

## Northumbria Police judged as 'good' at legitimately keeping people safe and reducing crime – HMIC

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) has assessed how legitimate Northumbria Police is at keeping people safe and reducing crime. This is the second year running HMIC has carried out inspections of this kind, which makes up part of HMIC's annual PEEL inspections.

HMIC considers a police force to be legitimate if it has the consent of the public, and if those working in the force consistently behave in a way that is fair, ethical, and within the law.

To assess this, HMIC has inspected how well forces treat the people they serve; ensure their workforce acts ethically and lawfully; and treat their workforces with fairness and respect. The findings of this inspection are included in a report, published today.

This inspection also included, for the first time, an assessment of how well forces tackle the problem of abuse of authority for sexual gain by members of its workforce. This serious form of corruption betrays the trust of the public and, while we identified some examples of good practice, there remain significant areas where forces must improve. The service needs to be more proactive in seeking out and preventing this form of corruption, and referring cases of abuse of authority to the IPCC.

HMIC found that Northumbria Police:

- uses feedback from the public to make improvements to its service;
- understands corruptive influences and has a counter-corruption control strategy to mitigate any threat posed; and
- recognises the importance of supporting the wellbeing of its staff and it has signed up to the Workplace Wellbeing Charter.

**HM Inspector of Constabulary Mike Cunningham said:**

"I have judged Northumbria Police as 'good' at how legitimately it keeps people safe and reduces crime. This is very positive, considering in 2015 we judged it as 'requires improvement'. I am pleased with the force's overall progress.

"The way in which the force seeks feedback from the public it serves is good. There has been a concerted effort to understand the issues minority groups might have with how they have been treated by the police. It has also undertaken some positive work to raise awareness of how it uses stop and search, in particular with youth and black and minority ethnic groups. This has helped break down barriers with groups who might be less likely to trust the police.

"Northumbria Police is well prepared to deal with threats to its integrity, as shown in its approach to corruption. The force has a dedicated team that monitors police systems and investigates allegations of corruption, and is able to assess all intelligence relating to possible corruptive practices, and to review it in a timely manner. It recognises the abuse of authority for sexual gain as serious corruption and a risk to the integrity of the organisation.

"Following a staff survey in 2015, the force had made positive changes to how it supports its workforce. Staff wellbeing is now central to force policy. The force has made particular efforts to raise awareness to support supervisors in identifying of mental health-related issues."

HMIC has also published individual assessments of the leadership within each police force in England and Wales. These, along with individual reports on the legitimacy of all forces in England and Wales, are available on HMIC's website.