



Creating a safer  
**Cambridgeshire**

**To:** Business Coordination Board

**From:** Chief Constable

**Date:** 12 December 2017

**A report on two recent publications by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services and the Constabulary's response**

**1. Purpose**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Business Coordination Board ("the Board") of two publications by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) during November and December 2017, and to set out how the "areas for improvement" within these that are being addressed by the Constabulary.

1.2 The two publications are:

*"PEEL: Police efficiency (including Leadership) 2017. An inspection of Cambridgeshire Constabulary"* (Published 9<sup>th</sup> November 2017).

*"A progress report on the police response to domestic abuse"* (the third in a series of national thematic reports). (Published 14<sup>th</sup> November 2017).

**2. Background**

2.1 HMICFRS independently inspects, assesses and then publishes reports on the efficiency and effectiveness of police forces and policing.

2.2 PEEL is the annual assessment of Police Efficiency, Effectiveness and Legitimacy (these elements being referred to as "pillars"). It is a process of inspection in which each force is judged against a series of set questions in each pillar and graded either as outstanding, good, requires improvement or inadequate.

2.3 HMICFRS also undertakes a number of “thematic” inspections looking in detail at a key issue across a number of forces. The third in a series of reports on domestic abuse has been recently published, detailing progress made across all forces in providing support to victims. The first report was published in 2014, the second in 2015 and the latest draws on evidence gathered as part of the 2016 round of PEEL Effectiveness inspections where HMICFRS looked at (amongst other things) how effective forces are at investigating crime and protecting vulnerable people.

### 3. Efficiency 2017

3.1 As part of the PEEL inspection, HMICFRS considered how efficient the force is at keeping people safe and reducing crime and awarded **an overall judgement of good**.

*“Cambridgeshire Constabulary is judged to be good in the efficiency with which it keeps people safe and reduces crime. Our overall judgment this year is an improvement from last year. The force is judged to be good in its understanding of demand; its use of resources to manage demand is assessed to be good; and its planning for future demand is also judged to be good”.*

3.2 The overall judgement is reached by assessing three sub-questions:

How well does the force understand demand? Assessed as **good**.

How well does the force use its resources? Assessed as **good**.

How well is the force planning for the future? Assessed as **good**.

3.3 HMICFRS identified four “areas for improvement” (AFIs) where an aspect of the force’s practice, policy or performance falls short of the expected standard:

*The force should put in place better processes and governance to understand its prioritisation of calls, and how they affect the force’s ability to meet current and likely future demand efficiently.*

*The force should conduct a skills and capability audit that will allow it to understand leadership capacity and capability below the rank of chief inspector and police staff equivalent, including special constables and volunteers.*

*The force should ensure that it has sufficient resources available to fulfil its resourcing model, and so to meet its demand, while also taking into account the wellbeing of its staff.*

*The force and the strategic alliance need to ensure that performance development reviews are quality assured and line manager supported to develop the skills and capability of their officers and staff effectively.*

3.4 HMICFRS did not identify any “causes of concern” (a serious or critical shortcoming in practice, policy or performance).

3.5 The force has considered the AFIs, allocated owners and commenced an action plan to address them.

3.6 Progress is monitored monthly at the Organisational Improvement Group, chaired by the Head of Corporate Development, with strategic oversight provided by the Deputy Chief Constable through the HMICFRS Gold Group.

#### 4 Domestic abuse

- 4.1 As part of a national thematic inspection on domestic abuse, HMICFRS has published a report and a number of AFIs and recommendations for all forces and a number of other bodies to consider. Evidence was drawn from the 2016 PEEL Effectiveness inspections (including Cambridgeshire).
- 4.2 The AFIs and recommendations are detailed in the Appendix. The Head of Public Protection has been tasked to review these, identify any action needed and will provide an update to the Force Performance Management Meeting, chaired by the Assistant Chief Constable.

#### 5. Recommendation

- 5.1 The Board is recommended to note the contents of the report.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

<b>Source Documents</b>	HMICFRS "How we inspect": <a href="http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/peel-assessments/how-we-inspect/#afis">http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/peel-assessments/how-we-inspect/#afis</a>  Efficiency report: <a href="https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/peel-police-efficiency-2017-cambridgeshire.pdf">https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/peel-police-efficiency-2017-cambridgeshire.pdf</a>  Domestic Abuse national report: <a href="https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/progress-report-on-the-police-response-to-domestic-abuse.pdf">https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/progress-report-on-the-police-response-to-domestic-abuse.pdf</a>
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## Appendix

### **Areas for improvement and recommendations extracted from the HMICFRS report “A progress report on the police response to domestic abuse”.**

These are for all police forces to consider. Only those relevant to Cambridgeshire Constabulary are listed here.

#### Areas for improvement

**Risk assessment** – Although HMICFRS found that in general risk assessment is improving, forces still use a range of different and inconsistent practices when assessing risk, which potentially means that victims might receive different levels of service across England and Wales. HMICFRS has also raised concerns about the practice of conducting the initial risk assessment over the telephone. HMICFRS has been clear that forces should continue to use the Domestic Abuse, Stalking, Harassment and Honour-Based Violence risk identification, assessment and management model (DASH) until the College of Policing has completed its pilot on a national risk-assessment model for frontline officers.

**Positive action and the role of arrest** – Despite very clear guidance in Authorised Professional Practice, there appears to be confusion about what positive action involves. Police officers have a duty to take positive action when dealing with domestic abuse incidents. Often this means making an arrest, provided that the grounds exist, and it is a necessary and proportionate response. The use of arrest is falling at an alarming rate, which can be explained in part by the misguided belief of some officers that their actions in not arresting the perpetrator are ‘victim-focused’. Officers need clear supervision and direction to ensure that all opportunities for an early arrest are taken. This is particularly true in relation to perpetrators of domestic abuse. It is crucial that such an approach is part of an effective process to protect victims and ensure their continuing safety.

**Build the case for the victim** – HMICFRS accepts that domestic abuse victims are often reluctant to support a prosecution, given the financial, housing and family connections they might have with the perpetrator, or the level of control which they may be under. Despite this, there are opportunities for investigators to build a sound case against the perpetrator whether the victim supports a prosecution or not. It is important that police officers are clear about what constitutes an acceptable level of investigation in all cases of domestic abuse. Given the high and increasing number of cases that are closed due to ‘evidential difficulties – victim does not support police action’, it is vital that clear standards and expectations are set for building the best possible case for the victim (including working with specialist domestic abuse services), which increase the likelihood of a victim working with the criminal justice process and giving evidence at a trial.

**A shared view with the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) on referrals and prosecutions** – There is wide variation in the number of cases which police forces refer to the CPS. Referrals are declining and charge rates are falling year on year. Police forces and the CPS have been examining this matter in an attempt to understand the variation and reduction in the rate of referrals. During the period of this report, the CPS has also invested in training to ensure that its staff are building the case for the victim, even when the victim does not want to make a

complaint. However, this cannot be done if the case is not presented to the CPS. To reverse the current trend, forces need to work closely with the CPS to understand when cases should be referred.

**The elements of a thorough police response** – The overall response to domestic abuse has improved over the last three years, but the service provided for domestic abuse victims is not consistent across all 43 forces. Early and accurate identification of risk, followed by timely deployment, frontline officers who understand the dynamics of domestic abuse, early arrest and effective evidence-gathering at the scene are highly likely to provide the best chance of securing a conviction. Where a charge is not appropriate, forces need to consider the use of powers such as DVPNs/DVPOs and referrals to appropriate specialist domestic abuse organisations to protect and safeguard the victim. The investigation of the perpetrator, and continuing support for the victim (e.g. consistent and timely information and communication about the progress of the case) are equally critical. Some forces are better than others at each part of the response to domestic abuse. From the first point of contact, the police service needs to ensure that it understands each element of its response to domestic abuse to help ensure that its response is effective.

**Consistent performance measures** – In our last domestic abuse thematic report *Increasingly everyone's business*, HMICFRS highlighted that some forces had still not completed comprehensive analysis to understand domestic abuse within their area. Throughout this inspection, we have worked with forces to analyse their data, and found that many forces still struggle to record and accurately reflect their performance through the data they collect. They are still unable to explain what is happening in terms of arrest and outcome data even where this is particularly high or low. This suggests that these forces are not monitoring their data for insight into what is changing (or not) in the policing of domestic abuse. Given the importance of the police response to domestic abuse, it is disappointing to see that forces still do not record their performance relating to domestic abuse in a consistent way. Force leaders should use force data more effectively in order to understand demand and monitor performance.

### **Recommendation 3: Update of forces' domestic abuse action plans**

By April 2018, every police force in England and Wales should update its domestic abuse action plan, determine what more it can do to address the areas for further improvement highlighted in this report and specified below, and publish its revised action plan accordingly.

- Recording. There is considerable variation between forces in the proportion of recorded crime identified as relating to domestic abuse. Forces need to ensure that domestic abuse crime including coercive control is being correctly identified and recorded.
- Assessing and responding to risk. Forces should ensure arrangements for assessing and managing risk are well understood by officers and staff, especially at initial point of contact, and decision making about the grading of, and attendance at, domestic abuse incidents is supervised effectively.
- Positive and preventative action. Nationally, arrest rates for domestic abuse are falling, with large variations across forces. There are considerable variations in the use of preventative measures. Forces need monitoring processes, supported by accurate data, to ensure that they are taking positive action such as arrest, and are making effective use of powers, for example Domestic Violence Protection Orders and the Domestic Violence

Disclosure Scheme. Where orders or bail conditions are breached, forces need to ensure that there are appropriately robust processes in place to take action.

- Building the investigative case. Forces need to ensure that there are clear standards and expectations, with effective supervision, for building the best possible case for the victims of domestic abuse whether victims support police action or not.
- CPS referrals and prosecutions. Nationally, referrals and charge rates are falling. Forces need to monitor the data and work closely with the CPS to understand whether improvement is required, and, if so, to effect change.

Chief officers in each police force should continue to oversee and ensure full implementation of these action plans and offer regular feedback on progress to their police and crime commissioners. This should be a personal responsibility of the chief constable in each case. The leadership task for the service now is to sustain the level of determination and commitment seen since the publication of Everyone's business to ensure that the police response to victims of domestic abuse continues to improve. HMICFRS will continue to monitor progress against force action plans as part of their PEEL inspection regime.