



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:

PEEL Spotlight – Police performance: Getting a grip

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All local forces in England and Wales

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[Police performance: Getting a grip – PEEL spotlight report \(justiceinspectorates.gov.uk\)](https://justiceinspectorates.gov.uk)

Section 55 Response Deadline:

1 September 2023

Key Findings

His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services’ (HMICFRS) police effectiveness, efficiency, and legitimacy (PEEL) spotlight report brings together the findings from their PEEL 2021/22 inspection programmes of all 43 police forces in England and Wales.

They found that too often and in too many forces, the public is being failed, either at the first point of contact on the response to a call for help or in the service a victim of crime receives.

The inspectorate establishes that there are two fundamental issues that policing needs to address to support improvements:

- Chief Constables and senior police leaders must improve the way they run their force. Governance and performance management often lack grip. Too many forces make decisions based on poor data or insufficient analysis of data. Forces' financial and strategic planning is often short-term and short-sighted, creating avoidable problems.
- There must be greater investment in first-line supervisors. They are critical to improving performance and developing the right culture.

HMICFRS suggest that without a full understanding of performance data, and a robust and purposeful performance framework and governance processes, forces cannot do the following:

- Become more effective. Many forces do not understand what issues are most important to tackle, how their performance can be measured, how they should change and what works in tackling issues.
- Become more efficient. Forces struggle to explain what they have to do to improve, and how much it costs. This prevents them from using limited resources efficiently and hinders them when they ask for local or national (England and Wales) policy changes or seek increases in funding.
- Conduct performance analysis, identifying the underlying problems leading to underperformance. Without this information, forces cannot plan for effective changes to improve their service.
- Be confident in the legitimacy of policing. In too many areas, forces do not understand whether there is disproportionality or not. Without an understanding of if, where and how they might be treating people unfairly, forces cannot give explanations when concerns are raised.

The report suggests that the police were not collecting data about all the things they should be, and where they did, they were not accurately and consistently analysing it. Police forces complete many national (England and Wales) data returns, including annual data returns to the Home Office. Yet too many police forces made major strategic and operational decisions based on poor and often simplistic data and analysis. They failed to consider the context of the data, the quality of the data, the risk it carries and the potentially significant unintended consequences of their decisions.

The inspectorate found that many forces also had difficulties recruiting and retaining officers and staff. Forces' ability to have the right people available is being hindered by the increase in the number of young-in-service officers. These officers, while dedicated, lack experience, and they need training while they build their skills.

Furthermore, officers were spending a high proportion of their time responding to demand that was unrelated to policing and better addressed by other organisations. This was particularly the case for mental health.

HMICFRS suggest that first-line supervisors are being let down. Supervisors frequently had high workloads, particularly in specialist teams, which made good supervision more difficult. They often lacked sufficient training, did not always have access to the right technology and could be unaware of the importance of collecting data and using information to help manage workloads and performance.

In addition to this, the report suggests that too often there were long delays in calls from the public being answered. This was particularly true for non-emergency 101 calls. In too many cases vulnerability and repeat victims were not identified. Good-quality risk assessments that support the most appropriate response were not completed or recorded for others to see.

Norfolk Constabulary were referenced twice within HMICFRS' report for their innovative and promising practices in relation to referring drug users to intervention schemes and matching changes in demand to changes in financial resources.

Recommendations

There were six recommendations made by HMICFRS in their report; three of these recommendations were put forward to police forces and Chief Constables. These are detailed below using the same numbering contained within the report itself:

Recommendation 2:

By January 2024, forces should review whether they have effective processes in place to reduce the risk of skilled personnel leaving the organisation. These should include:

- how they conduct exit interviews and use this information to identify patterns and trends in why people leave; and
- how they identify people who are thinking of leaving and the action they take, where appropriate, to encourage them to stay.

Processes should cover police officers, police staff, special constables, and volunteers.

Recommendation 3:

By January 2024, forces should review their proactive well-being support for officers and staff in high-stress roles and situations. They should make sure it includes targeted support that goes beyond mandatory annual psychological screening.

Recommendation 6:

By January 2024, chief constables should review their force's performance frameworks and governance processes to reassure themselves that the force is:

- collecting and analysing the right data to help it to understand and improve its performance; and
- integrating a culture of evaluation into performance and improvement activity at all levels.

Areas for Improvement

There are no areas for improvement made.

Chief Constable response to report and any Recommendations/Areas for Improvement

This spotlight report entitled "Police performance: Getting a grip" by his Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services' (HMICFRS) brings together the findings from HMICFRS' Police Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Legitimacy (PEEL) 2021/22 inspection programmes of all 43 police forces in England and Wales.

Through their inspection programme, HMICFRS found that too often and in too many forces, the public is being failed either at the first point of contact on the response to a call for help or in the service a victim of crime receives.

The report highlights two fundamental issues that policing needs to address to support improvements.

Firstly, chief constables and senior police leaders must improve the way they run their force. Governance and performance management often lacks grip, too many forces make decisions based on poor data or insufficient analysis of data, and forces' financial and strategic planning is often short-term and short-sighted, creating avoidable problems.

Secondly, there must be greater investment in first-line supervisors as they are critical to improving performance and developing the right culture, but they are often being let down.

HMICFRS made three recommendations, as detailed below. Norfolk Constabulary accepts all three recommendations and will continue to make progress in these areas to deliver the standards outlined.

The Constabulary has reviewed the forces current position against each recommendation and has developed a clear plan to achieve them all by January 2024.

Recommendation 2

By January 2024, forces should review whether they have effective processes in place to reduce the risk of skilled personnel leaving the organisation. These should include:

- **how they conduct exit interviews and use this information to identify patterns and trends in why people leave; and**
- **how they identify people who are thinking of leaving and the action they take, where appropriate, to encourage them to stay.**

Processes should cover police officers, police staff, special constables, and volunteers.

At present, the identification of those who are looking to leave the Constabulary is captured through one-to-one meetings between staff members and their managers, and Performance Development Review meetings that managers undertake with staff. In addition, we are also looking to explore themes around retention within our Employee Opinion survey which launches in October 2023, and the Constabulary will shortly be introducing retention interviews to enhance our understanding of those people who are thinking of leaving. We are in the process of developing this scheme which will focus on

Detectives in the first instance. Specific interventions to encourage retention, linked to this scheme will include wellbeing support, career coaching / mentoring and support in resolving workplace disputes. More broadly we have recently launched our new People Strategy which focuses on improving employee engagement. This will be coupled with investment in training and support for front line leaders across the organisation.

Exit Questionnaires are provided to all those who leave the Constabulary. They are electronic and provide an opportunity for officers and staff to respond across several different subject areas. The responses are monitored by the Human Resources (HR) Department and themes are reported at several forums, including the People Board.

In addition, over the last 12 months, we have been conducting interviews as part of the attrition project. A representative from HR calls individuals after they have left the organisation, giving them the opportunity to provide any further feedback. This approach can allow the individual to speak freely as they have by this point moved on. Once again, themes from these conversations are reported within the HR Department and at People Board. The headline results have also been shared as part of the Workforce Report.

Recommendation 3

By January 2024, forces should review their proactive well-being support for officers and staff in high-stress roles and situations. They should make sure it includes targeted support that goes beyond mandatory annual psychological screening.

The force provides a wide range of proactive wellbeing support:

We have wellbeing champions/network spread across the force based in stations and officers. These champions are made up of officers and staff of all ranks who have an interest in wellbeing and volunteer to support the delivery of initiatives across the Constabulary. They are a local link to the wellbeing support that is on offer and are a great way to gain feedback and seek information about what is going on in any given area.

We have a dedicated Wellbeing intranet page with sources of information which includes, mental and physical health, men's health, exercise and fitness, diet, sleep, relaxation, stress/anxiety, spiritual, shift work, financial wellbeing, wellbeing dogs, and peer support groups.

We offer an employee Assistance Programme – this is a 24/7 service, available 365 days of the year, which provides support and guidance to help individuals manage work and personal stressors along with a wide range of other wellbeing information and support. It can provide access to counselling and provides advice on a wide range of topics including lifestyle.

We already provide psychological assessments to high-risk roles/teams not included in the mandatory offering and are planning to extend this further. We also continue to engage with our Force Psychologist to provide a stronger framework to support officers and staff by recognising that irrespective of what is on offer, a small group of officers will most likely develop post-traumatic stress, either following a specific set of incidents or due to long term exposure to stressful events at work. This support extends to treatment too.

We are taking steps to create a workplace that is trauma informed as much as possible, helping staff manage the impact of incidents within their teams by promoting and encouraging engagement with reactive support e.g., Trauma Risk Management (TRiM). A number of individuals have also recently completed training on delivering Trauma Impact Prevention Techniques (TIP-T)

Recommendation 6

By January 2024, chief constables should review their force's performance frameworks and governance processes to reassure themselves that the force is:

- **collecting and analysing the right data to help it to understand and improve its performance; and**
- **integrating a culture of evaluation into performance and improvement activity at all levels.**

The Constabulary continues to track force performance by capturing, recording, reporting, and reacting to the National Crime Policing Measures (NCPM) whilst taking advantage of continuously developing technologies. Key performance data on specific areas of business such as Child Protection, Neighbourhood Crime and the Beating Crime Plan is analysed and reported to designated boards before being brought to the main force performance meeting. Data is then further scrutinised against clear performance metrics and the longer-term direction of travel. The Constabulary regularly reviews the performance framework and governance process through the force performance meeting in liaison with the Performance Analysis & Research Team (PART).

The Constabulary can break-down force level data into smaller geographic areas, which presents a consistent and comparable picture across the county. There are also processes in place to identify the most appropriate areas/issues for further scrutiny via deeper data dives to better inform decision making. The process also enables the identification of outliers to establish the reasons why and identify areas of best practice as well as areas of concern.

The Constabulary has a constantly refining performance framework, which aims not just to assess outcomes, but to provide readily available management information to affect today's actions. This includes:

- An indicator suite developed for the performance of the Contact and Control Room, which enables clear visibility of the demands, pressures, and performance within that environment.
- Operation Discovery, a pilot aimed at improving the timeliness and quality of crime investigations, which has seen the design and delivery of a new Management Information (MI) system. This has resulted in significant improvements in investigations timeliness and positive outcomes. As a result of this successful pilot, the MI system has now been made available force-wide.

- Compliance with Victim's Code of Practice is on the journey of improvement following the appropriate development of relevant performance and management information indicators.
- Bespoke, focused performance products are developed according to need, e.g., Stop Search Reasonable Grounds and Police Use of Force compliance.
- There is a specific People Board which assesses the workforce, and a set of indicators is used to improve the skills management, training, and development, as well as assessing trends regarding topics such as wellbeing, recruitment and retention, as well as a variety of other factors relating to the workforce-mix.

There is already a mechanism in place for monitoring and scrutinising data quality via the Data Quality Group. Data quality is measured in relation to culture, capability, capacity, and strategy with further work streams being identified nationally and at force level to improve data quality.

As such, the Force considers its force performance framework to be of a good level and constantly improving.

PCC response to report and any Recommendations/Areas for Improvement

I welcome HMICFRS reports as a helpful vehicle for constructive scrutiny of Norfolk Constabulary. I note the contents of both this PEEL Spotlight report and my Chief Constable's response to it. Turning to the three recommendations applicable to forces:

Recommendation 2

A third of Norfolk Constabulary has less than three years' service. There is a need to rebuild the depth of experience that was lost as an unintentional consequence of Austerity. That can only be achieved by retaining officers over time. However, the unrelenting tempo of police work together with the constantly negative media and thus public narrative about policing creates conditions in which officers and staff are more likely to consider their options more often. I thus welcome both the report's recommendation and the Chief Constable's wholehearted endorsement of it. Nevertheless, the problem cannot be addressed by retention plans alone. There needs to be a policing-wide effort to address the tempo of policing (the Police Productivity Review should help) and a politically-led national effort to address the negative narrative. Arguably, the greatest form of retention is self-respect thus those who serve need to believe that when they run toward danger their efforts are appreciated.

Recommendation 3

Well-being support is essential both as part of sound day-to-day management of staff and also as part of longer-term retention of officers and staff. I welcome the report's observations and the Chief Constable's response to it. However, I make the observation that part of the problem in Norfolk is that Norfolk Constabulary is 'running hot' and has been for some time. There is a need to reduce the tempo of demand and the administrative burden imposed by the criminal justice system in order to create time for officers and staff to be able to draw breath.

Recommendation 6

I welcome the report's comments on the use of data. I am pleased to see that one of two examples of Norfolk Constabulary's good practice cited in the report relates to the matching of changes in demand to the changes in financial resources, which was driven by analysis of data. However, I am concerned that police data is also a public resource with a growing amount of police analytical capacity being absorbed by journalists and academics exploiting the Freedom of Information Act for their own research purposes and doing so free of charge.

All three recommendations have potential to generate more capability to provide increased visible policing from current resources. However, Chief Constables could only deliver part of this potential. The other part needs engagement nationally to create more fertile conditions for true success at force level. In the meantime, I will use this report as a vehicle for my scrutiny of Norfolk Constabulary.

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