experiencing one of their biggest crises in memory. It was identified that the relationship between the police and the public has never been more strained than it is now. They found significant reductions in trust and confidence being recorded, and this drop in trust and confidence can make it harder for decent and honest police officers and staff to do their jobs. The assessment details how these conditions make it less attractive for people to stay in the service and join it in the first place.

Furthermore, the assessment notes that there were some obvious and atrocious reasons for the decline in public trust and confidence. In 2021, a serving police officer abducted, raped, and murdered Sarah Everard. In 2022, another serving police officer admitted to carrying out 85 sexual offences. In both cases, warning signs over several years were missed, and the officers managed to keep their jobs as police constables until they were finally brought to justice.

The assessment states that the police service is a complex system operating within an even more complex Criminal Justice System (CJS), and there are widespread systematic failings in both. Some of these account for the present state of policing. In broad terms these are:

- The police are not always focusing on the issues that matter most to the public, and charge rates are far too low.
- The police and the wider CJS are not getting the basics right, as shown through the withdrawal from neighbourhood policing.
- Some critical elements of the police's leadership and workforce arrangements need substantial reform.

Although the inspectorate concludes that there are some systematic failings in play, the service isn't broken beyond repair. These failings will be challenging to resolve but they won't be fixed solely by issuing glossy strategies, mission statements, visions, or concordats; but they can be fixed through action. The inspectorate suggest that the police need to focus on doing what matters most to benefit the communities they serve; these actions need to be highly visible. Not only do they need to show that they are committed to taking action today, tomorrow, and next week, but also that they will act in the long-term too.

Recommendations

Three recommendations were put forward by HMICFRS to the Government and Chief Constables in their annual assessment:

Recommendation 1:

By 30 September 2023, the National Police Chiefs' Council lead on stop and search, working with the College of Policing and academia, should commission further primary research to quantify the deterrent value of stop and search and the causes of disproportionality in its use.

Recommendation 2:

By 31 December 2023, the Home Secretary should review the present limitations in the legislation concerning the Inspectors of Constabulary and establish whether measures to resolve them should be introduced to Parliament.

Recommendation 3:

By 31 December 2023, the Home Secretary should re-establish the involvement of the Inspectors of Constabulary in the selection and appointment of police chief officers and determine whether legislative changes should be introduced to Parliament.

Areas for Improvement

There are no areas for improvement made.

PCC response to report and any Recommendations/Areas for Improvement

The Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk notes the report and its findings and is contributing to the Association of the Police and Crime Commissioners response.

For Office Use Only:

- Response forwarded to HMICFRS Section 55 Responses and submitted onto the HMICFRS portal
- Response forwarded to Chief Constable
- Response forwarded to Police and Crime Panel
- Response published on the OPCCN website