

PEEL

Police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy 2018/19

An inspection of Gwent Police



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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 Gwent Police against.

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

	Gwent rate	England and Wales rate
999 calls per 1,000 population	139	175
12 months ending 31 March 2019		

	Gwent rate	Most Similar Forces rate
Recorded crime per 1,000 population	99	102
12 months ending 31 March 2019		






Gwent workforce

	FTE in post on 31 March 2019	FTE in post on 31 March 2014	Percentage change
Police Officer	1308	1330	-2%
Police Community Support Officer	115	206	-44%
Police Staff	573	593	-3%

	Gwent spend	England and Wales spend
Spend per head of population	£213	£203
2019/20 projection		

Overall summary

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

 Legitimacy	 Requires improvement	Last inspected
Fair treatment of the public	 Requires improvement	2018/19
Ethical and lawful workforce behaviour	 Requires improvement	2018/19
Fair treatment of the workforce	 Good	2017

How does the force compare with similar forces?

We compare Gwent Police's performance with the forces in its most similar group (MSG). MSGs are groups of similar police forces, based on analysis of demographic, social and economic factors. [For more information about MSGs, see our website.](#)

Gwent Police's MSG forces are Humberside Police, Durham Constabulary, South Wales Police, Lancashire Constabulary, Northumbria Police, Northamptonshire Police and South Yorkshire Police.

Figure 1: Pillar judgments for Gwent Police, compared with forces in its MSG



HM Inspector's observations

I am satisfied with most aspects of the performance of Gwent Police, but the force needs to make improvements in its legitimacy to provide a consistently good service.

The force is good at preventing crime and [anti-social behaviour](#). Since our last inspection, the force has improved how it investigates crimes. It has also developed better ways to make sure it identifies and respond to people at risk. It works closely with other agencies to protect [vulnerable people](#). However, the force should do more to provide a consistently good service in child protection investigations.

Gwent Police has a good understanding of current and likely future demand for its services. It is using this information to develop sustainable financial and workforce plans – which include increased collaboration with neighbouring forces.

The force recognises the importance of working closely with communities, but frontline officers and [staff](#) vary in their knowledge of [unconscious bias](#). It understands how and when to use stop and search, but needs to improve how it monitors its use, and the use of force. Gwent Police also needs to improve how it identifies and manages the risk of corruption, and needs to do more to ensure all members of its workforce are appropriately vetted.

I commend the progress that Gwent Police has made and will continue to monitor its progress in areas where improvements are still needed.



Wendy Williams

HM Inspector of Constabulary

Effectiveness



Force in context

	Gwent proportion	England and Wales proportion
Proportion of officers in a neighbourhood or response function in post on 31 March 2019	48%	40%
Victim-based crime per 1,000 population 12 months ending 31 March 2019		
	Gwent rate	Most Similar Forces rate
Violence against the person	34	34
Sexual offences	3	3
Theft Offences / Robbery	28	35
Criminal damage and arson	16	13

Crime Outcomes

12 months ending 31 March 2019

	Gwent proportion	England and Wales proportion
Proportion of crimes where action was taken	11%	12%
Proportion of crimes where suspect was identified	48%	46%
Proportion of crimes where victim did not support police action	28%	24%

Outcomes for crimes flagged as domestic abuse

12 months ending 31 March 2018

	Gwent proportion	England and Wales proportion
Charge/summonsed	13%	16%
Evidential difficulties: suspect identified; victim does not support	51%	49%

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



Good

Summary

Gwent Police is good at reducing crime and keeping people safe. It has made improvements in its approach to protecting [vulnerable people](#) and tackling [serious and organised crime](#) (SOC).

The force is good at investigating crime. It has introduced a new way of investigating crime, which prioritises investigations into crimes that cause the most harm to victims. The force trains and supervises officers and [staff](#) to carry out investigations, and victims are generally satisfied with the service they receive.

The force has improved its use of pre and post charge [bail, released under investigation](#) (RUI) and managing foreign national offenders. But it can't be confident that appropriate checks for foreign nationals always take place.

Protecting vulnerable people is a clear priority for the force. Officers and staff are aware of the importance of identifying and responding to vulnerability appropriately.

Gwent Police has made significant progress to improve its response to domestic abuse victims since our last inspection. Better workforce training has increased the use of arrest and legal powers to protect victims of domestic abuse.

The force is good at understanding, disrupting and preventing SOC. But it could improve frontline officers' awareness of it.

The force has built good working relationships with partner organisations. When planning to disrupt organised crime, it shares information with them to make sure victims are protected. With these partner organisations, it has also developed ways to intervene in situations and divert people at risk of being drawn into organised crime.

Gwent Police is good at preventing crime and tackling [anti-social behaviour](#). This question was not subject to detailed inspection in 2018/19, and our judgment from the 2016 effectiveness inspection has been carried over.

Preventing crime and tackling anti-social behaviour



Good

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

The force is good at investigating crime. It has introduced a new investigations framework to focus and prioritise investigations on crimes that cause victims the most harm.

The force trains and supervises officers and staff to carry out investigations, including telephone investigations. Victims are generally satisfied with the way investigations are carried out.

The force promptly follows up outstanding wanted suspects so it can find and arrest them. The force has improved how it manages foreign national offenders. But it can't be confident appropriate checks for foreign nationals always take place.

The force ensures that [safeguarding](#) discussions influence how it uses pre and post charge bail and RUI to effectively protect victims. The force generally understands and applies [disclosure](#) obligations.

Areas for improvement

- The force should improve its processes for the management of foreign national offenders so that it is reassured that it is effectively managing the risk.

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

Investigation quality

The force is good at investigating crime. It has introduced a new approach that prioritises investigations into crimes that cause the most harm to victims. The key aims of the approach are to:

- improve the force's decision making and provide a proportionate response to the crimes that will be investigated. This is in line with vulnerability, threat, risk and harm;
- use resources and expertise more efficiently across Gwent Police when investigating crime;

- increase the number of investigations involving vulnerable victims; and
- give investigators more freedom to make decisions and record their rationale in a structured way.

We found that the workforce had been trained as part of the new investigations framework.

This included:

- the investigation framework's principles and procedures;
- examples the force could learn from; and
- communication tools and techniques to manage victim expectations.

The force has slightly fewer investigators than it should. However, it was allocating investigations to appropriately trained staff and they seem to be managing the work. The force plans to introduce police staff investigators (investigators who aren't police officers).

The force trains first point of contact room staff who carry out telephone investigations. The force resolves appropriate investigations over the telephone, and carries out quality assurance to ensure they are dealt with effectively.

Officers at crime scenes have enough time and training to conduct investigations.

We reviewed 60 files from recent investigations as part of our pre-inspection fieldwork activity six months before the inspection. Only 35 of the 60 crimes we reviewed showed effective supervision. Since that review, the force has introduced its new investigations framework. This includes a positive focus on training supervisors. We found that in most of the crimes we reviewed, supervisors now provide regular review, focus and direction as investigations progress. The force gives strong supervisory direction for more serious crimes.

Improving the quality of investigations involving vulnerable people and ensuring investigations include regular and active supervision was an area for improvement from the last inspection of this question, which the force has now met.

We found victim support during investigations is good. The force gives them generally timely and sufficient updates. The force's victim satisfaction survey confirms this. Most crime victims (89 percent) were satisfied with how easy it is to contact Gwent Police and the time officers take to arrive at the scene.

They were also generally satisfied with the actions taken on their behalf (71 percent). Sixty-three percent were satisfied with the way they were informed of investigations' progress.

The force wants to continue to improve victims' experiences in Gwent. It has introduced a Victims' Board to oversee all victim activity, including surveys.

Appropriately trained officers carry out specialist interviews with victims and witnesses. The force has recently increased its number of trained interviewers. Victimless prosecutions (also called evidence-led prosecutions) are routinely considered in relevant cases.

We found several examples of the force taking forward evidence-led prosecutions, mainly where the victim didn't support the prosecution. Staff confirm they are routinely considered.

Catching criminals

The force is good at catching criminals and resolving investigations. It has developed an IT process so that it can easily identify wanted people on the [Police National Computer](#).

Frontline officers are informed weekly about any wanted people in their area. Officers can check their handheld devices for wanted suspects while on patrol. Supervisors check to ensure they are actively pursued.

Inspectors are expected to maintain staff performance in relation to catching wanted persons and outstanding known offenders. Daily management meetings consider outstanding suspects to ensure prompt follow-up. This was an area for improvement from our last inspection, which the force has now met.

The force has improved how it manages foreign national offenders since we last inspected this question. It has a designated officer who has links with [ACRO](#) and immigration enforcement. The officer in charge of individual suspects is responsible for doing ACRO checks. Compliance has increased.

However, the force has issues with the process for checking ACRO compliance. It is not fully automated and the force can't be confident these checks always take place in a timely way, without relying on the designated officer to check. This was an area for improvement the last time we inspected this question. Though the force has improved its processes, this is still an area for improvement.

The force has improved how it uses pre and post charge bail and RUI. It ensures safeguarding discussions influence decisions on whether to use bail or RUI. The force has introduced a policy for bail and suspects released under investigation. It aims to ensure people who are a risk to others are kept in custody or released on bail rather than being released under investigation.

We found domestic abuse suspects, sex offenders and people involved with cases involving child victims need an inspector's authority on the custody record before they can be released under investigation. The force oversees bail and RUI effectively.

The force works with the Crown Prosecution Service on an action plan to improve its response to its disclosure obligations. This is part of an all-Wales approach and is overseen by the head of criminal justice.

Disclosure points of contact are in place around the force. These staff have completed a two-day course on disclosure. Frontline officers and supervisors have been given training on disclosure and, as part of the review of investigations will consider if disclosure obligations have been met. Overall, staff seem confident using disclosure schedules.

The force did a quality of investigation review in December 2018 to find out how the new investigation framework was being applied. It also wanted to see what more it could do to improve the quality of investigations during this period of change.

The force took action on the results. For example, it increased the number of sergeants supervising investigations. Our crime file review showed that 49 of the 60 investigations we reviewed were effective. The Gwent Police Annual Victim Satisfaction Survey showed that 71 percent of victims were satisfied with the actions taken on their behalf. However, the force could still look at some areas to get more appropriate results for victims. These include investigation reviews and better scrutiny of outcome data. The force plans to do this and we will monitor its progress over the coming year.

Protecting vulnerable people



Good

Gwent Police is good at understanding and identifying vulnerability, including vulnerability that might be hidden. Protecting vulnerable people is a clear priority for the force.

Call handlers assess the caller's vulnerability to decide how quickly the person needs help. We found the force generally makes the right decisions in these assessments.

Staff in the [mental health triage](#) team give information and support to officers dealing with mental health incidents. They help the force respond effectively.

Gwent Police has made significant progress in improving its response to domestic abuse victims since our last inspection. It has improved training, resulting in an increase in risk assessments and using arrest and legal powers to protect victims of domestic abuse.

The force is effectively managing offenders who are known to be a risk to vulnerable people. It has reduced the number of registered sex offenders awaiting assessment.

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

Understanding and identifying vulnerability

Gwent Police is good at understanding and identifying vulnerability.

The main focus of the [police and crime commissioner's](#) police and crime plan is on preventing crime. The force aims to explore all ways to improve community safety, protect vulnerable people and support the victims of crime.

The force doesn't currently have a vulnerability strategy. But the chief constable underlines the importance of understanding vulnerability through regular blogs and briefings to frontline officers.

The force has done a lot to improve its approach to vulnerability since the last inspection, specifically in relation to domestic abuse. The force uses the [College of Policing](#) definition of vulnerability. We found that officers and staff had a good understanding of the nature and scale of vulnerability. The force trains staff so they know what is expected of them.

Officers also understand how to look for hidden vulnerability, like child sexual exploitation. The force has developed a vulnerability app it can easily access through its IT system. This allows it to analyse data on types and volumes of crime, plus patterns in repeat offenders over different time periods and places. Staff can use this information to improve prevention and patrol strategies.

The app currently includes data on domestic abuse, sexual offences and stalking and harassment. Other types of crime will be included in the future.

The force has processes to identify repeat callers and vulnerable people when they first contact the police. The first point of contact room (force control room) systems will identify previous callers by checking phone numbers and addresses.

Call handlers check the records management system for any previous incidents linked to callers. They also check for evidence of vulnerability, such as abuse or mental health problems. Call handlers assess callers for vulnerability using the [THRIVE](#) model.

THRIVE risk assessment templates are automatically created for incident logs. They prompt call handlers to ask questions and record information on the incident log. Staff in the first point of contact room routinely use THRIVE. Victims were effectively assessed when they first contacted the police.

Gwent Police launched its social media desk in December 2018 to offer another way for the public to contact the force. User feedback indicates that this facility has been well received by the public.

Responding to incidents

Gwent Police is good at responding to incidents involving vulnerable victims. The force attends incidents involving vulnerable victims quickly enough to keep them safe.

However, before the inspection we saw that police attended a small number of priority incidents slightly outside force timescales. The force had identified this as an issue and reviewed it. The review found an issue with the way some call handlers worked. The force is addressing this through training and supervision.

We revisited the first point of contact room and didn't find any delays in responding to priority calls. The force has strong arrangements to oversee all aspects of performance in the first point of contact room. It proactively identifies and resolves problems to ensure an effective service for the public.

Officers attending incidents complete a Public Protection Notice (PPN) for all cases involving vulnerable people. The PPN includes a [domestic abuse, stalking and harassment \(DASH\) risk assessment form](#). This is a national risk-assessment tool that is used for reports of domestic abuse.

We found all officers completed a DASH for domestic abuse reports. However, data given by the force during fieldwork shows a current completion rate of 89 percent. The force has found a problem with its IT systems, which are under-recording how often staff complete DASH forms. The force is now checking this manually while working on an IT solution.

Officers are using [body-worn video](#) for domestic abuse incidents. This meets an area for improvement from our last inspection. Officers at domestic abuse incidents identify risk relating to other vulnerable people in the household. This is included in the DASH.

A mental health triage team, which the police and crime commissioner funds, has worked in the first point of contact room since January 2018. The team works every day between 8am and 2am.

The team's main role is to give information and support to officers dealing with mental health incidents, helping with assessments, delivering training and awareness, and speaking to callers if needed.

The force has commissioned an academic evaluation of this approach. Early findings show an improved response to mental health situations, increased access to mental health care for people in crisis and less need for using [section 136 of the Mental Health Act 1983](#).

It also found readily available advice improves officers' knowledge and confidence when responding. This creates a more informed and appropriate response.

We found officers appreciate the importance of safeguarding vulnerable people when considering how to deal with suspects. The force has focused on raising awareness of this since the last inspection.

The force understands this is particularly the case when deciding whether to arrest or to use [voluntary attendance](#) for suspects. Voluntary attendance is a police station interview when a suspect volunteers to help with an investigation but isn't arrested.

To protect vulnerable victims, officers will make arrests when appropriate according to the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984. The arrest rate for domestic abuse in Gwent Police for the 12 months to 31 March 2019 is 28 percent. This is in line with the England and Wales rate. This was an area for improvement from our last inspection, which the force has met.

Supporting vulnerable victims

The force is good at supporting vulnerable victims. We found that neighbourhood teams are involved in the ongoing safeguarding of vulnerable victims at standard and medium risk of harm. The domestic abuse safeguarding team (DAST) manages high-risk victims. It is responsible for overseeing the force's response to domestic abuse.

The force has improved its use of legal powers to protect victims of domestic abuse since our last inspection. This is an area for improvement that the force has met. These legal powers include [Domestic Violence Protection Notices or Orders](#) and [Clare's Law](#). The DAST oversees these orders. The force uses pre-charge bail appropriately. This is discussed further in the 'Investigating crime' section of this report.

The force has arrangements to work with partner organisations to keep people safe. It has a multi-agency missing children's team, which includes all partner organisations. There is also a pilot [multi-agency safeguarding hub](#) project in Newport. This doesn't yet include all partner organisations.

A new pilot has just started in Blaenau Gwent as part of the Early Action Together (EAT) programme. It aims to improve multi-agency understanding and interventions with children suffering adverse childhood experiences.

The pilot is assessing public protection notices that don't meet the usual threshold for referring to social services and redirecting children and families to other interventions. This means more people will get support.

Gwent Police shares information with schools as part of [Operation Encompass](#). It tells schools before 9am if pupils have been affected by abuse at home in the previous 24 hours.

The central referral unit manages most information sharing with partners. We found no backlogs, but the staffing levels in the unit are becoming challenging.

The force has been working hard to set up multi-agency arrangements with its partners and promote the positive benefits for everyone. We found no issues with the current arrangements. But they are complex and vary depending on place and types of vulnerability involved. The force and partners would benefit from some mapping work to ensure everyone is clear on the arrangements.

The force refers all high-risk domestic abuse cases to a [multi-agency risk assessment conference](#) (MARAC). There are five MARACs, one for each local authority area. The force's referral rate is lower than the SafeLives recommended level. Our last inspection found that not all high-risk domestic abuse cases were referred to a MARAC. The force has changed its processes. The DAST team now manages this, and this area for improvement has been met.

The force seeks feedback from victims of domestic abuse. Findings from its 2018 survey showed that 79 percent of respondents were either completely or very satisfied with the service from Gwent Police. A further 11 percent were fairly satisfied, leading to a 90 percent satisfaction rate with the Gwent Police service.

During our last inspection, we found the force was not routinely getting feedback from victims of domestic abuse, including those who don't support police action. The force is now doing this and this area for improvement has been met.

The force has improved its approach to managing offenders who are known to be a risk to vulnerable people. It has reduced the number of registered sex offenders awaiting assessment since the last inspection. It uses the [Active Risk Management System](#) assessment tool. This was an area for improvement from our last inspection, which the force has met.

The force's [management of sexual offenders and violent offenders](#) team oversees and monitors the use of preventative orders. The team enforces these orders when breaches are detected. There were four breaches of [Sexual Harm Prevention Orders](#) in 2017/18 and seven in 2018/19. This shows the force is scrutinising this type of offender more.

Neighbourhood teams are aware of the sex offenders living in their area. That is because the force uses alerts on its IT system to quickly identify addresses connected to registered sex offenders. This means officers attending apparently unrelated incidents at these addresses know about offenders. So they are able to make better decisions.

The force is effective in its approach to identifying people sharing indecent images of children online. It has a proactive approach to reducing this threat.

Tackling serious and organised crime



Good

Gwent Police is good at tackling SOC. The force takes a proactive approach to understanding SOC threats, including newer threats.

Neighbourhood teams' awareness of organised crime groups (OCGs) varied. So they may not be reliably identifying people at risk of becoming involved in these groups, collecting intelligence and disrupting their activity.

The force has benefited from being part of the Home Office's SOC pilot programme. It has developed several initiatives along with partners to identify and divert those at risk of being drawn into SOC.

The force is managing organised criminals in prison, but not consistently.

Gwent Police regularly publicises examples of when it disrupts organised crime and the impact it has on the community.

The force has built good working relationships with partners. It proactively shares information when planning any disruption activity. This ensures safeguarding arrangements can be put in place.

Gwent Police can show a positive and significant impact on SOC because of its work.

Areas for improvement

- The force should improve the awareness of organised crime groups among neighbourhood teams to ensure that they can reliably identify these groups, collect intelligence and disrupt their activity. Neighbourhood teams should also recognise their role in identifying those at risk of being drawn into serious and organised crime.
- The force should enhance its approach to the 'lifetime management' of organised criminals to minimise the risk they pose to local communities. This approach should include routine consideration of ancillary orders, the powers of other organisations and other tools to deter organised criminals from continuing to offend.

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

Understanding threats

Gwent Police is good at understanding threats from SOC. The force takes a proactive approach in understanding threats, including newer threats. It has a strategic assessment, built on a [Management of Risk in Law Enforcement](#) (MoRILE) threat assessment matrix, which the force updates every year. The force has identified three SOC areas as priorities. These are:

- [county lines](#) and illegal drugs;
- modern day slavery and human trafficking; and
- cyber crime.

Strengthening the force's response to drug-dealing networks using county lines was an area for improvement from the last time we inspected this question, which the force has now met.

The force recognises in its [force management statement](#) (FMS) that Gwent has significant issues with Class A drug misuse centred on Newport. It goes on to say that the force has largely avoided attention from county lines groups when compared with neighbouring areas. But the force should ensure it fully understands how county lines starting in Gwent affect other forces and prioritise according to risk.

Also, the force should ensure that county lines are [mapped as OCGs](#), where appropriate, and managed as such.

The force has produced [local SOC profiles](#) for each local authority area. The profiles bring together data about SOC. The force and partner organisations can then work together to address it. The profiles include police and some partnership data identifying key threats. For example, information on drug use and health data on serious violence. But the force acknowledges that this could be improved and is working closely with partner organisations to identify data to develop the profiles.

The profiles are updated every quarter. This was an area for improvement from the last time we inspected this question, which the force has met. To continue to drive partnership working the force should use local profiles to develop a partnership action plan to encourage activity at local partnership meetings.

The force uses a range of intelligence sources to increase its understanding of SOC. This includes intelligence collected by internal departments such as neighbourhood officers and the modern day slavery and child sexual exploitation teams.

It also uses intelligence from key partners such as the [regional organised crime unit](#) (ROCU) and local partnership boards. The force has identified some gaps in its intelligence, which it needs to develop. They include developing its capacity around financial investigations and improving intelligence on people at risk of child sexual exploitation.

We found that most neighbourhood officers are generally aware of organised crime and what to look for. They will provide intelligence on potential SOC activity, which is reviewed at force intelligence meetings. The force needs to continue to raise neighbourhood officers' awareness, so they can help identify SOC in their areas.

Once the force has identified OCGs, it scores them using the MoRiLE system. At the time of inspection, Gwent Police was managing 22 OCGs and working closely with the region to monitor their activity. The force has mapped 37.2 OCGs per million head of population. That is slightly higher than the England and Wales rate.

Serious and organised crime prevention

Gwent Police is good at preventing SOC. The force has benefited from being part of the Home Office's SOC pilot programme. It has developed several initiatives to identify and divert people at risk of being drawn into SOC. These include:

- identifying children most at risk of being drawn into SOC and working with partner organisations to ensure they are diverted from it using mentors and peer support;
- working with education and social services to ensure children who live with family members involved in organised crime get support when action is taken against organised criminals at their home addresses. The force is also using clinical psychologists to ensure children have professional support and to minimise traumatic experiences; and
- working with a voluntary organisation with experience of gang culture to give training in secondary schools in Newport about SOC.

The force needs to ensure that frontline officers have a better understanding of identifying and preventing people at risk of being drawn into SOC. The force has worked hard to educate partners about prevention; now it needs to better educate its own workforce.

The force has not identified any active gangs in its area, so it hasn't considered any tactics to reduce or disrupt this type of criminal activity. But we found there was evidence of gang activity on the edge of some OCGs. The force should review this area to ensure it doesn't miss disruption opportunities.

The ROCU leads the management of organised criminals in prison. When appropriate, the force monitors their activity, such as movements between prisons and preparation for release. But we found that this is being done on a case-by-case basis. It wasn't consistent and wasn't part of the force's offender management teams' duties. Some of the workforce were unclear whose responsibility it was to monitor organised criminals' activity in prison.

The force uses [Serious Crime Prevention Orders](#) to prevent organised criminals from offending after being released from prison. They are monitored in each local policing area through the force's tasking process. For example, they are included on bulletins for officers. But the force could improve the level of direction it gives officers on what they should be doing with the tasking information.

The force brings together its SOC work under the name Operation Jigsaw. The force proactively and regularly publicises how it disrupts organised crime and the impact it has on the community. It uses social media not just to publicise operations and actions, but to connect with the community for feedback, intelligence and partnership working.

The force commissioned a private sector company to understand what the community needs to increase resilience in an area with SOC. It has trained officers, partner organisations and members of the community. It has also brought local Newport communities together to identify issues in the area, highlight positive aspects and find practical ways to solve problems. This process has helped the community be more resilient.

Disruption and investigation

Gwent Police is good at disrupting and investigating SOC. The force prioritises activity aimed at tackling SOC through a structured process. This includes the ROCU and partner organisations such as the local authority. It is using [organised crime group mapping](#) and other analysis alongside professional judgment to make decisions about its priorities.

The force has a SOC partnership meeting structure in place – one for each local authority area. Some are more established than others. For instance, in Newport, the force has worked hard to build good working relationships with partner organisations. There is also proactive information sharing when planning disruption activity.

In most parts of the force, partner organisations contribute to the organised crime agenda, with evidence of intelligence being shared between agencies. Tactical and operational actions are assigned to different agency representatives to develop intelligence and do enforcement activity.

The [lead responsible officers](#) have a manageable organised crime caseload. They have received training and the head of SOC holds them to account.

Lead responsible officers have up-to-date plans covering the [4Ps](#) (pursue, prevent, protect and prepare). However, some of the 4P plans varied in consistency and could be improved. Lead officers consider a range of tactics to disrupt and dismantle OCGs. They can get support from the ROCU and other partners such as Trading Standards and HM Revenue & Customs.

The force allocates financial investigators to each OCG. They find opportunities to disrupt criminals benefiting financially from crime with the ROCU.

Neighbourhood officers get involved in disrupting OCGs. But the approach is inconsistent and could be strengthened across the force.

The force shows a positive and significant impact on SOC across the 4Ps through its actions. It uses MoRILE to reassess threats after it carries out disruption activity. This was an area for improvement from the last time this question was inspected, which the force has now met.

For example, Operation Divide tackled a Class A drug supply operation across Newport, which led to the force taking enforcement action. It involved collaboration with partners including HM Revenue & Customs, social services, HM Prison and Probation Service and Newport City Homes. It demonstrates how the force carries out a review of SOC investigations and tactics with partner organisations. Doing this encourages learning and helps share good practice so that partner organisations and the force can support this kind of operation in the future.

The force would benefit from doing a comprehensive analysis of the impact on long-term disruption and how organised crime is changing. It could then predict how this may affect its tactics, and communities, in the future. The force records disruptions in line with national guidelines. It has recorded 11.5 disruptions per OCG, which is much higher than the England and Wales rate of 3.0.

Armed policing

We have previously inspected how well forces provide armed policing. 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 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 OCGs 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

Gwent Police operates joint arrangements with Dyfed-Powys Police and South Wales Police to provide armed policing. This means that the standards of training, armed deployments and command of armed operations are assured in all three forces.

The force 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. There are different standards for each role that armed officers perform. The majority of armed incidents in Gwent Police's area are attended by officers trained to an [armed response vehicle](#) standard. However, incidents sometimes occur that require the skills and specialist capabilities of more highly trained officers.

The availability of specialist officers in the Gwent Police area, in addition to the support available from Dyfed-Powys Police and South Wales Police, mean that the force has enough specialist capability. The force's capabilities align well with the threats and risks identified in its APSTRA.

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.

This is an area where Gwent Police performs well. Close working between the three Welsh forces means that armed officers can deploy quickly and efficiently in the region.

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

The joint firearms unit regularly debriefs incidents attended by armed officers. It has recently introduced an incident debrief and lessons learnt process that identifies themes and good practice and which is shared with the unit.

Efficiency



Force in context

	Gwent spend	England and Wales spend
Spend per head of population		
2019/20 projection	£213	£203

Spend per head of population by category

2019/20 projection

	Gwent spend	England and Wales spend
Visible frontline	£78	£68
Non-visible frontline	£65	£66
Frontline Support	£12	£17
Business support	£51	£45
Other	£8	£8

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



Good

Summary

Gwent Police is good at planning for the future and has used a wide range of information to understand future demand. It has used software to inform its future predictions. This links to its [FMS](#), which it uses to test its predictions and build a better picture of gaps in future policing.

The force is improving its understanding of what the public expects, which will help it plan for future demand.

The force is good at prioritising resources, and adapting them to meet demand.

The force has predicted future retirements and staff increases. But it needs to consider changing requirements to ensure its workforce has the right skills for the future.

The force has a comprehensive [medium-term financial plan](#) (MTFP). This includes the longer-term financial issues facing the police service in Gwent.

The force's plans for future joint working and collaboration are ambitious and based on a clear understanding of the benefits. Collaborative working has increased efficiency and created savings.

In 2017, we judged that the force's approach to meeting current demand and using resources was good. We have carried over our judgment from the 2017 efficiency inspection.

Meeting current demands and using resources



Good

This question was not subject to detailed inspection in 2018/19, and our judgment from the 2017 efficiency inspection has been carried over.

However, Gwent Police had two areas for improvement in our 2017 efficiency inspection. These were:

- The force should develop a plan to recover non-emergency abandoned calls. This has been addressed.
- The force should conduct a leadership skills audit that will allow it to understand leadership capacity and capability. This is in progress.

Planning for the future



Good

Gwent Police is good at planning for the future.

The force has used a wide range of information to understand future demand. It has used software to inform its future predictions linked to the FMS. It uses this to test its predictions and build a better picture of gaps in future policing.

The force understands what the public currently wants from it. It is less clear about future public expectations and how it can use them to plan for the future.

The force is good at prioritising its resources. It allocates resources to meet the [police and crime commissioner](#)'s vision and objectives. For example, the force's people plan aims to help the force respond to changing demands and challenges as effectively as possible.

The force has predicted future retirements and staff increases. But it needs to consider changing requirements to ensure the workforce has the right skills for the future.

The force has a comprehensive MTFP, which also includes the longer-term financial issues facing the police service in Gwent.

The force's plans for future joint working and collaboration are ambitious and based on a clear understanding of the benefits. Collaborative working has increased efficiency and generated savings.

Areas for improvement

- The force needs to ensure that public expectations form part of future planning.

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

Assessing future demand for services

The force is good at assessing its future demand.

The Gwent Police Strategic Intelligence Assessment 2018/19 found the potential for significant future public order demand in the medium to short term. For example, increased future demand in respect of non-domestic violent crime and on the police online investigation team due to new technology.

The force has used a wide range of information to understand future demand for its criminal investigation department, public protection unit and first point of contact room. It identifies and assesses emerging and likely future demand for its social media desk services.

In our 2017 efficiency report, we said that Gwent Police shows a comprehensive understanding of the demand for its services. We reported that the force uses a range of ways to monitor trends in demand and its own effectiveness and efficiency in meeting that demand. These methods include the force's own performance framework and a commercial demand modelling software package.

In 2019, we found that the force has a good relationship with the specialist company working with it on its demand modelling software. The force now has in-house skills and the company provides five consultancy days each year to support the force.

Informed by its modelling work, the force predicts change over the next three to five years. For example, it assessed the work of police constables and police community support officers (PCSOs) in neighbourhood teams. It then connected their activities to neighbourhood policing priorities to make sure staff are being used effectively. The force also analyses demographic data to ensure neighbourhood resources are in the right places.

The force connects its modelling work to its FMS. Doing this means it identifies likely future effects and factors them into the modelling. One example is the changes in custody provision (the opening of the Ystrad Mynach custody unit) to understand the impact on response officers of matters such as travelling time. The impact of the FFF project (the Fixed, Flexible, Field IT programme for laptops and mobile phones) has also been modelled. As a result, the force made changes to its use of NICHE technology and simplified the forms it uses.

The FMS shows a good understanding of future demand and that the force comprehensively considers its issues. It highlights opportunities for technology to assess future demand. The force knows technology (such as cyber crime) will drive future demand, but it hasn't fully analysed this yet.

The force has worked well with partners to assess demand. It is building an evidence-based approach to ensure benefits and outcomes are clear. For example, academics are evaluating its Early Action Together programme, referred to in the Vulnerability section of this report, which is being academically evaluated. This builds evidence and helps measure success.

Gwent Police has learned a lot from the FMS process. The first version involved business leads and used wide-ranging data. The second used the first to test predictions and build a better picture of gaps in future provision. The force wants to turn the FMS into a living document. It recognises the statement has helped increase its understanding of demand and the future of the force.

Understanding public expectations

The force understands what the public currently wants from it. It is less clear about future public expectations and how this can be used for future planning.

The force has changed how it works with communities to set police priorities. Using online surveys through Twitter, the force is asking communities directly what they want from Gwent Police. This information can help predict demand in specific communities. More detail on this work is included in the Treating the public fairly section of this report.

The force and the police and crime commissioner have a joint engagement and communications strategy (2018–22). It sets out how the force wants to communicate and engage with communities and interested parties. It explains key objectives for engagement and communication over the coming years in line with the police and crime priorities for Gwent, these objectives are:

- empowering local residents to make communities safer;
- informing communities of action taken;
- involving communities in shaping policing services; and
- consulting the public to inform strategic decision making.

The social media desk gives the public another way to contact the force. It has run surveys to understand the views of people who did this between December 2018 and May 2019. Most thought the service was good and a helpful and worthwhile resource, which provided quick responses and allowed police to easily gather digital evidence.

Prioritising

The force is good at prioritising its resources. The police and crime commissioner's vision is that the people of Gwent have confidence in their crime and policing services, which makes them feel safe in their communities.

The five-year Gwent police and crime plan is reviewed jointly every year to ensure it aligns with the force's strategic and financial planning process. It is also updated during the year. The force considers the priorities in the plan when setting budgets and taking action.

The current plan includes priorities like tackling [SOC](#), addressing cyber-enabled and cyber-dependent criminality and protecting people made [vulnerable](#) by criminal and sexual exploitation. The force reflects these in its budget proposals.

The force allocates resources to meet the police and crime commissioner's vision and objectives. For example, the force's people plan aims to help the force respond to changing demands and challenges as effectively as possible. The force is making sure it has the specialist capabilities needed to tackle more complex crimes, such as sexual offences and online crime.

It is too early to judge how well the force's plans take into account public expectations. The force has only recently gathered this information.

Future workforce

The force is adapting its future workforce needs. For example, the force has changed job descriptions for the first point of contact room. They now reflect future skills, including using social media, not just the phone.

The force has also redesigned workforce and training plans to ensure first point of contact room staff have the skills and capabilities to meet demand and improve service. The force has predicted future retirements, staff increases and the budget at all levels until 2023/24.

Key to delivering the workforce requirements is the People Plan 2019–2022. The priority areas are:

- embed a learning culture;
- take a structured approach to leadership and talent development;
- provide the knowledge, skills and processes needed to do a great job;
- ensure effective, fair and robust recruitment, selection and retention;
- develop strategies and structures that can deliver Policing Vision 2025; and
- communicate a clear vision for the future.

The force recruits from outside and actively encourages transferees from other police forces. It also has a [direct entry](#) inspector. The force aspires to be a policing service that looks and feels like Gwent. It wants to be able to change its blend of skills rapidly as criminals find new ways to commit crime.

The force is aiming to have a new employment framework to ensure it can attract, develop, deploy, retain, lead and reward the workforce best able to represent and serve the public. It feels its current employment model needs to offer better value for money and direct investment into areas where it will have greatest impact.

Finance plans

Force plans take account of future funding and spending. The MTFP is the key document that forecasts the financial impact of future demand on the force. It is a rolling forecast giving five years of revenue income and spending projections.

The police and crime commissioner sets out a five-year capital programme that projects income (grants and sales proceeds) and spending on capital items (for example, police cars). While developing proposals for a balanced revenue budget and affordable capital programme, the MTFP includes longer-term financial issues facing the police service. This includes the wider portfolio of what the police and crime commissioner will be spending money on.

Plans make provision for the potential future financial challenges from the review of the police funding formula. From 2021/22 to 2023/24, the MTFP includes plans for £6m less funding, based on its understanding of what the new formula might be. The current MTFP also reflects the flat cash position of the police settlement and a 6.99 percent increase in the council tax precept. The MTFP takes into account planned efficiency savings, identified cost pressures including increased pension costs, and inflationary increases for both pay and non-pay costs. It shows a deficit before future years' service improvement schemes of £184,000 rising to £10.955m in 2022/23.

For Gwent, the estimated increase in police officer employer pension contributions will be £3.255m. The expected central government grant funding will be £1.501m (Gwent's share of £146m) and £1.325m (Gwent's share of £143m), resulting in a shortfall to fund pensions in 2019/20 of around £0.429m. This shortfall will be met from a contribution from the police and crime commissioner's [reserves](#) and committed funds and not from council tax precept. This issue is further compounded by whether the Specific Pension Grant will be recurrently provided from 2020/21 onwards to meet the recurrent pension costs.

The police and crime commissioner sets reserves based on the forecast outturn for the current year, the projected MTFP and capital programme. The force must meet gaps in the budget by being more efficient.

Gwent Police has sufficient reserves and has made savings. The force had a previous area for improvement around ensuring it had adequate plans in place while also making savings. This has now been met.

The police and crime commissioner's and force reserves have risen by £17.68m in cash terms since 2011/12. In real terms, they have increased by £13.7m. This increase is mainly due to the force's 'staying ahead' programme.

This has helped the force achieve difficult savings ahead of time. It has also generated extra reserves to help redesign the estate (for example, buildings) and introduce new initiatives.

As at 31 March 2018, the total usable reserves of £57.7m represent 45.9 percent of the net cost of services compared with the all-Wales average of 19.1 percent. This includes £12.2m committed to funding future spending on the site at Ystrad Mynach. A further £14.7m will also fund replacing the current police headquarters at Croesyceiliog, Cwmbran. Carrying out the current capital programme (building new headquarters) will require the continuation of a recurrent revenue contribution to capital of £2.6m, use of reserves and committed funds. It will also need significant borrowing (£38.2m to 2022/23) to fund the programme's requirements.

This will create long-term cashable and non-cashable benefits. These include appropriate and more sustainable estate provision and a fit-for-purpose fleet while maximising returns on ICT investment. The force forecasts reserves will reduce to £9.7m over the five-year forecasting period.

The force's financial planning includes all known future possibilities with contingencies depending on what happens. Since 2015, the force has made £7m savings, which has been reinvested in police numbers and cost-saving projects.

The £6m deficit is covered by the assumption of needing £6m to cover the potential changes to the funding formula. Savings of £1.7m are included for 2019/20 with £1.5m from the operating model (overtime, reviews of service areas and cashable efficiencies) and £200,000 from procurement. The force may need to use reserves and is discussing this with the police and crime commissioner, although if the UK Government pays the pensions costs, this will not be needed. The most recent version of the MTFP shows a much smaller projected deficit with increased savings.

Leadership and workforce development

The force has done a thorough assessment of future workforce demand.

This is clearly explained in the force's People Plan 2019–2022. The plan links with the national Policing Vision 2025, is fully costed and done in collaboration with an outside business partner. It shows how the force thinks its service provision and the workforce can respond to forecasted demand.

For example, the force has identified the need for a more diverse workforce reflecting the local community. So it has put in place recruitment initiatives aimed at attracting more black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME), lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) and female staff.

The force is an early adopter of the Policing Education Qualification Framework. It recognises the benefits of a workforce linked to the higher education community, where previously people may not have considered a career in the police.

The workforce is young. So the force has several initiatives to find future leaders and retain experienced officers/[staff](#) near retirement. It has also done an analysis of leadership skills, which has spotted gaps in business skills in senior leadership.

The force has done an internal skills and capability gap analysis of chief inspecting ranks, equivalent police staff grades and above. This has identified gaps such as experienced investigators and specialist roles such as [occupational health](#) practitioners.

It has done work to address some of these early findings. One example is the tri-party occupational health collaboration with South Wales Police and the South Wales Fire and Rescue Service.

Gwent Police is considering recruiting police staff investigators. However, the force has not yet matched the outcome of the analysis with role requirements to better understand gaps, succession planning and training requirements. The force did gap

analysis for all other ranks as part of its workforce planning and profiling of age/retirement/skills exercise.

The force uses outside scrutiny to assess candidates from inside the force. Selection and promotion processes include representatives from staff associations. The [College of Policing](#) and an NHS chief executive officer were involved in recent [chief officer](#) group selection panels.

Outside psychometric testing (psychological measurement) is also part of the process. During the inspection, senior managers were very positive about outside scrutiny on panels.

The force has a talent management process allowing line managers and peers to nominate talented people. It has run at least two talent management programmes.

This is a ten-month development programme to develop personal skills and isn't focused on promotion. The workforce values the process and sees it as fair. The force has also had several officers take the police constable-to-inspector [fast track](#) scheme.

Ambition to improve

The force's plans for future joint working and collaboration are ambitious and based on a clear understanding of the benefits. Collaborative working has increased efficiency and generated savings. Through the all-Wales collaboration, the force developed a single e-recruitment system, a joint recruitment assessment centre and shared training programmes. The new process has reduced application timescales and achieved contract cost savings.

The force is collaborating with South Wales Police to provide mobile IT devices to the workforce. This is providing service improvements and efficiencies.

Since summer 2018, the joint digital services division has focused on giving frontline officers mobile phones and laptops. This allows them to access all police systems. The force is evaluating the project and producing a business benefit report examining business improvements across several areas.

The evaluation shows staff are using laptops more and mobile phones less. Benefits include increased productivity, and officers are more visible to the public because they don't need to return to their stations to use IT systems.

The force has ambitious plans for future joint working and collaboration. It is strongly committed to working with South Wales Police and the other Welsh forces around technology.

This aim to build services across both forces has grown over time. The force now wants to work together and develop shared support functions.

There is a clear shared commitment to bringing together IT resources across Gwent and South Wales forces. This is supported by a joint digital services division and a joint strategy bringing IT together and ensuring forces use the same systems.

Both forces have a future ambition to have shared cloud-based resources across both organisations.

Legitimacy



Force in context

Comparison of Gwent workforce ethnicity with local population

as of 31 March 2019

	Gwent proportion	Local population proportion
Black, Asian and minority ethnic as % of those with stated ethnicity	2.3%	3.9%
White as % of those with stated ethnicity	97.7%	96.1%
Not Stated as % of total	2.9%	

	Gwent proportion	England and Wales proportion
Proportion of female officers in post as of 31st March 2019	34%	30%

Stop and search by ethnicity

12 months ending 31 March 2019

Gwent
disproportionality

**Stop and Search likelihood of
BAME individuals compared to
white individuals**

4.9

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

9.0

Gwent
rate

**Number of stops and searches
per 1,000 population**

12 months ending 31 March 2019

4.3

England and Wales
rate

6.4

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



Requires improvement

Summary

Gwent Police requires improvement at treating the public fairly and on behaving ethically and lawfully. It is good at treating the workforce fairly.

The force recognises the importance of working closely with communities. Officers and [staff](#) understand how important it is to treat people with fairness and respect. However, frontline officers and staff varied in their knowledge of [unconscious bias](#).

The workforce understands how and when to use force and stop and search. The force needs to improve how it monitors the use of stop and search and use of force.

Gwent Police needs to do more to ensure all members of its workforce are appropriately vetted for the posts they hold. It also needs to monitor people who apply to see if they belong to certain protected minority groups.

The force needs to improve how it spots and manages risk of corruption. It also needs to make sure it has enough people and resources to do this work.

Gwent Police is good at treating its workforce fairly. This question was not subject to detailed inspection in 2018/19, and our judgment from the 2017 legitimacy inspection has been carried over.

Treating the public fairly



Requires improvement

Gwent Police requires improvement at treating the public fairly.

The workforce recognises the importance of working closely with communities. Leaders are committed to treating the public with fairness and respect.

Gwent Police has several different ways it engages with the public, like through social media, outreach work and attending community events.

The workforce understands the importance of treating people with fairness and respect. However, frontline officers and staff varied in their knowledge of unconscious bias.

The workforce understands how and when to use force and the [powers of stop and search](#). But Gwent Police needs to improve how it monitors use of these powers. More data and information would help. Good monitoring will help the force identify and understand trends and unfairness. Then it can reassure any community or group that they will get fair treatment.

The force has arrangements in place for external scrutiny of use of force and stop and search.

Areas for improvement

- The force should ensure that appropriate members of its workforce receive training in, and understand, unconscious bias.
- The force should ensure it monitors a comprehensive set of data on its use of force to enhance its understanding of fair and effective use of this power.
- The force should ensure it monitors a comprehensive set of data on its use of stop and search to enhance its understanding of fair and effective use of these powers.

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

Treating people fairly and respectfully

Force leaders are good at understanding the importance of engaging with the people they serve and treating them with fairness and respect. There is a joint engagement and communications strategy between the force and the [police and crime commissioner](#). This sets out how they intend to communicate and engage with communities and key interested parties. This is covered in the 'Planning for the future' section of this report.

Force policies and procedures explain the importance of fair decision making and treating the public with respect. Training for officers and staff also reinforces the importance of fair decision making.

Gwent Police has several different channels it uses to engage with the public. Social media provides an alternative way for people to contact the force. A positive action outreach worker does engagement activities with diverse communities in Gwent. This include activities with BAME elders' groups and people in places of worship, colleges, local authorities and sports clubs.

The force has also engaged with community partners. For example, officers joined a We Are Wales interfaith event. At the event, the force asked for feedback on what deters victims of hate crime from reporting it.

Gwent Police is keen to hear from residents about the issues they would like to see prioritised where they live. In May 2019, the neighbourhood teams in each local authority area sent out a short survey on social media. The survey asked for residents' views on their top policing priority. Links were also posted on partner organisations' websites.

A total of 1,378 people took part in the survey and 140 said they wanted to work with police and partner organisations to manage their own community issues. Priorities varied for each local authority area. Each priority will be addressed through the newly formed community safety partnership in each of the five local authority areas.

The force encourages local people to get involved in local crime prevention. Gwent Police has continued to expand its focus around the citizens in policing programme. The force has police cadets actively working with local policing teams in Gwent communities. There are mini-police schemes in schools (aimed at 9–11 year olds) where the force is building trust and resilience in some of its most deprived primary schools.

Some officers we spoke to understood unconscious bias and the importance of effective communication skills when working with the public. This understanding varied across the force.

The force has given training to officers on unconscious bias. But it seems not to have had the impact the force hoped. It is also unclear if appropriate staff have received training. This is an area that needs to be addressed. The force needs to assure itself as to who has been trained and then be assured officers and staff understand the importance of making fair and impartial decisions when working with the public.

Using force

Gwent Police needs to improve the extent to which it understands how force is being used.

Gwent Police gives training and guidance on the use of force. Most officers and staff understand how to use it fairly. Since our 2017 inspection, there has been a significant drive to ensure officers are completing use of force forms. There has been a significant improvement in compliance.

This information complies with [National Police Chiefs' Council](#) (NPCC) recording standards, and the force submits relevant data in line with national requirements. This was an area for improvement in our last inspection, which the force has met.

While some local supervision takes place, this is limited and there is reliance on central monitoring as to whether staff complete use of force forms. The force is in the process of moving this responsibility back to local supervisors. This should ensure officers get feedback on their use of force, rather than just on whether they have completed the form correctly.

The force considers use of force at the quarterly operational tactics meeting chaired by a superintendent. The meeting considers how often force is used, the age of the person involved and the types of force used, along with injuries to officers, any complaints received and (more recently) ethnicity. However, this information is not detailed or broken down so the force can get a thorough understanding of how force is used.

There was no evidence of the meeting conducting a review of officers and teams who frequently use force, or of injury rates. Therefore the force is not systematically monitoring or managing the appropriate and inappropriate use of force.

The force is aware that it needs to improve how it monitors use of force. So far, its focus has been on changing the meeting structure. It also needs to develop more comprehensive data and information to consider at the meeting.

The quarterly legitimacy scrutiny panel gives the force external scrutiny on use of force and stop and search. It is co-ordinated by the office of the police and crime commissioner and considers use of force and stop and search at alternate meetings. Members are independent and drawn from the force's [independent advisory group](#) and [ethics committee](#). They represent a diverse range of the community and have appropriate training to carry out their role.

For the first part of the meeting, they review [body-worn video](#) for the use of force or stop and search encounters along with the relevant form. In the second part, they review all forms and a report summarising the use of force or stop and search. This report could be expanded to include similar information that we recommend is considered at the force's internal meetings.

They then give feedback to the force through a report. The report is considered at various internal groups and published on the police and crime commissioner's website.

External scrutiny of stop and search and viewing body-worn video were areas of improvement for the force in the last inspection, which the force has met. The force publishes an infographic on use of force on its website, featuring key data.

Using stop and search powers

Gwent Police needs to improve the extent to which it understands how stop and search powers are being used.

We found that the workforce understands the ethical use of stop and search and, in the main, supervision is taking place. The force has provided training to ensure officers understand how to use the power fairly and respectfully. This was an area for improvement in our last inspection, which the force has met.

We reviewed a representative sample of 345 stop and search records to assess the reasonableness of the recorded grounds. We found that 77 percent of those records contained reasonable grounds. Our assessment is based on the grounds recorded by the searching officer and not the grounds that existed at the time of the search.

Monitoring of stop and search is similar to use of force. It is considered at the operational tactics meeting. The monthly equality and diversity group (chaired by the head of equality and diversity) also considers ethnicity.

These meetings consider a range of data and information such as volume, purpose, object and outcome of searches by age and ethnicity. They also consider how the force monitors complaints. But the data is not comprehensive and the force may be missing opportunities to understand how stop and search is being used, or if it is being used effectively and fairly.

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 force 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). Also, it isn't clear that it 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. The force has carried out some recent work to understand disproportionality in its stop and searches, but it lacked detailed analysis. We reviewed the force's website and found no reference to analysis carried out to understand and explain the reasons for disparities or any subsequent action taken.

The force is aware that it needs to improve the monitoring of stop and search. As mentioned above, it is taking action. Prior to the commencement of our inspection fieldwork, the force had taken the decision to use the operation tactics meeting to consider all aspects of stop and search in future, as it has recognised that more detailed monitoring is required.

As mentioned above, the legitimacy scrutiny panel gives external scrutiny of stop and search.

The force runs a 'ride along' scheme. This allows the public to patrol with officers to better understand how stop and search is used. The force gives feedback from the public to local teams.

In May 2019, the force attended a local leisure centre where they carried out a question and answer session on stop and search with members from the local community. Many were from a BAME background.

Ethical and lawful workforce behaviour



Requires improvement

Gwent Police requires improvement in behaving ethically and lawfully.

Gwent Police is good at maintaining an ethical culture. But it needs to do more to ensure that all members of its workforce are appropriately vetted for the posts they hold. It also needs to do more to monitor applicants to see if they belong to certain protected minority groups.

Gwent Police needs to improve how it spots and manages corruption risk. The force is not able to monitor its mobile devices. Doing so will help the force make sure that the workforce is using them appropriately.

The force needs to make sure that it has enough people and resources to assess any corruption risks from monitoring mobile devices and support people who are most at risk of falling into corrupt practices.

The workforce understands the need to declare gifts and hospitality.

Areas for improvement

- The force should ensure all staff have received at least the lowest level of vetting clearance for their roles, including those in designated posts, ensuring it is fully compliant with the national vetting guidelines.
- The force should monitor vetting decisions to identify disparities and disproportionality (e.g. BAME groups), and to reduce them where appropriate.
- The force should ensure its anti-corruption strategic threat assessment and control strategy are regularly refreshed using local and national data, and are subject to effective governance arrangements.
- The force should ensure that its counter-corruption unit:
 - has sufficient capability and capacity to gather, assess and develop information about corruption risks effectively; and
 - has full information technology monitoring to effectively protect information in its systems.

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

Maintaining an ethical culture

Gwent Police is good at maintaining an ethical culture. But it needs to do more to ensure all members of its workforce are appropriately vetted for the posts they hold.

The force's leaders promote the importance of the [Code of Ethics](#). They do this, for example, by publishing a Friday blog post on the force's intranet and by reminding

people at meetings about high standards of ethical behaviour. The force reinforces these expectations during staff training.

The force's policies and procedures incorporate the Code of Ethics. Each is assessed for its equality impact to ensure it is fair. We found that the workforce understands the importance of the Code of Ethics well.

Gwent Police has a well established ethics committee that includes representation from independent members. The workforce can refer ethical dilemmas to the committee easily using the intranet. The force makes changes as a result.

Examples include a review of uniform policy, and whether the force's mobile devices should be used for personal use. The committee also provides [chief officers](#) with its views in a report after each meeting. However, knowledge of the committee's work varied among officers and staff. The force could promote its existence more widely.

We also found that ethical discussions with supervisors did not happen consistently. Encouraging these discussions will highlight the importance of ethical decision making and support organisational learning and continuous improvement.

The force would benefit from this because it has a strong commitment to learning through experience, rather than blaming staff for mistakes. This reflects Gwent Police's open and transparent culture.

During the last inspection, we considered how much the force was developing and maintaining an ethical culture through effective initial vetting. We found that the force was not complying with all aspects of the national vetting standards.

We noted that the force has not achieved our 2016 recommendation that, within two years, all members of its workforce should have received the lowest level of vetting clearance for their roles.

This means the force is not yet fully compliant with the national Vetting [Code of Practice](#) and [authorised professional practice](#).

The force vets new recruits to the correct standards. However, it doesn't routinely ensure that people who move to different posts hold the right level of vetting clearance for their roles.

During our fieldwork, we found that 90 percent of the workforce hold the correct level of vetting for their designated posts. The force has taken steps to stop members of the workforce from moving to higher-risk posts until they are re-vetted. But there are times when people are required to do roles at short notice without having the right level of vetting clearance. Then, the force needs to use an effective risk management process authorised at a senior level that includes a clear reason for the decision.

Gwent Police doesn't routinely monitor vetting decisions to evaluate how they may affect recruiting diverse groups. This means the force is missing opportunities to identify potential disparities in its decisions relating to people from under-represented groups, such as people with BAME backgrounds. The force told us it has plans to address this.

The force complies with its obligations to provide details to the [College of Policing](#) for the barred and advisory lists. This prevents people who have left the service under investigation, or who have been dismissed, from re-joining or working in law enforcement.

Gwent Police uses effective channels for clarifying and reinforcing acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Also, for learning lessons from the causes and results of local and national misconduct cases.

The force produces a newsletter called the *Professional Standards Department Times*. It includes case studies and best practice from the [Independent Office for Police Conduct](#) (IOPC) and its own investigations.

The [professional standards department](#) gives 60-second video briefings about risks to integrity. This includes reporting requirements relating to business interests and notifiable associations, and the harm caused to [vulnerable people](#) by staff who abuse their position.

During our inspection, we tested how far the workforce appreciated these risks. We found that officers and staff clearly understood the consequences of not following the expected standards of behaviour. This shows the force's approach is effective.

Tackling corruption

Gwent Police takes steps to identify and manage internal corruption risks. However, its ability to identify and respond to these risks is restricted. That is because it can't monitor all its ICT systems and the capacity of its [counter corruption unit](#) (CCU) is limited.

The force has completed its counter-corruption strategic threat assessment and control strategy. But the strategy doesn't meet the force's needs because it leaves out information about areas of the force where corruption threats are higher.

The force would benefit from more analysis of local cases, to allow greater comparison between local and national corruption threats. Its control strategy needs to specify measures the force is taking to respond to corruption threats and who is responsible for them. More effective governance will allow the force to evaluate its progress better.

The force draws together different sources of information to assess corruption risks. It responds to them using different tactics and techniques.

For example, it does ethical interviews with officers and staff and it makes referrals to debt management agencies based on its assessment of a person's vulnerability.

The force has used information from different sources to prepare a risk matrix to identify employees most at risk of corruption. This is a new process.

The force says it will use this matrix at a tactical meeting bringing together representatives from different departments to review information and take action in a structured way. This will help it support people who are most at risk of falling into corrupt practices.

The workforce has a good understanding of the need to declare gifts and hospitality. The force has responded to a previous area for improvement by publishing the register of gifts and hospitality every quarter.

Officers and staff know they must declare business interests and reportable associations (people who might compromise their position). The professional standards department makes decisions on whether they should be authorised.

The force could be more proactive in how it monitors compliance with the above – especially those that are declined. It doesn't check for compliance routinely or consistently. Information about business interests published on the force's website also needs to be refreshed.

Gwent Police takes steps to assess and develop intelligence about corrupt behaviour. But insufficient capacity and capability in its CCU is making it less effective.

Our review of 60 case files confirmed that the force doesn't always take enough action to follow up lines of enquiry in all cases. The CCU monitors open source and telecommunications data. It is unable to monitor the use of all its ICT systems.

A software update during summer/autumn 2019 was planned to increase its ability to do this. The force is carrying out a review of the CCU's capacity and capability to find out how it can monitor all intelligence more effectively in the future.

The force promotes its whistleblowing and anonymous reporting systems to its workforce. It runs two confidential reporting systems that enable officers and staff to report wrongdoing. These are the independent Safecall service and a confidential online messaging system.

We found the workforce had confidence using these systems and saw them as anonymous. The force takes effective action to support people who report wrongdoing. It has appointed several wellbeing ambassadors who give staff extra welfare support.

Gwent Police has developed links with partner agencies that support vulnerable people, including vulnerable crime victims. Since 2017, the force has given presentations about corruption risks to agencies that support victims of domestic abuse and those supporting people with drugs and alcohol problems. But the force needs to do more to reassure itself about the effectiveness of these links. It can do this by continuing to raise awareness about the significant harm caused by officers and staff who [abuse their position for a sexual purpose](#).

The force has adopted the NPCC's strategy to respond to the problem of police officers and staff who abuse their position for a sexual purpose. It recognises this behaviour as serious corruption and refers cases to the IOPC.

The force submitted a plan in 2017 to address the 2016 national recommendation on abuse of position for a sexual purpose. But it hasn't yet met it. Issues with the CCU and monitoring ICT systems, as mentioned above, are still risk areas.

Reassuringly, the force has acted to ensure that its workforce is aware of the problem of abuse of position for a sexual purpose by providing training. It publicises cases to demonstrate how it deals effectively with this type of corrupt behaviour.

The force had one other area for improvement in 2017. This was to ensure it has force-specific literature in police stations and other public places on how to make a complaint in line with IOPC guidance. This has been met.

Treating the workforce fairly



Good

This question was not subject to detailed inspection in 2018/19, and our judgment from the 2017 legitimacy inspection has been carried over.

However, Gwent Police had three areas for improvement in the 2017 legitimacy inspection. These were:

- The force should review how high potential members of the workforce are selected for leadership development. This has been met.
- The force should take steps to ensure selection and promotion processes are transparent to improve the perception of fairness of officers and staff. This is being progressed.
- The force should continue to develop an effective system for managing individual performance to improve the perception of its value by officers and staff. This is being progressed.

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.

Most similar groups

We compare each force's crime rate with the average rate for forces in its most similar group (MSG). MSGs are groups of similar police forces, based on analysis of demographic, social and economic factors which relate to crime. We could not identify any forces similar to City of London Police. Every other force has its own group of up to seven other forces which it is most similar to.

An MSG's crime rate is the sum of the recorded crimes in all the group's forces divided by its total population. All of the most similar forces (including the force being compared) are included in calculating the MSG average.

[More information about MSGs can be found on our website.](#)

Population

For all uses of population as a denominator in our calculations, unless otherwise noted, we use ONS mid-2018 population estimates.

Survey of police workforce

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 0 and 372. 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 June and 31 August 2019 and assessed them against several criteria. We reviewed 60 case files in each force, except for West Yorkshire 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 October 2019 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 HMICFRS inspection. Therefore, 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 31 March 2019 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 2019](#).

Domestic abuse outcomes

In England and Wales, 29 police forces provide domestic abuse outcomes data through the Home Office data hub (HODH) every month. We collected this data directly from the remaining 14 forces.

Domestic abuse outcome proportions show the percentage of crimes recorded in the 12 months ending 31 March 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.

Workforce figures (including ethnicity and gender)

This data was obtained 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 2019/20 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 2019](#). Stop and search totals exclude vehicle only searches and searches where the subject's ethnicity was not stated.

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