



west midlands
police and crime
commissioner



Agenda Item 06

JOINT AUDIT COMMITTEE
27 June 2024

HMICFRS Update

1. Purpose of Report

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

WMP remains in Engage status due to the identification of 4 Causes of Concern during our 2023 PEEL inspection. WMP continues to work at pace to implement improvements and report on the changes being made in response to the concerns raised. Since the last JAC, HMICFRS have been back into force and conducted a re-visit inspection for OCSET/SOMS and again for MARAC. We await the formal reporting from these re-visits but the early hot-debrief recognised improvements having been made. WMP have also taken part in a Crime Thematic Inspection which afforded us opportunity to demonstrate and showcase the improvements to investigations that are being led under Op Vanguard. CC Guildford presented our progress to HMICFRS for the second Police Performance Oversight Group that was held in May 2024. This is due to be repeated again in Sept 2024.

2. Recommendations, Causes of Concern and Areas for Improvement

Since the last JAC, there has only been one report published which resulted in recommendations for WMP.

HMICFRS apply a level to each recommendation, these levels are:

Level 1 – Closed and archived by HMICFRS.

Level 2 - Forces are able to close records when they have completed the work, including uploading a letter signed by the Chief Constable.

Level 3 - Forces self-certify that the recommendation is complete, including uploading a letter signed by the Chief Constable.

HMICFRS follow-up/ verification via the next relevant planned inspection.

Level 4 - No force self-certification.

HMICFRS follow-up work conducted via further bespoke fieldwork, with additional support / inspection when appropriate. In most cases this will be for forces moved to the Engage status.

The force continues to concentrate upon the Causes of Concern, Recommendations and Areas for Improvement held on the HMICFRS Portal under the direction of our DCC through his HMIC Oversight Board which is held on a monthly basis.

In relation to the 4 x Causes of Concern, 23 x Recommendations and 17 x Areas for Improvement received during our PEEL 2023/2025 report we have submitted the following for closure to date;

3 x Causes of concern
18 x Recommendations
6 x Areas for Improvement

Progress continues in the remaining areas.

Total submissions for closure since change of HMIC process (August 2023) across all portfolios:

Closed (since Aug 2023)	Total Number submitted
AF1 Lv3	7
AF1 Lv2	12 (+6)
Recommendation Lv4	18 (+18)
Recommendation Lv3	34 (+9)
Recommendation Lv2	48
Total	119 (+66)

3. National Published Reports and Recommendations

I. An inspection of the West Midlands regional response to serious and organised crime. – Published 14th May 2024

As part of the overall police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy inspections, HMICFRS inspect how well police forces tackle serious and organised crime (SOC). In 2022, HMICFRS changed how they inspect this aspect of policing, to incorporate inspections of the ten regions as well as the nine regional organised crime units (ROCU) throughout England and Wales, and the 43 police forces. This improves their understanding of how well forces and ROCUs work together to tackle SOC.

This inspection included WMP, West Mercia, Staffordshire and Warwickshire forces and took place in early 2023.

The Regional Organised Crime Unit for the West Midlands: *Received an Adequate grading*

West Midlands Police: *Received an Adequate grading*

It was noted that WMP prioritises its SOC threats, using intelligence to inform operational decision-making. Lead Responsible Officers (LRO's) are supported by the force but it was recognised that some face excessive demand due to their role within higher demand geographic areas. WMP tackles county lines effectively but it was found that SOC demand isn't being dealt with consistently across the force – largely due to knowledge and experience of local policing officers. It was recognised that WMP should improve its use of Serious Crime Prevention Orders (SCPO) to prevent SOC offending but there was good evidence of work with partners to prevent people from becoming involved in SOC and to protect vulnerable victims.

There were 10 x areas for improvement and 1 x cause of concern issued within the report, however, only 3 x AFI's were relevant for WMP.

Area for Improvement 1

West Midlands Police should improve its serious and organised crime local profile

Area for Improvement 2

West Midlands Police should increase its financial investigation capacity

Area for Improvement 3

West Midlands Police should improve the quality and consistency of its 4P plans.

II. Joint Targeted Area Inspection: The multi-agency response to serious youth violence in Coventry. – Published 17th May 2024

This Inspection took place between 18th and 22nd March 2024, carried out by inspectors from Ofsted, the Care Quality Commission, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services and His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation.

Children at risk of criminal exploitation and serious youth violence are safer as a result of the effective partnership work undertaken by both statutory services and the third sector to reduce risks in place and spaces as well as for individual young people in Coventry. Mature partnership arrangements are in place. Since 2019, partners in Coventry have continued to focus on serious youth violence and exploitation. Their response to the new serious violence duty, through the Coventry Serious Violence Prevention Partnership led by the police, with strong links to the West Midlands Regional Violence Reduction Partnership and Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership, further builds on the learning from the city's experience of serious youth violence.

There were no recommendations specific to policing from this report.

4. Inspection Activity

Since the last JAC, WMP has hosted the following inspection activity in force;

- a) 29th April – 2nd May – **SOMS & OCSET re-visit**. HMIC returned to force in order to measure our progress against the two causes of concern we received in these areas.
- b) 20th May – 22nd May – **MARAC re-visit**. HMIC returned into force to measure our progress against this cause of concern.
- c) 10th June – 13th June – **Crime Investigations Thematic** – we were 1 of 6 forces being inspected as HMICFRS seek to identify good practice that can be shared nationally to help improve the overall approach to investigations.

Forthcoming HMICFRS Activity & Inspections

There are no further Inspections currently in the calendar.

CONTACT OFFICER	BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
Name: T/Chief Inspector Fiona Fletcher Title: HMICFRS Force Liaison Officer, Strategy, Delivery and Assurance	None