

## Surrey Police is 'good' at legitimately keeping people safe and reducing crime - HMIC

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) has assessed how legitimate Surrey 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 Surrey Police:

- understands the importance of communicating with community groups who may have less trust in the police;
- has good systems in place to ensure that its workforce behaves ethically and lawfully; and
- in general, treats its workforce with fairness and respect but has areas where it could improve.

### **HM Inspector of Constabulary Zoë Billingham said:**

"Overall, I am pleased to report that Surrey Police has been graded as 'good' following our legitimacy inspection.

"In 2015, HMIC recommended that the force resolve more complaints locally, rather than subjecting all to a full investigation. I was pleased to find that the

force had improved in this area, and now provides quicker resolution to complaints that do not require lengthy investigations.

"We found that the force, in general, has a good approach to responding to corruption. It has instilled in its workforce an understanding of the behaviours and ethics expected of it, and has good vetting arrangements in place. There are areas that the force can improve upon however.

"We found that although the anti corruption unit prioritises instances of officers and staff abusing their authority for sexual gain (taking advantage of a position of power to exploit vulnerable victims of crime), there is more the force can do to gather intelligence. It could also ensure supervisors receive better training to identify predatory behaviour.

"The force should be commended for the investment it has made to improve wellbeing services for its staff, and provides appropriate support quickly where necessary. The force could do more to improve its personal development processes, as staff do not recognise the benefits of the current system."

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.