

# PEEL

## Police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy 2018/19

An inspection of Durham Constabulary



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# What this report contains

This report is structured in four parts:

1. Our overall assessment of the force's 2018/19 performance.
2. Our judgments and summaries of how effectively, efficiently and legitimately the force keeps people safe and reduces crime.
3. Our judgments and any areas for improvement and causes of concern for each component of our inspection.
4. Our detailed findings for each component.

## Our inspection approach

In 2018/19, we adopted an [integrated PEEL assessment](#) (IPA) approach to our existing PEEL (police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy) inspections. IPA combines into a single inspection the effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy areas of PEEL. These areas had previously been inspected separately each year.

As well as our inspection findings, our assessment is informed by our analysis of:

- force data and management statements;
- risks to the public;
- progress since previous inspections;
- findings from our non-PEEL inspections;
- how forces tackle serious and organised crime locally and regionally; and
- our regular monitoring work.

We inspected all forces in four areas:

- protecting vulnerable people;
- firearms capability;
- planning for the future; and
- ethical and lawful workforce behaviour.

We consider the risk to the public in these areas important enough to inspect all forces every year.

We extended the risk-based approach that we used in our 2017 effectiveness inspection to the efficiency and legitimacy parts of our IPA inspections. This means that in 2018/19 we didn't inspect all forces against all areas. The table below shows the areas we inspected Durham Constabulary against.

<b>IPA area</b>	<b>Inspected in 2018/19?</b>
Preventing crime and anti-social behaviour	No
Investigating crime	Yes
Protecting vulnerable people	Yes
Tackling serious and organised crime	No
Firearms capability	Yes
Meeting current demands	No
Planning for the future	Yes
Treating the public fairly	No
Ethical and lawful workforce behaviour	Yes
Treating the workforce fairly	No

Our 2017 judgments are still in place for the areas we didn't inspect in 2018/19.

# Force in context

	Durham rate	England and Wales rate
<b>999 calls per 1,000 population</b>	129	171
12 months ending 30 September 2018		

	Durham rate	Most Similar Forces rate
<b>Recorded crime per 1,000 population</b>	100	90
12 months ending 30 September 2018		

## Durham workforce

	FTE in post on 31 March 2018	FTE in post on 31 March 2014	Percentage change
Police Officer	1,141	1,288	- 11%
Police Community Support Officer	134	152	- 12%
Police Staff	758	731	4%

	Durham spend	England and Wales spend
<b>Spend per head of population</b>	£179	£192
2018/19 projection		

# Overall summary

 <b>Effectiveness</b>	 <b>Outstanding</b>	<b>Last inspected</b>
Preventing crime and tackling anti-social behaviour	 Outstanding	2016/17
Investigating crime	 Good	2018/19
Protecting vulnerable people	 Good	2018/19
Tackling serious and organised crime	 Outstanding	2016/17
Armed response capability	Ungraded	2018/19
 <b>Efficiency</b>	 <b>Outstanding</b>	<b>Last inspected</b>
Meeting current demands and using resources	 Outstanding	2017/18
Planning for the future	 Outstanding	2018/19

 <b>Legitimacy</b>	 <b>Good</b>	<b>Last inspected</b>
Fair treatment of the public	 Good	2017/18
Ethical and lawful workforce behaviour	 Good	2018/19
Fair treatment of the workforce	 Good	2017/18

## HM Inspector's observations

I congratulate Durham Constabulary on its excellent performance in keeping people safe and reducing crime.

The constabulary is outstanding at preventing crime and [anti-social behaviour](#) and at tackling [serious and organised crime](#). It investigates crime well. It also works effectively with other agencies to identify and protect [vulnerable people](#).

The constabulary has a comprehensive understanding of demand. It has used this to develop robust financial and workforce plans to make sure it uses its resources efficiently. I am particularly pleased with its approach to investment and use of technology in its future plans.

Senior leaders make sure that the workforce understands the importance of treating the public and each other with fairness and respect. The constabulary promotes the standards of professional behaviour it expects. This is well understood by the workforce.

Overall, I congratulate Durham Constabulary for its excellent performance over the past year. I am confident that it is well equipped for this to continue.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Phil Gormley', with a large, stylized loop at the end.

**Phil Gormley**

HM Inspector of Constabulary



# Effectiveness



# Force in context

	Durham proportion	England and Wales proportion
<b>Proportion of officers in a neighbourhood or response function</b> in post on 31 March 2018	50%	40%

## Victim-based crime per 1,000 population

12 months ending 30 September 2018

	Durham rate	Most Similar Forces rate
<b>Violence against the person</b>	37	29
<b>Sexual offences</b>	3	3
<b>Theft Offences / Robbery</b>	30	33
<b>Criminal damage and arson</b>	15	12

## Crime Outcomes

12 months ending 30 September 2018

Durham  
proportion

England and Wales  
proportion

**Proportion of crimes where  
action was taken**

22%

12%

**Proportion of crimes where  
suspect was identified**

60%

41%

**Proportion of crimes where  
victim did not support  
police action**

23%

21%

# How effectively does the force reduce crime and keep people safe?



## Outstanding

### Summary

Overall, Durham Constabulary remains outstanding in its effectiveness at reducing crime and keeping people safe. It continues to provide high-quality services to its communities, as well as seeking to innovate and improve in many areas.

The constabulary is good at investigating crime. It has the right structures in place to investigate incidents. The quality of these investigations is impressive, as well as the constabulary's victim care. It has done much to improve its crime investigations which has led to more positive outcomes for victims in the finalisation of an investigation.

The constabulary introduced a performance management framework to manage and monitor:

- its use of [bail](#); and
- suspects under investigation.

It does a risk assessment of the suspect before releasing them from custody. This helps it ensure it takes all opportunities to attach conditions and place suspects in diversionary schemes. By this, it aims to reduce re-offending.

Durham Constabulary is good at protecting vulnerable people and supporting victims. It is effective at identifying vulnerable people at the first point of contact. Throughout the constabulary, we found excellent understanding of what makes people vulnerable and how they need to be supported. Officers give a good service to victims when they initially respond to incidents.

The constabulary understands well the nature and scale of vulnerability caused by mental health crises. It works effectively with partners in this area.

The constabulary has a strong commitment to work with partner agencies to protect vulnerable people. This allows it to:

- give vulnerable people a service that meets their specific needs;
- manage offenders who pose the greatest risk and threat; and
- provide diversionary schemes to reduce re-offending.

In 2016, we judged the constabulary as outstanding at preventing crime and tackling serious and organised crime.

## Preventing crime and tackling anti-social behaviour



### Outstanding

This question was not subject to detailed inspection in 2018/19, and our judgment from the 2016 effectiveness inspection has been carried over.

## Investigating crime



### Good

Durham Constabulary is good at conducting initial investigations. Its use of the [THRIVE](#) risk assessment at the first point of contact is particularly impressive. This approach is now routine practice, and used effectively to [safeguard](#) the victim and reduce re-offending.

The constabulary assigns incidents to appropriate teams with the right capacity and capability to effectively investigate and respond to the needs of the victims. Although it doesn't have enough qualified detectives, the constabulary has plans in place to address this.

The quality of investigations is impressive. The constabulary has trained frontline officers to improve case files, supervision of investigations and the initial investigation. This ensures thorough and complete enquiries when the officer first responds to an incident.

Durham Constabulary has excellent working relationships with all partners it works with to provide joint services that support victims and manage offenders.

The constabulary effectively manages offenders on the Police National Computer. Its positive relationship with immigration enforcement has improved how it deals with foreign national offenders.

The constabulary is good at managing and monitoring bail and suspects [released under investigation](#). Its use of THRIVE on suspects before release from custody is leading to:

- better use of bail conditions; and
- diversion of suspects into schemes aimed at reducing re-offending.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the constabulary's performance in this area.

## Investigation quality

Durham Constabulary has the right structures in place to deal with most of its investigative demand. Through the use of THRIVE, calls for service and incidents are assessed to ensure the most appropriate teams are assigned to investigate crimes and respond to the needs of the victim. Different teams have the ability to act flexibly and expand according to need and demand. The constabulary has governance in place through a mixture of strategic, operational and tactical meetings to move resources in order to make best use of capacity and the skills of the workforce.

The constabulary is now under capacity in terms of its detective capability. This issue is not exclusive to Durham Constabulary but is having an impact on the constabulary's effectiveness, particularly when it comes to specialist safeguarding investigations. We acknowledge the work that the constabulary is doing to address capacity in this area. This includes continuing work to support accreditation with officers and [staff](#), and future plans to collaborate with South Yorkshire Police and Sheffield University to develop an investigation accreditation. Further work is needed to support inexperienced officers in this area and to ensure supervisors have the skills to ensure the quality of investigations. In terms of safeguarding and dealing with vulnerability, this means making sure that officers are sufficiently trained in child abuse and safeguarding. This training is through the [College of Policing](#)'s specialist child abuse investigator development (SCAID) programme. The constabulary might want also to review the training and career structure for civilian investigation officers, to ensure they have the same development opportunities as police officers.

Durham Constabulary has one of the lowest levels of telephone resolution of incidents among forces in England and Wales. The team was established in June 2017. The criteria under which crimes and incidents are allocated to this team are clear. All incidents are assessed against THRIVE and five solvability factors. These are: offender at the scene; offender known to the victim; CCTV of the incident; DNA present; and fingerprints of the scene. The resolution team does not deal with the incident if one of the five factors is present. Instead, a police officer will attend in person. The telephone resolution team deals only with certain types of crime. There are regular audits to ensure incidents are crimed and allocated appropriately. In most instances we reviewed during the inspection, we found the use of telephone investigations to resolve non-emergency incidents was appropriate. They provided a good quality of service that led to satisfactory outcomes for victims. The inspection found excellent use of THRIVE throughout the victim's and offender's journey, from the initial reporting of an incident to the police, through to closure of police involvement in the case. THRIVE is well embedded throughout the organisation and used effectively to safeguard victims and reduce re-offending.

Although we only assessed a small sample of files, the quality of the investigations we reviewed impressed us. The file review highlighted that in most cases the investigation was effective (51 out of 60 files reviewed), with investigative lines of enquiry identified and pursued (53 out of 60 files reviewed). Victim care was good (56 out of 60 files reviewed). This was a marked improvement on the 2017 PEEL effectiveness crime file review. The constabulary has invested in training officers and supervisors. This is shown by the 'do it right, do it well' training and supervisor training. The constabulary may want to review its approach to supervision. Of 60 files reviewed, only 31 contained evidence of an effectively supervised, or limited but

appropriately supervised, investigation. The constabulary may wish to reassure itself that supervisors are documenting their guidance to officers appropriately, particularly when the investigator is inexperienced or when the investigation is complex.

We found the quality of handover packages from response officers to the criminal investigation department (CID) or other investigative team was high. Officers' feedback confirmed that they generally get the time they need to carry out golden-hour enquiries. This includes taking statements from injured parties and witnesses, making standard enquiries, such as house-to-house, and CCTV and scene preservation before they leave the crime scene and go on to the next incident. Officers have received training in handover packages in the last 12 months and showed a good understanding of what is needed. The constabulary has streamlined the handover pack process. Both guidance and feedback is given to assist the officer in producing a high-quality package. A full performance management framework is in place, scrutinising the standard of file handovers and file submissions monitored through the local threat and risk meeting. This provides a good foundation for the quality of the subsequent investigation.

The constabulary provides a good service to victims of crime. Processes are rigorous and supervision is good, to make sure victims are kept updated about the progress of investigations. All officers see this as important. It was the focus for all the officers we spoke to during the inspection. The constabulary seeks the views of victims, using several surveys. Victim satisfaction and repeat victims are monitored through the constabulary's governance structures. The data is reviewed regularly and the feedback used to improve the service.

In the period April 2017 to March 2018, the rate of [outcome 16](#) (where the victim did not support police action) for Durham Constabulary was 22.15 percent. The England and Wales rate was 16.14 percent. The constabulary has worked hard to understand why it was using outcome 16 more than most other forces in England and Wales. It has carried out analysis and reviews to be sure that correct outcomes are being assigned to crimes, supporting the right outcome for victims. The crime management system incorporates THRIVE on all cases. This is designed to ensure that decisions and actions are recorded, enabling supervisors to monitor progress and outcomes. The constabulary has provided recent training throughout the service to raise the standards offered to victims. It has done so by improving the investigations processes, standards and recording, National Crime Recording Standards compliance and national file standards.

These initiatives target the 'front end' of investigations. The aim is to improve officers' ability to effectively deal with incidents from the outset and ensure all available opportunities for positive outcomes are seized. That means identifying and preserving evidence, formulating proportionate investigation plans, capturing details of the investigation fully, complying with file standards and applying the correct outcome for the victim. The approach to victimless prosecutions,<sup>1</sup> where no evidence is adduced from the complainant, is based on an assessment of the needs of the victim,

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<sup>1</sup> A 'victimless prosecution' is one where no evidence is directly adduced from the complainant. This is only likely to take place where a victim is a) unwilling to give evidence, and b) it is in the public interest to continue with the prosecution without the victim. One of the most common public interest factors is the fact that a successful prosecution is likely to protect the victim from further abuse.

proportionate to the level of risk. This includes the officer explaining to the victim what the outcomes mean. The domestic abuse policy was reviewed earlier this year to give officers guidance on victimless prosecutions. This has been reinforced with officers through safeguarding training. [Body-worn video](#) cameras are used for all domestic abuse incidents to support greater use of victimless prosecutions. Supervisors subject all domestic abuse incidents to greater scrutiny, so that victimless prosecutions take place where appropriate, and crimes are correctly classified with an appropriate investigation plan. The relationship with the Crown Prosecution Service has improved. A joint monthly performance meeting now allows progress to be tracked and ensures justice is pursued appropriately.

### **Catching criminals**

The constabulary has improved its policy and process for the circulation and management of offenders on the Police National Computer (PNC). This has reduced the number of circulations and outstanding suspects. A detective inspector reviews all circulated wanted people on the PNC each month. The opportunity exists to improve the management of those offenders wanted as local targets on the constabulary crime management system but not circulated on the PNC. The constabulary is aware of this. It is aiming to strengthen the crime management system, to help supervisors and leaders obtain a clearer overview of all suspects wanted for offences.

The constabulary has improved its working relationship with immigration enforcement and has improved the processes in relation to foreign national offenders and the [ACRO](#) submission process. Officers and staff have received training on foreign national offenders. The performance management data for custody has improved as well. A gap in intelligence processes was identified on foreign national offenders and the constabulary is making improvements in this area. All force intelligence officers have been trained in international intelligence tools. Further guidance has been produced to help staff and officers working in this area. The ACRO submission process has been automated, making it easier to check a foreign national offender's overseas convictions. Immigration Enforcement is now included in multi-agency teams within Durham Constabulary. This leads to better information sharing and better action in terms of the returns of intelligence checks, improving enforcement opportunities and reviewing and filling intelligence gaps.

The constabulary has a performance management framework to manage and monitor its use of pre-charge bail, and of suspects released under investigation. Changes to the bail legislation have been clearly communicated to all staff and officers. Their understanding of bail management and of the protection of vulnerable people show this. The constabulary monitors the number of suspects released under investigation as part of the constabulary's monthly threat and risk meeting. It audits compliance both of the use of bail and of suspects released under investigation. Custody officers and staff have been trained in the new bail legislation. Now, before a suspect is released from custody, a formal review of the safeguarding of the suspect and victim will take place, using THRIVE. This is leading to a better risk assessment of the suspect, creating opportunities to attach conditions to those released under investigation and divert suspects into diversionary schemes aimed at reducing re-offending.



Frontline officers and staff are obtaining [disclosure](#) training. We are impressed with the constabulary's approach to disclosure and by its use of disclosure champions and the 'disclosure management document'. Officers and staff either understand disclosure rules, and how these apply to their investigations, or know where to access help and advice. Durham Constabulary performs well in terms of its case file quality. It consistently shows top quartile performance nationally. Improvement in this area continues to be driven through performance management and by enhancing the skills of staff throughout the organisation, in support of high-quality investigations.

Frontline inspectors are required to check ten crime investigations involving cases where there is an element of vulnerability per month. This has led to improvements in the quality of THRIVE and supervisory oversight. Further audits occur on completed crime files using a matrix approach, which prioritises risky areas for scrutiny. The constabulary also monitors its crime outcome data against victim satisfaction to be sure that there is no difference in satisfaction levels, irrespective of the outcome used.

## Protecting vulnerable people



### Good

Durham Constabulary is good at protecting vulnerable people. Its clear definition of vulnerability is understood by officers and staff.

The constabulary works with partner organisations to understand community risks and threats. Initial calls for service are assessed for vulnerability by a THRIVE risk assessment. We found that call handlers have a good understanding of THRIVE principles. The risk grading and response to incidents is in line with the immediate threat or risk of harm to the victim.

All frontline staff and officers have undertaken training to improve their understanding of vulnerability. The constabulary has also given improved guidance to officers attending domestic abuse incidents where children are present.

The constabulary shows a good understanding of the nature and scale of vulnerability due to mental health crises. It works with partners to protect people with mental health conditions or in mental health crisis through:

- a triage approach in the control room; and
- a [street triage](#) pilot.

Neighbourhood policing teams are closely involved with the continuing safeguarding of vulnerable people. Where prosecution is not possible or practical, the constabulary uses other powers to protect vulnerable people.

Durham Constabulary is strongly committed to working with a range of partner organisations to protect vulnerable people. These include:

- two [multi-agency safeguarding hubs](#) (MASHs); and
- charities like Harbour, which supports domestic abuse victims.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the constabulary's performance in this area.

### **Understanding and identifying vulnerability**

Durham Constabulary has a clear definition of vulnerability. It has policies that provide clear, unambiguous guidance and direction for safeguarding children, young people and adults. Protecting the vulnerable is explained clearly as part of the '[plan on a page](#)', covered in the section marked 'protecting neighbourhoods'. This means intervening early to reduce harm and demand. The focus is on safeguarding vulnerable victims and those at risk of harm, reducing repeat callers and repeat victimisation, and identifying and managing people and places that pose the most risk of harm. Officers and staff on the whole show a good understanding of this area.

The constabulary has a vulnerability strategy. It uses this definition: 'A person is vulnerable if as a result of their situation or circumstances they are unable to take care of or protect themselves or other from harm, exploitation or any adverse impact on their quality of life.' The constabulary's demand reduction plan details a standard approach for public and protective demand, with a dedicated owner for each of the plan's 15 themes. These cover areas such as domestic abuse, missing and absent people, modern slavery and trafficking, and children in care. Each theme details: the constabulary's understanding of the causes of relevant vulnerability; the identification of the vulnerability and what the constabulary is doing already to alleviate the problem; the prevention of harm and mitigation of risk by problem solving; and the response to deal with the immediate threat and harm.

The constabulary works closely with partner organisations to understand community threats and risk. They include adult social services, children's services and voluntary organisations. When vulnerability is identified, the constabulary is good at sharing information about its nature and scale. The force's strategic threat and risk assessment (STRA) includes information from partner organisations. The understanding of demand is assessed through the causes of demand and what factors pose most and greatest risk. They might be health or mental health problems, drug use and abuse, or vulnerable adults and children. The constabulary has established partner problem-solving groups to target hidden demand activity. These include child sexual exploitation, modern slavery, domestic abuse and safeguarding. These have evolved based on the threats faced locally and nationally. Most strategic partner agencies are involved in these groups. Terms of reference are clear and governance is in place.

Vulnerability is initially assessed using the THRIVE process. During the inspection, we found that call handlers in the constabulary control room had a thorough understanding of the THRIVE principles. In most case files we reviewed, we found the grading and response to incidents was appropriate regarding the immediate threat or risk of harm for the victim. Staff working in the control room dealt with calls appropriately, applying THRIVE as a triage and using this to form part of their decision-making processes. During the audio calls we reviewed, we found that call handlers were polite, professional and respectful throughout the calls. This was even the case when callers were intoxicated and agitated. They also applied the principles to assess the level of harm that individuals were facing, generally made sound decisions and took the right action to support callers. Repeat victims are identified

quickly, using the constabulary command and control system. This encourages the most efficient use of resources.

While the use of flags to mark repeat victims or highlight areas of vulnerability on the constabulary command and control system is good, the use of vulnerability flags on the crime system to identify victims with vulnerability was less consistent. The constabulary has identified this as an area where it needs to improve. It is to be rectified in the next update of the crime management system. Generally, the constabulary's initial response to incidents involving vulnerable people is good, particularly concerning victims of domestic abuse. The use of THRIVE is well embedded throughout the organisation. Risk assessment takes place from the initial point of contact to the closure of an investigation.

## **Responding to incidents**

Call handlers promptly identify the vulnerability of victims at the first point of contact. There are clear markers on the constabulary's systems and incident logs to highlight vulnerability and repeat victims. Once an incident has been created, it passes from the call handler to the dispatcher. He or she must then re-apply THRIVE criteria to all incidents on acceptance, once further system checks have been completed, to provide more context and information on the incident. All domestic abuse incidents receive supervisory reviews. In most case files we reviewed, we found the grading and response to incidents from victims of crime was appropriate regarding the immediate threat or risk of harm for the victim. The safeguarding unit is used appropriately to investigate incidents involving vulnerable victims who require safeguarding. Response times to immediate and priority incidents are monitored and reported weekly to the leadership team. This is done through formal governance and the accountability structures of the monthly locality threat and risk meeting, and through the force operational threat and risk meeting.

All frontline staff and officers undergo safeguarding training as part of a rolling programme of training. It is refreshed annually to enforce the philosophy that 'safeguarding is everyone's business'. Training has covered the definition of vulnerability as well as guidance for officers attending domestic abuse incidents where children are present. 'Through the eyes of a child' directs officers attending domestic abuse incidents to consider what life is like for the child in that environment. Through the use of body-worn video cameras, officers gather evidence about the experiences of children, and how domestic abuse is seen within a family. This gives the police the opportunity to intervene early and share information with partner agencies.

In their initial response, officers will use a [DASH](#) form in domestic abuse cases, and the national risk assessment matrix for missing reports. They use the risk assessments within the safeguarding referral reports for vulnerable child and adult cases. These assessment tools help the officer to identify the level of safeguarding needed, and whether escalation to a supervisor is necessary. The constabulary analyses and quality-assures documentation submitted by staff and officers monthly on domestic abuse incidents and on the identification of vulnerability. This enables the constabulary to identify problems and rectify concerns quickly.

Durham Constabulary demonstrates good understanding of the nature and scale of vulnerability due to mental health problems. It has developed this in conjunction with partner organisations. A comprehensive [problem profile](#) was developed last year, using both police and partnership data. It has been refreshed this year. Officers have welcomed the introduction of triage both in the control room and the street triage pilot. They feel these initiatives allow for more effective support of people with mental health problems. Officers and staff in the control room have a good understanding of the importance of taking immediate action to protect people with mental health conditions or in a mental health crisis. The tele-triage protocol for control room staff for incidents involving mental health is a simple one-page flow chart. This outlines the options and where to obtain further assistance and advice for people contacting the control room in a mental health crisis. Both the street triage pilot and the use of a mental health practitioner in the control room have been reviewed and assessed in terms of their effectiveness. The results have been fed back into the partnership forum for mental health. Funding for both initiatives has been secured until December 2019.

The constabulary makes good use of body-worn video cameras in domestic abuse cases. This enables the constabulary to use footage as evidence in support of victimless prosecutions. For our 2017 effectiveness inspection, the constabulary was unable to provide data on the use of arrest, [voluntary attendance](#) or bail in relation to domestic abuse incidents. Since then, the constabulary has analysed and triangulated domestic abuse arrest data. It has found a consistent monthly average of 39 to 42 percent for arrests. Durham Constabulary has a higher arrest rate for domestic abuse than the England and Wales rate, however the voluntary attendance rate is also higher. Voluntary attendance and arrest are monitored as part of the monthly performance management regime and are part of the performance dashboard. The data is reviewed as part of team performance reviews and, individually, through monthly performance conversations. Using the information we reviewed during the inspection, we found that the constabulary made correct use of its powers of arrest to protect vulnerable victims and witnesses, particularly in domestic abuse cases.

The constabulary is working with partner agencies to assess and respond to incidents involving people with mental health conditions. Information is shared with the [multi-agency public protection arrangements](#) (MAPPA) strategic board, with the adult social care board and the local safeguarding children's board. People with mental health crises who often contact the constabulary and the Durham and Darlington mental health partnership are highlighted to officers and staff as 'familiar faces'. This means they receive a consistent and bespoke service from both the police and health care services that meets their needs. The constabulary also attends the County Durham children and young people's mental health meeting, and the emotional wellbeing and resilience meeting. These meetings link with the County Durham Children and Young People's Mental Health, Emotional Wellbeing and Resilience Transformation Plan 2015–2020. The meetings aim to support children, young people and their families in County Durham to achieve their best possible mental health and wellbeing.

## Supporting vulnerable victims

Neighbourhood policing teams are closely involved with the continuing safeguarding of vulnerability. This is part of a holistic approach, where contribution is shared across the constabulary when it comes to managing the risk around vulnerable people. Repeat victims and repeat missing persons are all reviewed at neighbourhood level. Time-limited projects or problem-orientated policing plans are in place where appropriate. Led by the neighbourhood policing inspector, regular meetings examine crime and anti-social behaviour in the area, people missing from home and cases where protection of a child requires intervention. The meeting then ensures that the appropriate tactics, a plan owner and the right intervention are in place.

When prosecution is not possible or practical, Durham Constabulary makes use of alternative legislation and powers to protect vulnerable victims. This includes [domestic violence protection notices](#) (DVPNs) and orders (DVPOs). Each DVPO is recorded on the crime management system with a plan owner. The relevant details are uploaded onto the constabulary's briefing page. Frontline officers and staff can then actively manage the risk around that particular order. They can enforce breaches when appropriate. It is positive that the number of DVPOs and DVPNs issued in the last 12 months has increased. The constabulary has a clear policy as to how it progresses [Clare's Law](#) enquiries. Both the constabulary and its partner agencies have a clear commitment to Clare's Law being well used to protect potential victims of domestic abuse. In each MASH we found evidence that the most appropriate agency was proactively completing domestic violence disclosures.

Clear processes operate to manage pre-charge bail in domestic abuse cases and safeguard victims. Custody sergeants have been trained in new bail legislation. This forms part of the custody course, and of their own continuous professional development. Before an offender is released from custody, the safeguarding in place for the victim and offender is reviewed. Offenders are often diverted to agencies for support over drugs abuse and/or alcohol abuse. The officer in charge and the custody staff will then re-apply THRIVE to the incident. The rationale for the release decision will be placed on the offender's detention log. A range of perpetrator interventions is available. They include Barnardo's domestic awareness project, Harbour's perpetrator programme, and Checkpoint, the offender management programme. This offers offenders a four-month-long contract to engage with services as an alternative to prosecution. Interventions are offered to address the underlying reasons for committing the crime. All of them are designed to reduce offending and the risk that these perpetrators pose to vulnerable people.

We were impressed with Checkpoint. This began as a project comparing the benefits of dealing with offenders through traditional criminal justice routes with the Checkpoint programme, which offers deferred prosecution and supported desistance. The programme is now routine practice in the constabulary. Checkpoint navigators work with offenders using an individually tailored contract to engage with partner agencies. This is based on the offender's critical pathways of need. The aim is to reduce their re-offending and improve the life chances of participants.

Durham Constabulary shows a strong commitment to working with a range of partner organisations to protect vulnerable people. We saw and heard of many examples of the constabulary collaborating with others, including the two MASHs. The structure of



both MASHs enables information to be shared in a timely fashion with partner agencies where a child or adult is at risk. Harbour, a charity supporting victims of domestic abuse, mental health services and independent domestic violence advocates (IDVAs) – who provide practical support and guidance to victims – are all co-located within the MASH. In general, the partner agencies that we spoke to expressed confidence in the constabulary.

Along with other organisations, the constabulary has invested in the [multi-agency risk assessment conference](#) (MARAC) process. It employs a dedicated MARAC co-ordinator, a chairperson and support service. They all work within the MASH, which operates a triage system where cases are risk-assessed before being referred to the MARAC. This ensures that MARAC discussions can concentrate on high-risk, complex cases, where a multi-agency response is most likely to be effective. All high-risk victims of domestic abuse are considered for referral. During the inspection, we found no evidence of cases being inappropriately ‘screened out’. The MARAC reviews all high-risk domestic abuse assessments, in line with the [SafeLives](#) guidance. The experienced MARAC co-ordinator reviews all high-risk assessments to ensure partner agencies review the most appropriate domestic abuse cases.

A disproportionately high number of domestic abuse reports are flagged as medium risk. The findings of the recent [joint targeted area inspection of the multi-agency response to domestic abuse in Durham](#) highlight this concern. This matter is of some concern to us. We acknowledge the current work being done and reviews to improve the triage and decision-making process – and the other continuing improvements made with partner agencies to manage these more effectively. To address this concern, the constabulary is to undertake a multi-agency tasking and co-ordinating (MATAC) approach to tackling domestic abuse. At the time of our inspection, this was at the inception stage. The MATAC process will identify and target the most harmful perpetrators, by analysing how recent, frequent and grave their offences were. The MARAC will continue to address high-risk domestic abuse cases, while the MATAC will address medium-risk cases. The process will integrate the options available to offenders, such as Checkpoint, to try and address their offending behaviour.

Attempts are made to contact victims of domestic abuse; every offence involving domestic abuse is sent to a third party who undertakes victim satisfaction surveys on behalf of the constabulary. Each victim is contacted unless they are under 16 or contact details are missing. This is irrespective of whether victims do, or do not, support police action. The constabulary is assisting the development and piloting of the third-party national survey. The constabulary recognises that not all victims will want to be surveyed. In these cases, it has worked with partner organisations to obtain feedback and victims’ views through other routes. Harbour, the domestic abuse charity, part of the local domestic abuse and sexual violence executive group, has been conducting research with victims of domestic abuse on the service they received from the police and other organisations. This is used to inform activity and service provision. Durham University Social Sciences department regularly conducts independent research with victims to learn how the constabulary can improve its service. The sexual assault referral centre offers victims the chance to

provide feedback. The IDVAs and independent sexual violence advisers (ISVAs) also act as the victim's voice.

The total victim care board, the force threat and risk meeting, and the ethics and legitimacy board oversee the results of the victim satisfaction surveys conducted by supervisors. They do this using the seven-day ring-back requirement. Officers are required to maintain contact with victims for 21 days. Surveys are published quarterly, and every six months for sexual crimes. The police, crime and victims' commissioner (PCVC) also conducts surveys on lower-level sexual offences and on standard-risk domestic abuse.

The constabulary has the capability to proactively identify and deal with offenders sharing indecent images of children. The digital intelligence and investigation unit has co-located functions. These allow work with officers and staff working across functions to be fast-tracked. The constabulary uses specialist software to identify people who are sharing indecent images of children and this is checked regularly. If a case is identified, the intelligence officer prepares a package. The child exploitation and online protection officer, or CID, then deals with it. If the perpetrator lives out of the area, the matter is allocated to the relevant force. At the time of the inspection, all cases had been actioned. There was no backlog.

We were impressed by the awareness neighbourhood officers and police community support officers (PCSOs) showed of both vulnerable people and offenders in their area – and by the proactive involvement of neighbourhood teams in safeguarding vulnerable victims and offender management. The public protection unit leads the management of registered sex offenders and violent offenders. Neighbourhood policing teams, who are trained in sex offender behaviour and in how to undertake risk assessments, manage low and medium-risk registered sex offenders. The public protection unit provides scrutiny and expert advice overall to this approach. The number of both intelligence submissions and the number of [sexual harm prevention orders](#) has risen since neighbourhood policing teams changed their approach – and since they undertook more active involvement in managing registered sex offenders. All registered sex offenders have a profile on the crime management system along with an up-to-date photograph and tactical plan. This means they can be monitored and that breaches of prevention orders can be identified. The constabulary may want to review the process for assessing registered sex offenders, to ensure that the approach is as closely aligned as possible with the Probation Service.

## Tackling serious and organised crime



### Outstanding

This question was not subject to detailed inspection in 2018/19, and our judgment from the 2016 effectiveness inspection has been carried over.

## Armed policing

We have previously inspected how well forces were prepared to manage firearms attacks. This formed part of our 2016 and 2017 effectiveness inspections. Subsequent terrorist attacks in the UK and Europe have meant that the police service maintains a firm focus on armed capability in England and Wales.

It is not just terrorist attacks that place operational demands on armed officers. The threat can include the activity of organised crime groups or armed street gangs and all other crime involving guns. The [Code of Practice on the Police Use of Firearms and Less Lethal Weapons](#) makes forces responsible for implementing national standards of armed policing. The code stipulates that a [chief officer](#) be designated to oversee these standards. This requires the chief officer to set out the firearms threat in an [armed policing strategic threat and risk assessment](#) (APSTRA). The chief officer must also set out clear rationales for the number of armed officers (armed capacity) and the level to which they are trained (armed capability).

### Understanding the threat and responding to it

Durham Constabulary operates joint arrangements with Cleveland Police to provide armed policing. This ensures that the standards of training, armed deployments and command of armed operations are the same in both forces.

The constabulary has a good understanding of the potential harm facing the public; its APSTRA conforms to the requirements of the code and the [College of Policing guidance](#). The APSTRA is published annually and is accompanied by a register of risks and other observations. The [designated chief officer](#) reviews the register frequently to maintain the right levels of armed capability and capacity.

All armed officers in England and Wales are trained to national standards. These standards relate to the role they perform. Most armed incidents in County Durham and Darlington are attended to by officers trained to an [armed response vehicle](#) (ARV) standard. However, incidents sometimes occur that require the skills and capabilities of more highly trained officers.

Some ARV officers expressed concerns that specialist officers are not always available to attend incidents when these additional skills are required. On these occasions, we were told that ARV officers sometimes resolve the incidents as an expedient method of reducing the danger and protecting the public. However, it is important that, for the safety of all concerned, the skills and capabilities of armed officers match the threats they face.

### Working with others

It is important that effective joint working arrangements are in place between neighbouring forces. Armed criminals and terrorists have no respect for county boundaries. As a consequence, armed officers must be prepared to deploy flexibly in the knowledge that they can work seamlessly with officers in other forces. It is also important that any one force can call on support from surrounding forces in times of heightened threat.



The joint operational arrangements with Cleveland Police mean that ARV officers can deploy quickly and efficiently in both force areas. This is undoubtedly a strength. However, we believe that extending collaborative arrangements to other forces in the North East would be of benefit. In particular, consideration should be given to developing a specialist capability with other forces in the region. This would provide greater assurance that officers with the right skills are on hand to manage the threats presented by the most dangerous criminals.

We also examined how well prepared forces are to respond to threats and risks. Armed officers in Durham Constabulary are trained in tactics that take account of the types of recent terrorist attacks. Also, the constabulary has an important role in designing training exercises with other organisations that simulate these types of attack. We found that these training exercises are reviewed carefully so that learning points are identified and improvements are made for the future.

In addition to debriefing training exercises, we also found that the constabulary reviews the outcome of all firearms incidents that officers attend. This helps ensure that best practice or areas for improvement are identified. However, officers told us that some suggestions they have put forward, for example how control room procedures could be improved, have not been followed through to a logical conclusion.

# Efficiency



## Force in context

	Durham spend	England and Wales spend
<b>Spend per head of population</b> 2018/19 projection	£179	£192

### Spend per head of population by category

2018/19 projection

	Durham spend	England and Wales spend
<b>Visible frontline</b>	£65	£65
<b>Non-visible frontline</b>	£55	£62
<b>Frontline Support</b>	£19	£17
<b>Business support</b>	£33	£41
<b>Other</b>	£7	£8

# How efficiently does the force operate and how sustainable are its services?



## Outstanding

### Summary

Durham Constabulary remains outstanding in the efficiency with which it keeps people safe and reduces crime.

The constabulary assesses future demand well, using a sophisticated approach. It strives to understand what the public expects, and to manage their expectations. Its future workforce plans are strong and recruitment tightly managed. The constabulary's financial plans are sound, realistic and aligned with its priorities. It looks for continuous improvement rather than transformation.

The constabulary's ICT strategy is impressive and comprehensive. This seeks to develop products and services that meet identified needs.

The constabulary has refined its approach to leadership over the last four years. This includes a talent development programme as well as examining organisational attitudes and behaviours.

Its [medium-term financial plan](#) is based on credible assumptions. These include:

- a summary of expected funding; and
- its use of [reserves](#) aligned against workforce budgeted posts for the number of police officers, staff and PCSOs.

In 2017 we assessed the constabulary as outstanding for meeting current demand and using its resources.

### Meeting current demands and using resources



## Outstanding

This question was not subject to detailed inspection in 2018/19, and our judgment from the 2016 efficiency inspection has been carried over.

## Planning for the future



### Outstanding

Durham Constabulary assesses its demand profile and the likely demand for its services as part of its annual planning cycle. This examines and reviews all demand for the constabulary in the previous 12 months. It recognises the threats and opportunities posed by changing technology. It is investing heavily in improving information technology and the skills of its workforce so they are all digitally aware and competent. This includes a digital leadership programme to help officers and staff exploit data and technology opportunities in the investigation of crime.

The constabulary's strategic planning framework ensures that its financial resources and workforce plan are aligned with its understanding of demand. The constabulary has undertaken consultation and engagement to understand:

- what the public want; and
- how expectations are changing.

We found a clear link between the constabulary's public consultation and its planning and resource allocation.

The constabulary's workforce planning is comprehensive. Training is prioritised against the constabulary's most important priorities. Career pathways and succession planning are in place. The constabulary advertises all senior posts externally, which ensures it constantly brings in new perspectives, approaches and ideas.

The constabulary's financial plans are based on sound planning assumptions. It has subjected them to extensive scenario planning to test their validity. It has a clear vision for the future alongside a comprehensive understanding of current and future demand.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the constabulary's performance in this area.

### Assessing future demand for services

The constabulary reviews its demand profile every year and projects forward the likely demand for services. As part of the annual planning cycle, the constabulary has a strategic planning day each January. This examines and reviews all the demand for the constabulary in the previous 12 months. It also makes projections for the next 12 months. These are based on incident data, partnership information and PESTLE (political, economic, socio-cultural, technological, legal and environmental) analysis. The understanding of demand is assessed through the causes of demand and what poses the greatest risk, such as vulnerability, health problems, mental health crisis, drug use and abuse, and vulnerable adults and children. Resource levels are reviewed against this information and whether growth is needed in any areas due to growing demand. Cyber-related crime and safeguarding are two examples. The demand profile also takes account of the effect of preventative and diversionary work to reduce offending.

Value for money profiles, which provide comparative data on a range of policing activities, are reviewed annually, when the data is published. Where the constabulary has an outlier for a service area, the manager of that area undertakes a review to understand the reasons behind that and whether efficiencies can be made in that area. A report is produced for the PCVC. This outlines what the constabulary said it was going to do a year ago with an update on what has happened since, and progress in this area.

The constabulary undertakes an in-depth study into all areas of demand. It assesses current demand levels and issues of vulnerability, taking account of unnecessary demand and considering whether resources are sufficient to meet projected levels of future demand. We saw examples of the use of benchmarking data to determine whether the level of resources applied to each area is appropriate. The constabulary checks its understanding of demand in various ways. They include staff focus groups, user feedback, surveys and process mapping. During the inspection, we saw examples of how these processes feed into decision making.

We saw compelling evidence of a sophisticated approach being taken to emerging demand analysis. They include work done to understand: the effect of a high number of children's homes and the increase in missing-from-home cases; the effect of changes in the benefits system on shoplifting rates; and the effect on local levels of recruitment by major employers like the armed forces.

The strategic planning framework ensures that financial resources and the workforce plan are aligned to the constabulary's understanding of demand.

The constabulary has an impressive and comprehensive ICT strategy. The constabulary has a culture of encouraging leaders to consider how digitalisation and ICT could improve service standards or drive efficiencies – and how ICT can assist in crime investigation and the approach to policing today. An example of this is the response to missing people. Staff have been trained in the control room to become digital media investigators, ensuring 24/7 access to this skill. Traditionally, the police responded to missing persons by using officers in patrol vehicles to search frequented locations for missing people. By using digital media investigators placed in the control room in the initial response to missing people, it has identified the location of the missing person more quickly and deployed fewer resources.

Invest-to-save initiatives are encouraged as part of the culture of continuous improvement. A professional and forward-thinking IT department, which seeks to develop products and services that meet identified needs, supports Durham Constabulary. An ambitious digitalisation plan is supported through the constabulary IT strategy. Officers are equipped with mobile devices that are aligned with constabulary policy and operational guidelines and are fit for purpose.

## Understanding public expectations

The constabulary has undertaken consultation and engagement to understand what the public want and how expectations are changing. The [force management statement](#), which also contains the constabulary's strategic threat and risk assessment, has been shared with partner agencies concerning future demand areas. It has also been used to inform the public about the threats and resourcing pressures that the police have to contend with, which are not necessarily obvious to the public. It creates an opportunity for debate with the public via the office of the police, crime and victims' commissioner (OPCVC) about what can be provided within the available resources. Consultation is continuing between the constabulary and the public. These processes include 'police and community together' (PACT) meetings – which now include use of social media in the form of digital PACT meetings – victim surveys, which are monitored monthly, and confidence surveys. Neighbourhood policing command concentrate much of their daily activity on engaging with the public. The constabulary attends large community events, such as Pride, to encourage people who in the past might have had concerns or a lack of trust in reporting issues to the police. The constabulary is also conscious of the importance of social media. It monitors Twitter and Facebook feeds for views and feedback on service delivery and design. The constabulary is looking at different ways to engage with the public. An example of this is 'Facebook chat' events.

The constabulary's planning process is aligned with that of the OPCVC with a closer focus on engagement with minority groups. The constabulary has established an external ethics group, which contains representatives from the community. We saw evidence that the constabulary uses focus groups to inform policy and decide changes. One example is the introduction of the Checkpoint diversionary scheme, a deferred prosecution scheme for offenders who undertake a commitment not to re-offend.

## Prioritising

A clear link exists between public consultation, planning and resource allocation. The constabulary engages with the public both formally and informally. It has used focus groups on specific issues, such as fraud and diversionary schemes, to understand the public's views and to explain the constabulary's approach. There are also regular formal PACT meetings, both online and traditional, surveys and more informal 'meet a copper' sessions. Together with the OPCVC consultation methods, they create a rich picture that informs the planning process.

The constabulary involves all relevant managers in developing its 'plan on a page'. Financial and workforce plans are tailored accordingly. The commissioning board manages the implementation of change and any re-allocation of resources. We saw evidence of closely co-ordinated work taking place between finance, human resources and change departments to drive change. The chief constable has a commitment to attend as many calls for service as possible and a clear ethos of meeting the needs of the public, summarised as: 'Do it once, do it well.' Where officers do not attend calls, the response is appropriate, taking account of vulnerability and the wishes of the victim. The constabulary operates on a model of improving continuously rather than implementing large-scale change programmes. Where change is needed, such as where demand is changing, the focus is on whether things can be done differently

in order to free up resources to meet demand. A good example of this is the digital leadership initiative. This seeks to harness new, more effective ways of working through the better use of IT. How this can work is shown by the approach taken to missing persons; harnessing social media and undertaking a digital media investigation can result in a far more effective outcome than reliance on traditional methods to trace and locate missing persons.

### **Future workforce**

Essential skills are identified for every post in the organisation. This identification is refreshed every two years. A training plan aims to meet demand. It includes disclosure, firearms capability, investigative skills, and family liaison – and looks ahead for new requirements, such as IT developments and cyber investigation. The training plan is appropriately resourced through the financial training user group. This takes place every February. All commands, as well as finance and HR, are represented. All mandatory training is listed, and non-mandatory training is prioritised and authorised. This demonstrates the link between the constabulary's 'plan on a page', financial planning, workforce planning and learning and development plans.

From this, training is prioritised against the constabulary's most important priorities. This is then aligned against the workforce plan and budget. Career pathways are identified, and succession planning is in place. Where shortages occur in certain areas, such as in investigations and ICT, action has been taken to understand and address the issue. A new talent and leadership programme has been launched this year. This is open to everyone. The constabulary also funds two master's degrees in criminology, open to one police officer and one staff member. A recruitment, retention and progression plan includes the main work streams, actions and progress – measured against the objectives of leadership and culture, retention, wellbeing and fulfilment.

All senior posts are advertised externally. One result of this is that three of the eight current superintendents were appointed externally. The constabulary does not currently take part in Police Now or [direct entry schemes](#), although it has considered doing so.

### **Finance plans**

Following its 2010 consultation about revaluing public-sector pensions, the government announced, in 2016 and 2018, reductions in the discount rate it uses to set contribution rates for the unfunded public service pension schemes. These include the police service pension scheme. A lower discount rate will result in higher contribution rates for the employer. The official notification of a lower rate in September 2018 did not allow [police and crime commissioners](#) (PCCs) time to include the effect of this in their financial planning. In December 2018, the government announced a pensions grant for 2019/20 for each PCC. It allocated funding to each force to specifically help the police pay for these increased costs in the next year. PCCs must now plan for how they will finance the increased costs in the following years, assessing the impact on their officer numbers and their ability to provide effective and efficient services.



The constabulary's financial plans are built on realistic, sound assumptions about future funding levels, inflation and council tax levels, which are agreed with the OPCVC. The constabulary has also considered the possible effect of any changes in the national funding formula, and has presented a range of options to meet a reduced budget, if necessary. The financial plans are aligned with planning priorities, demand analysis and workforce and training plans. Durham Constabulary has benefited from the recent increases to the council tax precept. This has seen resources rise for the first time in years. Any savings required are met through improvements in working practices and internal efficiencies. Such savings are reinvested in priority areas.

The constabulary holds reserves of about £8.7m, about 7 percent of net revenue expenditure. It does not expect to call on these reserves in the foreseeable future. Capital expenditure is relatively stable, at about £3–4m per annum, mainly on vehicles and ICT. Any major estates schemes would be funded from a capital modernisation reserve.

### **Leadership and workforce development**

The assistant chief officer within the constabulary oversees both finance and HR, which assists with information sharing and oversight. A three-year workforce plan is aligned to the medium-term financial strategy, with practical actions. An update is provided for each action in terms of what has happened – 'We said, we did'. Recruitment of police officers is tightly managed. Understanding of the knock-on effect of recruitment is built into plans, such as stores, [professional standards department](#) and vetting, and learning and development.

Workforce planning is well developed and embedded within the organisation. The goal is to plan systematically for future workforce requirements in order to meet the organisation's main challenges, develop the skills of staff as part of the 'aiming for excellence' ethos, and identify opportunities for working with others. Everything is underpinned by efficiency and cost effectiveness. The workforce plan outlines the workforce profile in terms of age, ethnicity, disability, and gender. Analysis includes the turnover rate and retirees. This is linked to future planning in terms of building leadership and management capability, developing workforce capability and skills, organisational alignment between HR, service planning and corporate/financial planning, wellbeing, and forward planning (succession planning and recruitment). Clear governance and accountability are in place around the plan.

The constabulary understands the roles that are difficult to recruit into. It now offers incentives for targeted posts. An example of this is ICT staff and developers. The constabulary is competing in this field against the London market; most developers can work from home. A 10 percent pay incentive is offered for these posts. The constabulary also works with the local universities. It uses interns within the ICT department as part of succession planning.

The new, supportive leadership approach has been developed in conjunction with the university and has been widely publicised. This approach has evolved in Durham Constabulary over the last four years. It rests on a combination of academic theory, staff surveys, and previous learning and analysis of what has worked. The approach to leadership underpins the strategic direction of the constabulary through organisational attitudes and behaviours, valuing people and talent development.

A new talent scheme has just been launched and is inclusive of everyone. This three-tier framework aims to support the entire workforce. Level one is aimed at everyone in the organisation; it offers a range of proposed development resources, including leadership workshops, sessions and events, access to coaching and mentoring and lateral development in specialist roles and skill-sharing. Level two is aimed mainly at under-represented groups who may require bespoke development, depending on their needs. Level three targets those individuals who can make a difference to Durham Constabulary through their immediate contribution or, in the longer term, by demonstrating the highest levels of potential and ability to be an 'entrepreneur'. At the time of the inspection, the scheme was being formally launched.

### **Ambition to improve**

Durham Constabulary's medium-term financial plan sets the constabulary budget until 2021/22. The medium-term financial and workforce plans are based on credible and sensible assumptions. Including a summary of expected funding and use of the reserves, it is aligned against workforce budgeted posts for the number of police officers, staff and PCSOs.

The constabulary has a clear vision for the future alongside a comprehensive understanding of current and future demand. The ethos in the organisation is of continuous improvement rather than transformation and whole-scale organisational change. The constabulary looks continually to both the public and private sectors for innovation and new approaches. The commissioning board is the governance for managing change in the organisation. All change projects and programmes are discussed at this meeting, which the deputy chief constable chairs. This enables the constabulary to better understand interdependencies and links through to ICT as well as partnership and collaborative working. It also informs the information management board, which manages information management and ICT provision in the organisation.

All projects and programmes include benefits realisation. These are tested with staff and scrutiny is provided as part of the information management board. Senior leaders from the NHS and education have subjected ICT provision and transformation in the organisation to external scrutiny.

The constabulary is constantly seeking new ways to collaborate. Its approach is to consider joint work with any other organisation whose culture fits that of Durham Constabulary, and which creates an opportunity to increase the efficiency of the service area. The constabulary is collaborating with several forces on forensics, operational support and ICT.

Durham Constabulary has made great efforts to understand what the workforce needs to be digitally competent and capable. A comprehensive digital transformation pilot is underway with Gloucester Constabulary and Essex Police to develop a local operating reference model. The constabulary views ICT as an enabler that can improve the way it works and traditional methods of police investigation. A 'digital leadership programme' has been designed to help leaders think about their area of service – and about how ICT can help to improve the service, enable it to do things differently and take a new approach to crime. The programme is designed for police staff and police officers in leadership posts, ranging from first-line supervisor to chief constable.

The programme is designed specifically to fill the gaps that exist around digital leadership to help officers and staff to exploit data and technology, in support of the constabulary's operational purpose in a confident, competent, capable and compliant way (4Cs). The launch of the 4Cs has allowed the constabulary to focus on what officers and staff require to become digitally competent. Durham Constabulary has examined its digital capability and capacity and has examined its processes and its preparedness to respond effectively to an ever-changing digital landscape. This has seen a change in strategic direction for the enabling services, fundamental to success in this area. The constabulary is now exploring ways to use technology to investigate crime in a more efficient and effective way. The digital leadership programme is being evaluated in conjunction with the College of Policing, and a local university is working with Durham Constabulary to explore formal accreditation for learning.

The constabulary has a clear understanding of the savings it needs to make over the next three years. These are based on prudent assumptions. This approach to financial management, and the strong approach taken to change management, should put the constabulary in a good position to meet the challenges of the future.

# Legitimacy



# Force in context

## **Comparison of Durham workforce ethnicity with local population** as of 31 March 2018

	Durham proportion	Local population proportion
<b>Black, Asian and minority ethnic</b> as % of those with stated ethnicity	1.6%	2.2%
<b>White</b> as % of those with stated ethnicity	98.4%	97.8%
<b>Not Stated</b> as % of total	1.2%	

	Durham proportion	England and Wales proportion
<b>Proportion of female officers in post</b> as of 31st March 2018	29%	30%

## Stop and search by ethnicity

12 months ending 31 March 2018

Durham  
disproportionality

Stop and Search likelihood of  
BAME individuals compared to  
white individuals

0.9

Stop and Search likelihood of  
Black or Black British individuals  
compared to white individuals

1.6

Durham  
rate

Number of stops and searches  
per 1,000 population

2.4

12 months ending 31 March 2018

England and Wales  
rate

4.8

# How legitimately does the force treat the public and its workforce?



**Good**

## Summary

Durham Constabulary is good in how legitimately it keeps people safe and reduces crime.

There is a strong ethos within Durham Constabulary of ethical decision making. Staff are supported in the decisions they make as long as they can demonstrate good decision making. The constabulary gives all staff an information pack about the [Code of Ethics](#) to help them act ethically and fairly.

In 2016 we found that the constabulary was not complying with all aspects of national vetting guidelines. It has now done so, and has up-to-date vetting in place for the whole workforce.

At the time of our inspection the constabulary had no counter-corruption strategy. But it does have plans to rectify this. It also has mechanisms in place to encourage the workforce to report corruption.

In 2017, we judged the constabulary to be good at treating its workforce, and all of the people it serves, with fairness and respect.

## Treating the public fairly



**Good**

This question was not subject to inspection in 2018/19, and our judgment from the 2017 legitimacy inspection has been carried over. However, we reviewed a representative sample of 374 stop and search records to assess the reasonableness of the recorded grounds. We found that 94 percent had reasonable grounds recorded. Our assessment is based on the grounds recorded on the record by the searching officer and not the grounds that existed at the time of the search.

In our [2017 legitimacy report](#), we recommended that all forces should:

- monitor and analyse comprehensive stop and search data to understand reasons for disparities;
- take action on those; and
- publish the analysis and the action by July 2018.

We found that the constabulary has complied with some of this recommendation. But it doesn't identify the extent to which [find rates](#) differ between people from different ethnicities and across different types of searches (including separate identification of find rates for drug possession and supply-type offences). It also isn't clear that the constabulary monitors enough data to identify the prevalence of possession-only drug searches or the extent to which these align with local or force-level priorities.

We reviewed the constabulary's website and found no mention of analysis it had carried out to understand reasons for disparities or explain subsequent action taken.

## Ethical and lawful workforce behaviour



### Good

Durham Constabulary is good at ensuring that its workforce behaves ethically and lawfully. It maintains a strong culture of ethical decision making. Officers and staff feel supported in making decisions.

The chief constable, through his Code of Ethics message, has personally reinforced its importance to all staff and officers. The Code of Ethics is also a routine part of recruitment for all new entrants. Officers and staff see the professional standards department as approachable. They also believe it does more than enforce standards, and actively prevents poor behaviour.

Supervisors are trained in open communications. The constabulary has internal and external [ethics committees](#), which staff are encouraged to refer issues to. These provide robust oversight and feedback.

The constabulary has cleared in full the vetting backlog for its workforce. It has introduced 'z' cards that describe seven behavioural standards, to increase staff awareness of professional behaviour. The constabulary highlights misconduct cases in its quarterly newsletter, The Durham Standard, and in its internal web bulletin, the Midnight Circular.

The constabulary recognises the lack of a counter-corruption strategic assessment as a gap. It has dedicated an analyst to ensure completion of this important document. Its risk matrix approach identifies staff and officers at risk of corruption and is used to assess all the workforce. A confidential reporting system, 'bad apple', is being revised and re-introduced.

The constabulary takes [abuse of position for a sexual purpose](#) seriously. It has an action plan and a strategy to deal with this. It maintains strong relationships with



agencies which support vulnerable victims of crime. This encourages a flow of information about this type of corruption.

#### **Areas for improvement**

- The force should ensure that its counter-corruption unit has enough capability and capacity to counter corruption effectively and proactively.
- The force should ensure it has a counter-corruption strategic threat assessment and control strategy which enables it to understand and manage the risk corruption poses to the organisation.
- The force should monitor its vetting decisions to identify disparities and disproportionality (e.g. BAME groups), and act to reduce them where appropriate.

We set out our detailed findings below. These are the basis for our judgment of the constabulary's performance in this area.

#### **Maintaining an ethical culture**

There is a strong ethos within Durham Constabulary of ethical decision making and 'doing the right thing'. The organisation believes that empowerment and discretion embed good ethical behaviour. This means a culture in which staff are supported in the decisions they make – as long as they can demonstrate good decision making, focused on fairness, integrity, a focus on the victim and doing the right thing. The chief constable has produced a Code of Ethics message for the workforce, introducing an information pack on the subject. This message describes what the code is, identifying what it means for those working in Durham Constabulary and making specific reference to victims, communities and detained people. The packs have been issued to all staff and officers. The constabulary has further embedded the Code of Ethics throughout the organisation by incorporating it into recruitment processes for new entrants, promotion processes and interviews for lateral transfer to specialist roles – from the initial application process through to the interview.

The constabulary uses the annual staff survey to examine the perceptions of staff and officers of ethical behaviour and values, and their willingness to challenge poor and inappropriate behaviour. It uses this survey to indicate how they are performing. Governance is provided through the ethics and legitimacy board, which the deputy chief constable chairs.

We found a strong belief among staff and officers that the professional standards department proactively prevents poor behaviour rather than just enforcing standards. It was evident from the inspection that the staff believe they all share a responsibility to challenge inappropriate behaviour and lead by example. There is communication throughout the organisation on internal misconduct matters. This highlights what the organisation deems inappropriate behaviour and conduct, and its consequences.

Staff and officers are aware of the requirements for recording business interests and notifiable associations. This has been re-emphasised through [integrity health checks](#) that take place as part of the personal development review. The staff and officers we spoke to during the inspection view the professional standards department

as approachable. The constabulary's intranet contains detailed information about policies and procedures on business interests, reportable associations and gifts and hospitality.

The constabulary has invested in developing supervisors through development days, which include inputs on 'getting to know your staff'. This training incorporates encouraging effective, open communication, holding difficult conversations, and recognising pre-cursor signs of misconduct and corruption. As part of the supportive leadership model within the constabulary, supervisors are encouraged to have regular one-to-one talks with staff and officers.

The constabulary operates both an internal and external ethics committee that provides robust oversight and critical feedback. The external committee is a shared process with Cleveland Police and managed through the Cleveland PCC's office. It was acknowledged that attendance at the external meeting generally is low. This has prompted a recent drive to increase the level of participation and improve the diversity of the group. There is also an internal ethics committee. Staff and officers are actively encouraged to refer 'ethical dilemmas' to it, and issues for consideration through an ethics referral. These describe the topic or event being discussed, indicate the desired outcome and log the issues and considerations made during the meeting. The form records the decision making, recommendations, actions taken and referral to the external ethics group.

Example of issues discussed include charging for missed occupational health appointments, the exit of police officers through voluntary severance and fitness training in duty time. The internal ethics committee may refer issues to the external group. Neither group is a decision-making body; each makes recommendations that will be addressed elsewhere. The issues discussed at the committees are communicated to the wider organisation through an online blog.

The constabulary has achieved our 2016 legitimacy recommendation when it comes to up-to-date vetting of the workforce. At the time of inspection, only 11 outstanding vetting issues were being progressed in a workforce of approximately 2,400. The constabulary has sufficient resources, supported by IT systems, to fully vet the workforce, including high-risk posts and contractors. The vetting manager maintains weekly data sheets to ensure the level of vetting is maintained. We found a system that was sound and designed to ensure that reviews were conducted in a timely fashion. But we also found that the constabulary does not monitor its vetting decisions to identify any disproportionality in decision making, concerning black and minority ethnic (BAME) groups, for example. Where appropriate, the relevant notification is sent to the College of Policing to prevent inappropriate candidates from re-entering another law-enforcement organisation.

The constabulary has produced information 'z' cards. They aim to increase staff awareness of standards of professional behaviour and sexual harassment in the workplace. The cards describe the seven expected standards of behaviour, including use of authority and use of force. A separate section examines the abuse of position for sexual gain and unmanageable debt. The pocket-sized card is clear and easy to read. Regarding sexual harassment in the workplace, it describes what sexual harassment is, how to recognise it, and what to do. It also provides contact details and numbers of several different options for support.

Professional standards and legal services have produced training material for use at sergeants' training and inspectors' and managers' courses. This focuses on the complaints process and on the role of the supervisor and manager. It covers counter-corruption themes. In particular, it covers the abuse of position for sexual gain, maintaining professional boundaries, the Code of Ethics and the expected standards of professional behaviour. The training discusses the role of the supervisor and manager in dealing with complaints, misconduct, ethics, integrity and corruption. It highlights areas of vulnerability regarding potential corruption.

The constabulary has good systems to promote organisational learning from cases of misconduct. Details of misconduct cases that have been concluded are highlighted in 'The Durham Standard', a quarterly newsletter, circulated to all staff. Outcomes are also circulated through the internal web bulletin, 'Midnight Circular'. This includes learning notes to educate the workforce further on ethical behaviour and on the ramifications of corruption or abuse of power.

### **Tackling corruption**

At the time of the inspection, no counter-corruption strategic threat assessment was in place. The constabulary recognises this as a gap and plans to rectify this. To address this problem, the constabulary is to have a dedicated analyst within the unit. This will ensure completion of the document by the end of the year. Currently, no analytical products identifying counter-corruption trends are produced regularly. The unit head has prioritised the development of the counter-corruption risk matrix. The constabulary adopted a risk matrix approach earlier this year to identify members of the workforce who may be at risk of corruption. This considers a range of data and indicators. An algorithm has been developed that draws on data from a range of sources including notifiable associations, business interests, expense claims, complaints, leave and absences. All police officers and staff have been assessed through the matrix. Action has been taken about those who pose the greatest risk. The use of the matrix has enabled the [counter-corruption unit](#) to become more focused in its work, allowing it to prioritise its activity. The data is refreshed monthly.

The constabulary's confidential reporting mechanism, 'bad apple', is being revised. It was to be re-launched in October 2018. A retrospective analysis of a single quarter (three months) of bad apple referrals will be completed to identify a benchmark. All future referrals will be compared against this to identify trends in reporting and behaviour. The new system, 'integrity link', will be supported by a monthly analysis report. The force management statement contains a limited amount of detail about identified misconduct and corruption trends. The constabulary has produced a counter-corruption and vetting unit strategy. This document covers vetting, abuse of position, gifts and hospitality, standards of behaviour, notifiable associations, force information systems, alcohol and drug misuse and secondary employment (business interests). It outlines principal objectives and a series of actions for prevention, intelligence and enforcement. Actions are assigned ownership and given timescales. The intention is to develop a front-facing performance page, covering all data in relation to misconduct and countering corruption. This is still in the planning stage.

The constabulary makes good use of the integrity registers involving notifiable associations, business interests, and gifts and gratuities. It is good at monitoring compliance with decisions made about notifiable associations and business interests.

The constabulary uses early interventions appropriately. All criminal allegations were investigated fully. Of the 50 items of intelligence reviewed, we found no cases where we considered that early interventions were used inappropriately. We found very few intelligence reports relating to corruption. Most cases the counter-corruption unit investigated were reactive conduct issues. The low rate of reports of corruption has been questioned. The constabulary has responded to this by stating that it now has the ability to monitor all ICT systems. This is new to the constabulary since our last legitimacy inspection. Its use has not been fully implemented yet. There is some proactive use of ICT systems, as all incidents reported to the police are checked against force mobiles monthly in order to identify any issues that may suggest corruption. Over two years, this has not yielded any evidence of corruption.

The constabulary says it has a good relationship with the regional confidential unit, which proposes to check constabulary telephone numbers with the known contacts of live investigations. At present, no analytical product has examined reports of corruption. The constabulary is addressing this, and is conducting an analysis of corruption-related information. It maintains good control over notifiable associations, business interests and gifts and gratuities.

The constabulary has effective links with external agencies that support vulnerable victims of crime. It has provided training to staff with domestic abuse groups and care homes. The constabulary believes that this programme, called 'blurred lines', has been effective in building strong links with partner organisations. The constabulary and agencies can exchange information about the sexual abuse of vulnerable victims by police officers and staff, so they can take appropriate action to prevent and detect abuse.

Corruption intelligence is held locally on a system called [iBase](#). We found this to be up-to-date, well managed and the data fully searchable. The cases themselves were managed on separate folders, which all members of the counter-corruption unit could access. The iBase system directed staff to the relevant records, so no data was unobtainable.

Of the 50 items of corruption intelligence we reviewed, one investigation involved children. The local authority-designated officer brought this case to the constabulary, so no referral was necessary. Of the 50 cases reviewed, apart from one, all those that required referring to the [Independent Office for Police Conduct](#) were referred appropriately.

The constabulary relies on an informed workforce to identify corruption. This is achieved through training inputs/annual appraisals, a confidential reporting system, links with the regional confidential unit and links with partner agencies. Identified improvements that are in the process of being implemented include the proactive investigation into the use of all ICT systems, rebranding and training in respect of integrity link - the confidential reporting system, more proactive use of the data sets within the regional confidential units, telephone database and analysis of the information relating to corruption. These actions are expected to improve the constabulary's understanding of corruption.

The counter-corruption unit is small. It comprises a detective inspector, a detective sergeant, a detective constable, an investigator and a researcher. The unit has no specialist proactive capability. We found limited proactive intelligence development during the inspection. However, the resources available enable it to deal effectively with the reports of corruption that are submitted. These cases are few and most of those that the team dealt with are reactive conduct issues. The management and monitoring of business interests, notifiable associations and staff who have been identified as being a potential risk is effective. The unit is also involved in workforce training and in awareness sessions.

The constabulary views the abuse of position for a sexual purpose as a serious form of corruption. This is reflected in the constabulary's local counter-corruption and vetting strategy. The constabulary submitted a plan in 2017 to address our 2016 legitimacy national recommendation regarding the abuse of position for a sexual purpose. This has not been fully implemented yet. The constabulary maintains an action plan on abuse of position. This could be enhanced if timescales were added to the actions recorded. The constabulary uses the National Policing Counter-Corruption Advisory Group strategy to address abuse of position for a sexual purpose. It provides its employees with material and briefings, to ensure they are aware of the issue of abuse of position for a sexual purpose. Supervisors within the organisation are trained to look out for warning signs that suggest an individual is abusing their position for a sexual purpose.

The constabulary has trained all staff on abuse of position. This has been extended to partner organisations. While few in number, cases relating to the abuse of position were dealt with appropriately.

### **Treating the workforce fairly**



**Good**

This question was not subject to detailed inspection in 2018/19, and our judgment from the 2016 legitimacy inspection has been carried over.

# Annex A – About the data

Data in this report is from a range of sources, including:

- Home Office;
- Office for National Statistics (ONS);
- our inspection fieldwork; and
- data we collected directly from all 43 police forces in England and Wales.

When we collected data directly from police forces, we took reasonable steps to agree the design of the data collection with forces and with other interested parties such as the Home Office. We gave forces several opportunities to quality assure and validate the data they gave us, to make sure it was accurate. For instance:

- We shared the submitted data with forces, so they could review their own and other forces' data. This allowed them to analyse where data was notably different from other forces or internally inconsistent.
- We asked all forces to check the final data used in the report and correct any errors.

We set out the source of this report's data below.

## Methodology

### Data in the report

British Transport Police was outside the scope of inspection. Any aggregated totals for England and Wales exclude British Transport Police data, so will differ from those published by the Home Office.

When other forces were unable to supply data, we mention this under the relevant sections below.

### Population

For all uses of population as a denominator in our calculations, unless otherwise noted, we use ONS mid-2017 population estimates. This was the most recent data available at the time of inspection.



## **Survey of police staff**

We surveyed the police workforce across England and Wales, to understand their views on workloads, redeployment and how suitable their assigned tasks were. This survey was a non-statistical, voluntary sample so the results may not be representative of the workforce population. The number of responses per force varied between 32 and 365. So we treated results with caution and didn't use them to assess individual force performance. Instead, we identified themes that we could explore further during fieldwork.

## **BMG survey of public attitudes towards policing (2018)**

We commissioned BMG to survey public attitudes towards policing in 2018. Ipsos MORI conducted a similar version of the survey in 2015–2017.

The survey consisted of about 400 respondents for each of the 43 forces. Most surveys were completed online, by members of online research panels. However, a minority of the surveys (around 750) were conducted face-to-face. These face-to-face surveys were specifically targeted to groups that are traditionally under-represented on online panels. This aimed to make sure the survey respondents were as representative as possible of the total adult population of England and Wales. A small number of respondents were also surveyed online via postal invites to the survey.

Results were weighted by age, gender, ethnicity and indices of multiple deprivation to match population profiles. The sampling method used is not a statistical random sample and the sample size was small, which may be more problematic for larger force areas compared to small ones. So any results provided are only an indication of satisfaction rather than an absolute.

[The findings of this survey, and previous surveys, are available on our website.](#)

## **Review of crime files**

We reviewed police case files for these crime types:

- theft from person;
- rape (including attempts);
- stalking;
- harassment;
- common assault;
- grievous bodily harm (wounding); and
- actual bodily harm.

Our file review was designed to provide a broad overview of how well the police:

- identify vulnerability;
- conduct investigations; and
- treat victims.

We randomly selected files from crimes recorded between 1 January and 31 March 2018 and assessed them against several criteria. We reviewed 60 case files in each force, except for West Midlands Police and Greater Manchester Police where we reviewed 90.

For our file review, we only selected a small sample size of cases per force. So we didn't use results from as the only basis for assessing individual force performance, but alongside other evidence.

## Force in context

### 999 calls

We collected this data directly from all 43 police forces in England and Wales.

### Recorded crime and crime outcomes

We took this data from the December 2018 release of the Home Office [police recorded crime and outcomes data tables](#).

Total police-recorded crime includes all crime (except fraud) recorded by all forces in England and Wales (except BTP). Home Office publications on the overall volumes and rates of recorded crime and outcomes include British Transport Police, which is outside the scope of this inspection. So England and Wales rates in this report will differ from those published by the Home Office.

Police-recorded crime data should be treated with care. Recent increases may be due to forces' renewed focus on accurate crime recording since our 2014 national crime data inspection.

Other notable points to consider when interpreting outcomes data are listed below.

- Crime outcome proportions show the percentage of crimes recorded in the 12 months ending 30 September 2018 that have been assigned each outcome. This means that each crime is tracked or linked to its outcome. So this data is subject to change, as more crimes are assigned outcomes over time.
- Under the new framework, 37 police forces in England and Wales provide outcomes data through the HODH every month. All other forces provide this data via a monthly manual return.
- Leicestershire, Staffordshire and West Yorkshire forces participated in the Ministry of Justice's out of court disposals pilot. As part of the pilot, they stopped issuing simple cautions or cannabis/khat warnings and restricted their use of penalty notices for disorder for adult offenders. These three forces continued to follow these procedures since the pilot ended in November 2015. Later, other forces also limited their use of some out of court disposals. So the outcomes data should be viewed with this in mind.

For a full commentary and explanation of outcome types please see the Home Office statistics, [Crime outcomes in England and Wales: year ending March 2018](#).



## **Workforce figures (including ethnicity and gender)**

We took this data from the Home Office annual data return 502. The data is available from the Home Office's published [police workforce England and Wales statistics](#) or the [police workforce open data tables](#). The Home Office may have updated these figures since we obtained them for this report.

The data gives the full-time equivalent workforce figures as at 31 March. The figures include section 38-designated investigation, detention or escort officers, but not section 39-designated detention or escort staff. They include officers on career breaks and other types of long-term absence but exclude those seconded to other forces.

## **Spend per head of population**

We took this data from the [HMICFRS value for money profiles](#).

These profiles are based on data collected by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy, through the Police Objective Analysis. The spend over time figures are adjusted for inflation. The population figures are ONS mid-year estimates, with the 2018/19 value calculated by assessing the trend for the last five years.

[More details on this data can be found on our website.](#)

## **Stop and search**

We took this data from the Home Office publication, [Police powers and procedures, England and Wales, year ending 31 March 2018](#). Stop and search totals exclude vehicle only searches and searches where the subject's ethnicity was not stated.

## **Vetting data (workforce without up-to-date security clearance)**

We collected this data directly from all 43 police forces in England and Wales.

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