



Agenda Item 06

**JOINT AUDIT COMMITTEE
15 December 2022**

HMICFRS UPDATE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide members of the Committee with oversight of HMICFRS Inspection activity and recommendations.

2. WEST MIDLANDS POLICE PEEL INSPECTION & NATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The force has received confirmation for next years PEEL inspection. HMICFRS will be commencing PEEL activities¹ early in the year and the fieldwork² will take place in September 2023.

There is a new PEEL Framework and it has changed to nine questions, this previously was twelve.

- How good is the force's service for victims of crime?
- How good is the force at treating the public fairly, appropriately, and respectfully?
- How good is the force at preventing and deterring crime, antisocial behaviour (ASB) and vulnerability?
- How good is the force at responding to the public?
- How good is the force at investigating crime?
- How good is the force at protecting vulnerable people?
- How good is the force at managing offenders and suspects?
- How good is the force at building, developing, and looking after its workforce and encouraging an ethical, lawful and inclusive workplace?
- How good is the force at planning and managing its organisation efficiently, making sure it achieves value for money both now and in the future?

The framework has added emphasis to recruitment, retention and performance management and the rest has the same themes as previous.

Armed Policing, Strategic Policing Requirement, Vetting and Serious and Organised Crime are not part of the framework, however there is a current CCU/vetting and Serious and

¹ PEEL Activities include interviews, focus groups and attending force meetings

² Fieldwork – a group of HMICFRS inspectors will dedicate 1 or 2 weeks to do reality testing in force

Organised Crime inspection programme and they will be reported in PEEL. Armed Policing will become a thematic and data for this is being requested through the Autumn data collection.

The Strategy, Delivery and Assurance department will be communicating the framework to the force and will put together an internal assessment and has created functions to assist with the governance and assurance of HMICFRS recommendations and inspections.

The last PEEL inspection³ assigned four areas for improvement, one has been signed off as complete (Sex offenders)⁴ and the others are being progressed. David Roome, the HMICFRS Force Liaison Lead has engaged with the force and met with a number of leads to obtain a continuous assessment of the force.

Since the last JAC, the force has had 14 recommendations signed off as complete:

- Roads Policing – Not optional – An inspection of roads policing in England and Wales – four completed recommendations
- COVID – Review of policing domestic abuse during the pandemic 2021 – one completed recommendation
- PEEL Spotlight report 2019 – Shining a light on betrayal – Abuse of position for a sexual purpose – three completed recommendations
- An inspection of vetting, misconduct, and misogyny in the police service – six completed recommendations

The force now has a total of 146 recommendations, this has increased because there have been 43 recommendations added and five areas of improvement from a recently published national thematic report.

Out of the 43 recommendations 26 have been recommended to police forces which leaves 17 that have been recommended to either IOPC or NPCC agencies. WMP have already completed six of these recommendations due to evidence gathered from other recommendations.

Recommendations addressed to police forces will be recorded and monitored on the recommendation action tracker.

The below themes have been highlighted from the recommendations:

- updating minimum standards for pre-employment checks;
- establishing better processes for managing risks relating to vetting decisions, corruption investigations and information security;
- improving the quality and consistency of vetting decision-making, and improving the recording of the rationale for some decisions;
- extending the scope of the law on police complaint and misconduct procedures;
- strengthening guidance for forces on vetting processes and relationships and behaviours in the workplace;

³ [PEEL 2021/22 Police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy – An inspection of West Midlands Police](#)

⁴ The force should review how it manages sex offenders to make sure it has the capacity and capabili

- understanding and defining what constitutes misogynistic and predatory behaviour;
- improving how the police collect corruption-related intelligence; and
- improving how the police assess and investigate allegations of misconduct

3. **JTAI WALSALL AND CHILD PROTECTION**

Walsall NPU was subject to a JTAI inspection. This was a Joint targeted area inspection of the multi-agency response to identification of initial need and risk⁵ of child cases and evaluate:

- how effectively the front doors of individual agencies identify and respond to initial need and risk
- the effectiveness of the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) (or equivalent)
- how effectively each agency contributes to the multi-agency response, including early decision-making across early help, child in need and child protection
- how effectively the local partnership, through its multi-agency safeguarding arrangements (MASA), monitors, promotes, coordinates and evaluates the work of the statutory partners. The lead representatives of the safeguarding partners are the local authority chief executive, the accountable officer of a clinical commissioning group (CCG) and a chief officer of police
- the impact of leaders and managers on practice with children and families in relation to the front door
- the timeliness of this work and the impact of the local area's actions to improve the multi-agency response to children in need of help and protection

This inspection reviewed a number of child cases and met with staff and officers in the force to understand the force's governance, systems and training around child. The overall findings showed good examples of multi-agency work and highlighted some development areas. These will be confirmed in the published report in the new year.

The force has six recommendations from a 2014 Child Protection report and HMICFRS have been working closely with the force to progress them. There has been ongoing activity to gather evidence and the Child Protection team are working continuously to ensure the recommendations are being progressed. The status of the recommendations will be reviewed mid December and shared with the force.

4. **PUBLISHED INSPECTION REPORTS**

⁵ [JTAI Inspection – the multi-agency response to identification of initial need and risk](#)

Since the last JAC, there has been one published report and it is a national thematic report.

An inspection of vetting, misconduct, and misogyny in the police service – published 2nd November 2022⁶

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) reviewed hundreds of police vetting files and found too many cases where people should not have been allowed to join the police, including officers with criminal records or links to organised crime. It also found cases where evidence that a prospective officer may present a risk to the public was ignored.

Inspectors found examples of police officers transferring between forces despite a history of concerning intelligence, complaints or misconduct allegations.

HMICFRS said there were incidents which should have been assessed as gross misconduct that were assessed as misconduct only, or not treated as misconduct at all.

The inspectorate concluded that a culture of misogyny, sexism and predatory behaviour towards female police officers and staff and members of the public still exists and is even prevalent in many forces.

Completed recommendations:

Recommendation 33

By 31 March 2023, chief constables should make sure that counter-corruption units (CCUs) have established relationships with external bodies that support vulnerable people who may be at risk of abuse of position for a sexual purpose, such as sex-worker support services, drug and alcohol and mental health charities. This is to:

- encourage the disclosure by such bodies, to the force's CCU, of corruption-related intelligence relating to the sexual abuse of vulnerable people by police officers and staff;
- help the staff from these bodies to understand the warning signs to look for; and
- make sure they are made aware of how such information should be disclosed to the CCU

Recommendation 34

By 30 April 2023, chief constables should make sure that their counter-corruption units actively seek corruption-related intelligence as a matter of routine.

Recommendation 35

By 31 March 2023, to protect the information contained within their systems and help them to identify potentially corrupt officers and staff, chief constables should make sure that:

- their force has the ability to monitor all use of its IT systems; and
- the force uses this for counter-corruption purposes, to enhance its investigative and proactive intelligence gathering capabilities

⁶ [An inspection of vetting, misconduct, and misogyny in the police service](#)

Recommendation 38

By 30 April 2023, chief constables should make sure that all corruption-related intelligence is categorised in accordance with the National Police Chiefs' Council counter-corruption categories (and any revised version of these).

Recommendation 39

By 30 April 2023, chief constables should make sure they have a current counter-corruption strategic threat assessment, in accordance with the Counter-Corruption (Intelligence) Authorised Professional Practice.

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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS