PEEL: Police effectiveness 2016

An inspection of Cheshire Constabulary

Contents

Introduction

As part of our annual inspections of police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy (PEEL), Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) assesses the effectiveness of police forces across England and Wales.

What is police effectiveness and why is it important?

An effective police force is one which keeps people safe and reduces crime. These are the most important responsibilities for a police force, and the principal measures by which the public judge the performance of their force and policing as a whole.

To reach a judgment on the extent of each force's effectiveness, our inspection answered the following overall question:

- How effective is the force at keeping people safe and reducing crime?

To answer this question HMIC explores five 'core' questions, which reflect those areas of policing that we consider to be of particular interest and concern to the public:[1]

1. How effective is the force at preventing crime, tackling anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe?

2. How effective is the force at investigating crime and reducing re-offending?

3. How effective is the force at protecting those who are vulnerable from harm, and supporting victims?

4. How effective is the force at tackling serious and organised crime?

5. How effective are the force's specialist capabilities?

HMIC's effectiveness inspection assessed all of these areas during 2016. More information on how we inspect and grade forces as part of this wide-ranging inspection is available on the HMIC website (www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/peel-assessments/how-we-inspect/). This report sets out our findings for Cheshire Constabulary.

Reports on the force's efficiency, legitimacy and leadership inspections are available on the HMIC website (www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/peel-assessments/peel-2016/cheshire/).

---

[1] HMIC assessed forces against these questions between September and December 2016, except for Kent Police – our pilot force – which we inspected in June 2016.

Force in numbers

Calls for assistance

Calls for assistance per 1,000 population 12 months to 30 June 2016

Cheshire Constabulary	England and Wales
239	240
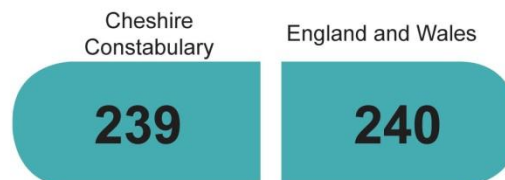
Crime (excluding fraud)

Crimes recorded per 1,000 population 12 months to 30 June 2016

Cheshire Constabulary	England and Wales
51	68
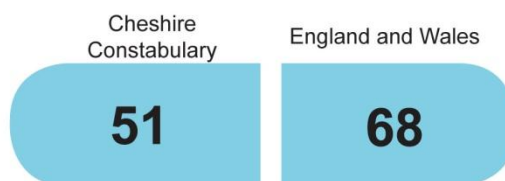
Change in recorded crime 12 months to 30 June 2015 against 12 months to 30 June 2016

Cheshire Constabulary	England and Wales
+0.1%	+7.8%
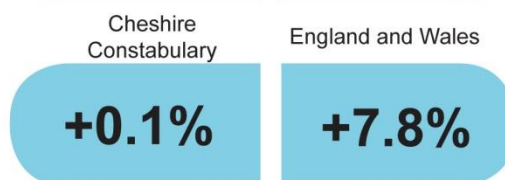
Change in recorded crime for the 5 years to the 12 months to 30 June 2016

Cheshire Constabulary	England and Wales
-13.6%	-3.4%
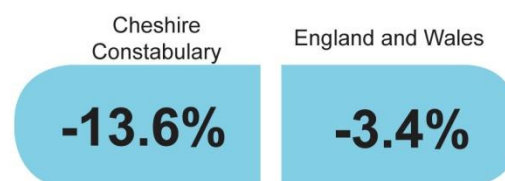
Crime outcomes*

Charged/summonsed

Cheshire Constabulary	England and Wales
19.9%	12.1%

Evidential difficulties: suspect identified but victim does not support action

Cheshire Constabulary	England and Wales
12.6%	10.6%

Investigation completed but no suspect identified

Cheshire Constabulary	England and Wales
43.6%	47.4%
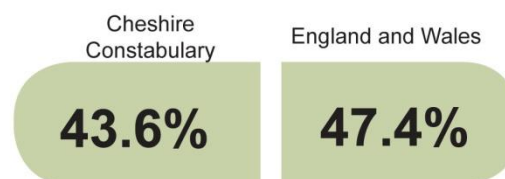
*Figures are shown as proportions of outcomes assigned to offences recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2016.

Anti-social behaviour

Anti-social behaviour incidents per 1,000 population 12 months to 31 March 2016
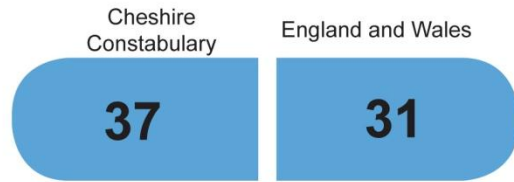
Cheshire Constabulary	England and Wales
37	31

Anti-social behaviour incidents per 1,000 population 12 months to 31 March 2015

Cheshire Constabulary	England and Wales
38	34
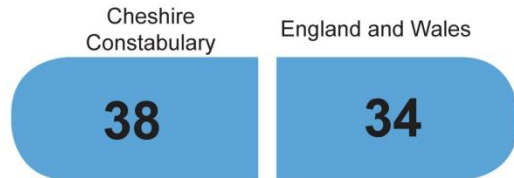
Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse calls for assistance per 1,000 population 12 months to 30 June 2016
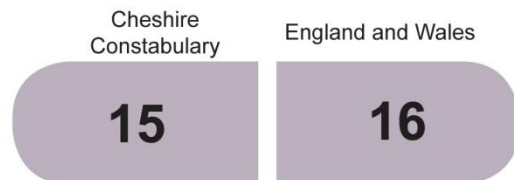
Cheshire Constabulary	England and Wales
15	16

Domestic abuse as a percentage of all recorded crime (excluding fraud) 12 months to 30 June 2016

Cheshire Constabulary	England and Wales
13.1%	11.1%

Domestic abuse as a percentage of all recorded crime (excluding fraud) 12 months to 31 March 2015

Cheshire Constabulary	England and Wales
11.0%	10.0%

Organised crime groups

Organised crime groups per million population as at 1 July 2016

Cheshire Constabulary	England and Wales
33	46
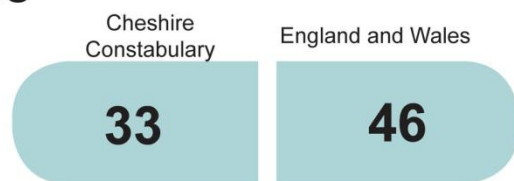
Victim satisfaction rate

Victim satisfaction with the overall service provided by the police 12 months to 30 June 2016

Cheshire Constabulary	England and Wales
87.2%	83.3%
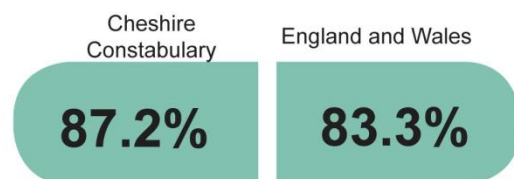
For further information about the data in this graphic please see annex A

Overview – How effective is the force at keeping people safe and reducing crime?

Overall judgment[2]

Good

Cheshire Constabulary has been assessed as good in respect of its effectiveness at keeping people safe and reducing crime. Our overall judgment this year is the same as last year, when we judged the constabulary to be good in respect of effectiveness.

The constabulary has maintained high standards of investigation and levels of service to vulnerable people, and it has improved its ability to tackle serious and organised crime. The constabulary's approach to preventing crime remains good.

Overall summary

How effective is the force at preventing crime, tackling anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe?	**Good**
How effective is the force at investigating crime and reducing re-offending?	**Good**
How effective is the force at protecting those who are vulnerable from harm, and supporting victims?	**Good**
How effective is the force at tackling serious and organised crime?	**Good**
How effective are the force's specialist capabilities?	**Ungraded**

Cheshire Constabulary is committed to preventing crime and anti-social behaviour and making a difference for communities. Neighbourhood policing provides a link between communities and the police, and the constabulary is able to address

---

[2] HMIC judgments are outstanding, good, requires improvement and inadequate.

emerging problems immediately. Preventative work and problem solving at a strategic, constabulary-wide level is effective, but at a neighbourhood level, officers need to understand the full principles of the problem-solving methodology.

Cheshire Constabulary carries out high-quality investigations. Crimes are investigated by officers who have the appropriate skills and supervisors play an active role in ensuring investigations are carried out to the highest standard. The constabulary works well with other agencies to reduce reoffending and to identify, investigate and bring to justice repeat and dangerous offenders.

Cheshire Constabulary is effective at identifying people who may be vulnerable through their age, disability, or because they have been subjected to repeated offences or are at high risk of abuse, and investigates crimes against vulnerable victims thoroughly. Officers across the organisation understand their role in ensuring safeguarding measures are appropriately applied. Greater attention is required when response officers assess risks in relation to vulnerable people. The constabulary can demonstrate a high level of support for victims of domestic abuse and makes good use of powers to place restrictions on perpetrators. The constabulary's use of charges is among the highest for domestic abuse offences in England and Wales.

Cheshire Constabulary made positive progress towards addressing the areas for improvement in relation to serious and organised crime that were identified in last year's report. The constabulary now has a greater understanding of the threat it is facing, informed by data from partner organisations. Neighbourhood officers understand the role they play in disrupting organised crime groups.

The constabulary has appropriate arrangements in place to ensure that it can respond to national threats.

How effective is the force at preventing crime, tackling anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe?

The police's ability to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour and to keep people safe is a principal measure of its effectiveness. Crime prevention is more effective than investigating crime, stops people being victims in the first place and makes society a safer place. The police cannot prevent crime on their own; other policing organisations and organisations such as health, housing and children's services have a vital role to play. Police effectiveness in this matter therefore depends on their ability to work closely with other policing organisations and other interested parties to understand local problems and to use a wide range of evidence-based interventions to resolve them.

How much crime and anti-social behaviour is there in Cheshire?

Although police-recorded crime is by no means a complete measure of the totality of demand for calls on its service that a force faces, it does provide a partial indication of performance across all forces. Crime rates are reported as the number of crimes per 1,000 population in each force area to enable comparison between areas. Total recorded crime is made up of victim-based crime (crimes involving a direct victim such as an individual, a group, or an organisation) and other crimes against society (e.g. possession of drugs). In the 12 months to 30 June 2016, the majority of forces (39 out of 43 forces) showed an annual increase in total police-recorded crime (excluding fraud). This increase in police-recorded crime may have been affected by the renewed focus on the quality and compliance of crime recording since HMIC's national inspection of crime data in 2014.

In 2010 the Home Secretary set a clear priority for the police service to cut crime. Figure 1 shows how police-recorded crime has fluctuated over the longer term. When compared with the 12 months to 30 June 2011, police-recorded crime (excluding fraud) for the 12 months to 30 June 2016 has decreased by 13.6 percent in Cheshire compared with a decrease of 3.4 percent across all forces in England and Wales.

Over this same period, victim-based crime decreased by 15.4 percent in Cheshire, compared with a decrease of 0.5 percent for England and Wales as a whole.

Figure 1: Police-recorded crime rates (per 1,000 population) in Cheshire, for the five year period to 30 June 2016
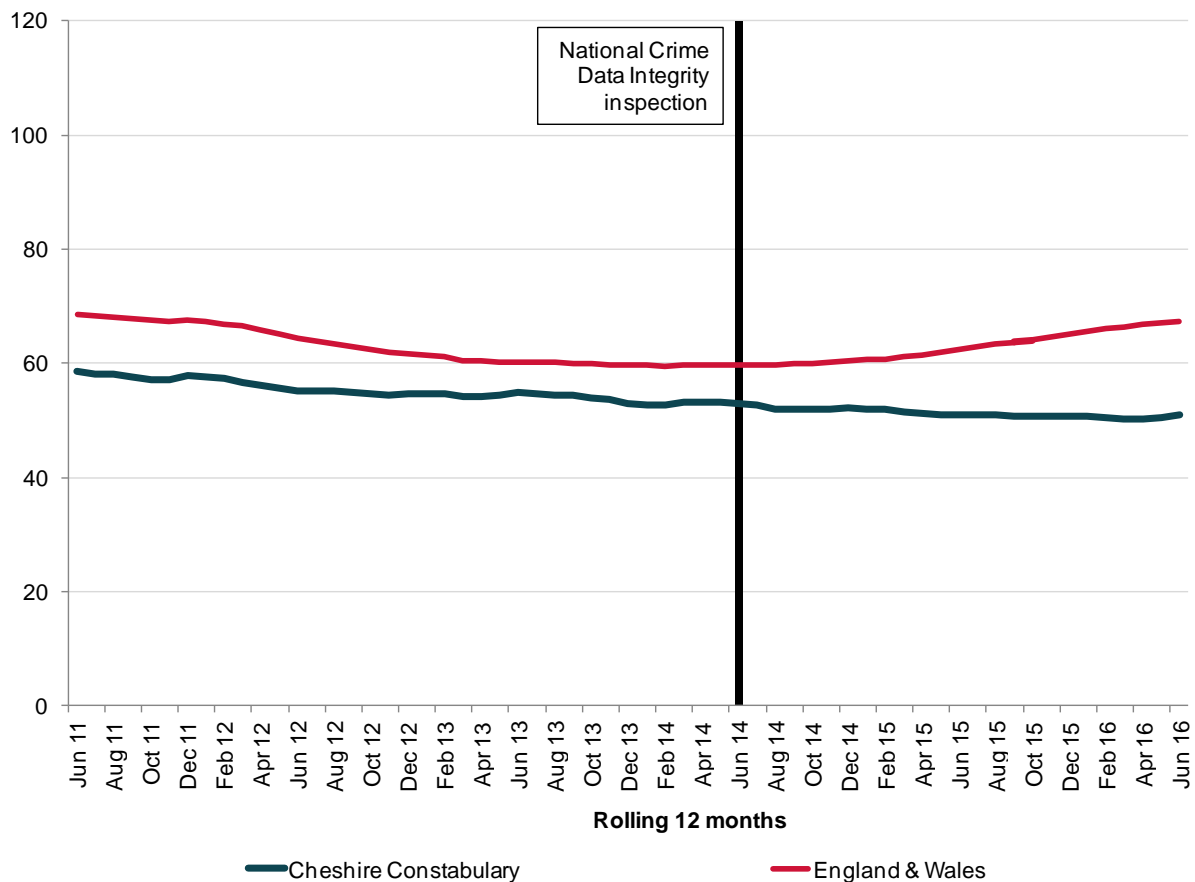
Source: Home Office data
For further information about these data, please see annex A

More recently, when compared with the previous 12 month period, police-recorded crime (excluding fraud) in Cheshire increased by 0.1 percent for the year ending 30 June 2016. This is compared with an increase of 7.8 percent across all forces in England and Wales over the same period.

The rate of police-recorded crimes and incidents of anti-social behaviour per head of population indicates how safe it is for the public in that police area. Figures 2 and 3 show crime rates (per 1,000 population) and the change in the rate (per 1,000 population) of anti-social behaviour in Cheshire compared with England and Wales.

HMIC used a broad selection of crime types to indicate crime levels in the police force area during the inspection. We are not judging the effectiveness of the force on police-recorded crime rates only. The figure below shows police-recorded crime rates in the force area for a small selection of crime types.

Figure 2: Police-recorded crime rates (per 1,000 population) in Cheshire, for the 12 months to 30 June 2016

Rates per 1,000 population	Cheshire Constabulary	England and Wales
Recorded crime (excluding fraud)	51.0	68.2
Victim-based crime	44.2	60.4
Sexual offences	1.4	1.9
Assault with injury	6.8	7.0
Burglary in a dwelling*	4.5	8.1

* The rate of burglary in a dwelling is the rate for 1,000 households, rather than population
Source: Home Office data
For further information about these data, please see annex A

Figure 3: Percentage change in the rate of anti-social behaviour incidents (per 1,000 population), by force, comparing the 12 months to 31 March 2016 with the 12 months to 31 March 2015
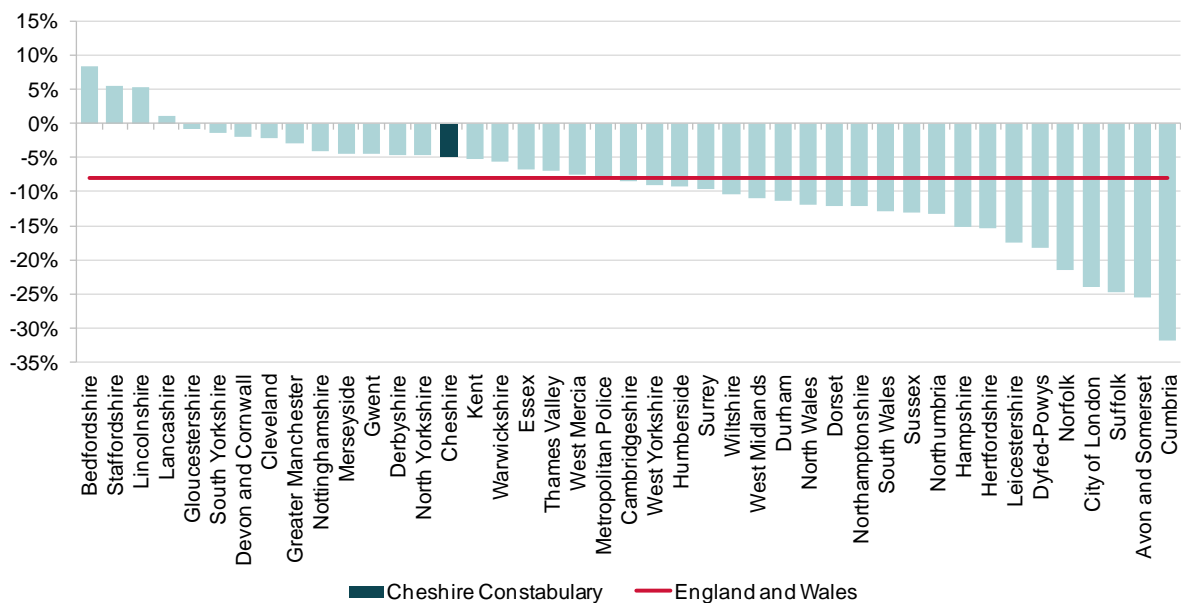
Source: Home Office data
For further information about these data, please see annex A

In the 12 months to 31 March 2016, Cheshire Constabulary recorded 37 incidents of anti-social behaviour per 1,000 population. This is 5 percent fewer incidents per 1,000 population than the force recorded during the previous 12 months. In England and Wales as a whole, there were 8 percent fewer incidents per 1,000 population in the 12 months to 31 March 2016, than were recorded during the previous 12 months.

How effectively does the force understand the threat or risk of harm within the communities it serves?

It is vital that forces have a detailed understanding of the communities they serve in order to protect them from harm. This understanding should include those communities which may – for a variety of reasons – need the police to work differently to understand their requirements, for example migrant communities, elderly people or groups which might be mistrustful towards the police. A good understanding of what matters to these communities helps the police to gain their confidence and create safer neighbourhoods for citizens.

In order to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour, police forces need to understand the threat and risk faced by communities. Forces must also operate a model of local policing in which police officers and police community support officers (PCSOs) have sufficient time for community engagement, visible targeted foot patrols and working with other policing organisations and other interested parties to promote resolutions that protect communities and prevent crime. Successfully undertaking these three activities leads to crime reduction and increased public confidence.

Does Cheshire Constabulary understand the risk posed to its communities?

Cheshire Constabulary is good at preventing crime, tackling anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe. Despite there being a continued emphasis on providing a policing service to suit individual communities, this is a lower grade than when we assessed the constabulary last year. We will cover this aspect in more detail later in the report when we consider whether the constabulary has a problem-solving approach.

In July 2015, Cheshire Constabulary changed its operating model and formed eight local policing units (LPUs), each of which is led by a chief inspector. The model ensures that response officers, neighbourhood officers, police community support officers (PCSOs) and CID investigators are all based in the same place and work together to provide a local policing service. Neighbourhood policing is provided by officers, known as beat managers, and PCSOs. Their time within the community is protected to an extent, although redeployments take place infrequently when demand is high. A survey carried out by Ipsos MORI on behalf of HMIC suggested that the public reported seeing the same number of foot and vehicle patrols in their communities as they did last year.

Cheshire Constabulary has a good understanding of the threats facing the communities it serves. It is good at analysing traditional threats (such as burglary and robbery) and so-called emerging threats (such as child sexual exploitation and cyber-crime). In assessing these threats, the constabulary has worked with partners to ensure it has access to as much information as possible. This assessment is linked to the priorities set out by the constabulary and the local community safety partnership (CSP). Throughout the development of this threat assessment, we were pleased to see a focus on keeping vulnerable people safe. The constabulary also makes effective use of its own intelligence capability to identify threat or risk of harm within communities, using traditional national intelligence model (NIM)[3] products to map local crime trends.

Since our 2015 inspection, Cheshire Constabulary has continued to improve its understanding of the risks faced by its communities. The constabulary has completed problem profiles which include data from the constabulary's partners and cover subjects such as child sexual exploitation and abuse, domestic abuse and rape. Problem profiles covering subjects such as cyber-crime, modern slavery and honour-based violence are awaiting publication. The profiles assesses how likely these threats are to affect the communities of Cheshire and what level of harm they would cause. This has allowed the constabulary to develop responses that are tailored to individual types of crime or threats which pose a risk to the community. There is, however, an inconsistent approach across the constabulary area to the use of neighbourhood profiles.[4] The constabulary recognises this issue and has taken steps to refresh each of the neighbourhood profiles – for example introducing a 'beat mangers toolkit' which contains details of operational tactics that could be used to enhance neighbourhood policing.

How Cheshire Constabulary engages with the public

The constabulary understands the importance of involving the public and uses a range of methods to do so with neighbourhood teams, led by the beat managers, at the centre of its efforts. The techniques used include traditional face-to-face methods, such as conventional foot patrol, community and resident meetings, beat surgeries and attendance at supermarkets. Social media such as Twitter and Facebook are used to engage with the public directly and to advertise meetings. Local policing priorities are set by the public as part of the engagement process and the constabulary has the ability to flex its policing provision to reflect these priorities.

---

[3] The national intelligence model provides a standardised approach to gathering, co-ordinating and disseminating intelligence which can be integrated across all forces and law enforcement agencies.

[4] Neighbourhood profiles bring together a range of partnership data to provide a detailed picture of threat, risk and harm posed to individual communities and provide a means for local operation police officers (and other agencies) to set local priorities and tackle those issues which cause most harm to communities.

HMIC found some good examples of the constabulary using volunteers from Eastern Europe to reach out to communities who traditionally have less trust in the police. The constabulary has also carried out a substantial amount of work in the Crewe area, where a community originating from East Timor was engaged in a violent internal dispute. The constabulary identified that martial arts played a significant part in the community's culture and, together with gang leaders, was able to act as a mediator and encourage the community to come together with martial arts being the common denominator. This engagement has reduced community tensions.

HMIC commissioned Ipsos MORI to conduct a survey of attitudes towards policing between July and August 2016. The survey indicated that there has been an increase in public satisfaction with Cheshire Constabulary. Some 402 people were interviewed and 64 percent were very or fairly satisfied with local policing in their area. This is a 5 percent increase on 2015.[5]

How effectively do force actions and activities prevent crime and anti-social behaviour?

Effective forces use a range of options to prevent crime, tackle anti-social behaviour and keep people safe. They use structured approaches to solving local problems which aim to rid communities of criminal and anti-social behaviour. They also use a range of legal powers and specific tactics which vary depending on the situation. HMIC expects forces to review their activity as well as other sources of evidence in order to improve their ability to protect people over the long term.

Does the force have a problem-solving approach?

Although we found some good examples, problem solving is applied inconsistently. We found a strong approach with good structure for those problems that have the greatest impact on constabulary-wide issues, but this is not reflected in the approach to addressing more localised concerns. A problem-solving approach has been introduced this year for some constabulary-wide, high-demand issues such as the night-time economy, hospitals and care homes and there is a clear governance process through monthly meetings to review and assess progress. Officers and PCSOs from the local policing units understand the long-term benefits of problem solving, although the vast majority could not identify the various stages of the OSARA[6] model. This is particularly true for the 'assessment' phase which is a necessary requirement in ensuring that the constabulary can identify the activity

---

[5] Ipsos Mori conducted an online panel survey in each force area. The sampling method used is not a statistical random sample. Therefore, any results provided are an indication of satisfaction rather than an absolute. For further details, see annex A.

[6] OSARA is a problem-solving model based on outcomes, scanning, analysis, response and assessment.

which is actually tackling the problem. We reviewed several problem plans and found that this stage was not taking place. This issue was highlighted during both the 2014 and 2015 inspections and it is disappointing that this is still yet to be addressed. Localised long-term problem-solving plans are held on the Niche IT system and inspectors found that these are being regularly updated with the results of allocated actions. The constabulary maintains a 'What works' database which is accessible on its intranet site. Partners are satisfied that information sharing protocols are effective and support the collaborative problem-solving process.

Cheshire Constabulary makes effective use of a range of techniques to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour. Neighbourhood teams, led by their beat managers, take responsibility for addressing the day-to-day concerns identified within the community they serve. 'Purposeful Patrolling' is used to direct available patrols with targeted activity based on intelligence and predictability. Targeted areas are identified through predictive policing techniques and the crime harm index (which weights individual crimes according to the harm they cause victims). The constabulary has introduced constabulary-wide initiatives, such as Operation Centurion, aimed at targeting alcohol-related crime in Warrington and Chester town centres. The operation uses dispersal powers as a means of intervening early and preventing disorder. 'Street a Week' has been launched across the constabulary by each of the eight LPUs. The initiative is used to enhance community engagement and maximise intelligence gathering opportunities by raising the visibility of police patrols in a specific area. Officers are encouraged to operate in an agile way and work within public buildings on their tablet devices instead of returning to the station.

We also found evidence that the constabulary works well with partner agencies to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour, as part of specific weeks of action. These included 'Fresher's week' in which the constabulary and partners educated licensees to ensure compliance with the relevant laws and raise awareness among students of the risks of excessive drinking. Respect Week is an anti-social behaviour campaign that coincides with school holidays and seasonal trends. The 'Know and See' campaign provides a focus on child sexual exploitation and raises awareness among potential victims, encouraging them to seek help and advice if they feel they are at risk.

Cheshire Constabulary maximises the use of legislation in order to reduce anti-social behaviour, using powers such as Criminal Behaviour Orders, Civil Injunctions and Dispersal Powers to reduce the number of incidents. The constabulary was one of the highest users of preventative orders in forces in England and Wales over the 12 months to 30 June 2016. The constabulary has seen a 5 percent reduction in anti-social behaviour, and a 16 percent reduction in incidents of anti-social behaviour linked to repeat victims in the 12 months to 30 March 2016, compared with the same period last year. In the same time, police-recorded crime has increased by 0.1 percent in Cheshire Constabulary, compared with an increase of 7.8 percent in England and Wales as a whole.

Does the force use evidence of best practice and its own learning to improve the service to the public?

The constabulary holds performance meetings and quarterly performance reviews to understand challenges and threats and identify best practice and makes use of good analysis of crime data. The constabulary uses the College of Policing debriefing model as a common format which also works with colleagues from other services. The constabulary uses peer assessments with officers from other forces providing the view point of a 'critical friend' to help improve its planning. An example of this related to preparing for the Christmas period. The constabulary has successfully taken action against criminals travelling from neighbouring force areas, making use of target-hardening techniques such as SelectaDNA marking product and cross-border investigations. There has been a reduction in acquisitive crime in Cheshire.

Summary of findings

Good

Cheshire Constabulary is good at preventing crime, tackling anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe. It understands the threats facing its community and uses information from across the constabulary and from other local partners to make sure the threats to all sections of its community are well understood.

The constabulary has a strong commitment to providing a policing service that has the interests of local communities at its centre. Neighbourhood policing continues to be the link between the community and the constabulary through dedicated beat managers and PCSOs. The constabulary uses conventional engagement methods as well as social media as a means of reaching a wider audience.

The constabulary works well with partner organisations to apply a collaborative problem-solving approach to dealing with areas of high demand. Problem solving at local level is less well developed, with a limited understanding of the value of a structured approach. In the last year, the constabulary has seen a reduction in incidents of anti-social behaviour and an even greater reduction for incidents linked to repeat victims. There has been a very slight rise in crime, however this increase is well below the England and Wales rate.

Area for improvement

- The constabulary should ensure that its problem-solving process is consistently applied particularly at neighbourhood level.

How effective is the force at investigating crime and reducing re-offending?

When a crime occurs, the public must have confidence that the police will investigate it effectively, take seriously their concerns as victims, and bring offenders to justice. To be effective, investigations should be well planned and supervised, based on approved practice, and carried out by appropriately-trained staff. In co-operation with other organisations, forces must also manage the risk posed by those who are identified as being the most prolific or dangerous offenders, to minimise the chances of continued harm to individuals and communities.

How well does the force bring offenders to justice?

Since April 2014, police forces in England and Wales have been required to record how investigations are concluded in a new way, known as 'outcomes'. Replacing what was known as 'detections', the outcomes framework gives a fuller picture of the work the police do to investigate and resolve crime and over time all crimes will be assigned an outcome. The broader outcomes framework (currently containing 21 different types of outcomes) is designed to support police officers in using their professional judgment to ensure a just and timely resolution. The resolution should reflect the harm caused to the victim, the seriousness of the offending behaviour, the impact on the community and deter future offending.

Outcomes are likely to differ from force to force for various reasons. Forces face a different mix of crime types in their policing areas, so the outcomes they assign will also vary depending on the nature of the crime. Certain offences are more likely to be concluded without offenders being prosecuted; typically these include types of crime such as cannabis misuse. If this type of crime is particularly prevalent in the force then it is likely that the level of 'cannabis/khat[7] warning' outcomes would be greater. Other offences such as those involving domestic abuse or serious sexual offences, are unlikely to result in a high usage of the 'cautions' outcome.

The frequency of outcomes may also reflect the force's policing priorities. For example, some forces work hard with partners to ensure that first time and low-level offenders are channelled away from the criminal justice system. In these areas locally-based community resolutions are likely to be more prevalent than elsewhere.

It is also important to understand that not all of the crimes recorded in the year will have been assigned an outcome as some will still be under investigation. For some crime types such as sexual offences, the delay between a crime being recorded and

---

[7] A plant native to Africa and the Arabian Peninsula, the leaves of which are frequently chewed as a stimulant. The possession and supply of khat became a criminal offence in England and Wales in 2014.

an outcome being assigned may be particularly pronounced, as these may involve complex and lengthy investigations.

Figure 4: Proportion of outcomes assigned to offences recorded in Cheshire Constabulary, in 12 months to 30 June 2016, by outcome type[8,9]

Outcome number	Outcome type / group	Cheshire Constabulary	England and Wales
1	**Charged/Summonsed**	**19.9**	**12.1**
4	**Taken into consideration**	**0.4**	**0.2**
	Out-of-court (formal)	**3.3**	**3.2**
2	Caution - youths	0.2	0.4
3	Caution - adults	2.5	2.3
6	Penalty Notices for Disorder	0.5	0.6
	Out-of-court (informal)	**4.7**	**3.6**
7	Cannabis/Khat warning	0.8	0.9
8	Community Resolution	3.9	2.8
*	**Prosecution prevented or not in the public interest**	**1.1**	**1.8**
	Evidential difficulties (victim supports police action)		
15	Suspect identified	7.1	8.3
	Evidential difficulties (victim does not support police action)	**13.9**	**13.8**
16	Suspect identified	12.6	10.6
14	Suspect not identified	1.3	3.2
18	**Investigation complete – no suspect identified**	**43.6**	**47.4**
20	**Action undertaken by another body / agency**	**0.0**	**0.6**
21	**Further investigation to support formal action not in the public interest**	**0.0**	**0.1**
	Total offences assigned an outcome	**94.0**	**91.3**
	Not yet assigned an outcome	**6.0**	**8.7**
	Total	**100.00**	**100.00**

*Includes the following outcome types: Offender died, Not in public interest (CPS), Prosecution prevented – suspect under age, Prosecution prevented – suspect too ill, Prosecution prevented – victim/key witness dead/too ill, Prosecution time limit expired
Source: Home Office crime outcomes data
For further information about these data, please see annex A

---

[8] Dorset Police is excluded from the table. Therefore figures for England and Wales will differ from those published by the Home Office. For further details see annex A.

[9] 'Taken into consideration' is when an offender admits committing other offences in the course of sentencing proceedings and requests those other offences to be taken into consideration.

In the 12 months to 30 June 2016, Cheshire Constabulary's use of 'charged/summonsed' was among the highest in England and Wales. Its use of 'action undertaken by another body / agency' was among the lowest in England and Wales. However, any interpretation of outcomes should take into account that outcomes will vary dependent on the crime types that occur in each force area, and how it deals with offenders for different crimes. Cheshire Constabulary's high use of 'charged/summonsed' suggests it conducts investigations well gathering sufficient evidence to charge suspects.

How effective is the force's initial investigative response?

The initial investigative response is critical for an effective investigation. From the moment victims and witnesses make contact with the police the investigative process should start, so that accurate information and evidence can be gathered. It is important that forces record evidence as soon as possible after a crime. The longer it takes for evidence-recording to begin, the more likely it is that evidence will be destroyed, damaged or lost. Recording this evidence is usually the responsibility of the first officer who attends the scene. After the officer has completed this initial investigation the case may be handed over to a different police officer or team in the force. This process must ensure that the right people with the right skills investigate the right crimes.

Control room response

Cheshire Constabulary is good at providing an initial investigative response. Call-takers ask relevant questions and gather sufficient information that assists the initial investigation.

The constabulary finalises a small number of calls within the control room through its Occurrence Management Unit (OMU). The unit takes details from the caller, records the crime and then provides the caller with sufficient information to satisfy their requirements. The chief constable has made a pledge that the constabulary will deploy officers if the caller makes such a request. This commitment is not having a negative impact on the timeliness of patrol attendance.

How well do response officers investigate?

Response officers have a good understanding of the 'golden hour'[10] principles and are generally given sufficient time to complete their enquiries. At times, when operational demand peaks, and greater pressure is placed on officers to go directly from one incident to the next, supervisors intervene to ensure that investigative opportunities are maximised. HMIC found that, in general, the quality of information passed from frontline officers to specialist investigators is of an acceptable standard,

---

[10] The golden hour is the term used for the period immediately after an offence has been committed, when material is readily available in high volumes to the police.

but some packages do not have any supervisory oversight. Although the constabulary has introduced a performance framework for supervisors which includes the management of crime investigation, this does not appear to have had a positive effect on the early stages of investigations.

Cheshire Constabulary has an effective method of allocating crimes for investigation. All crimes are reviewed within the LPU which covers the area in which the crime took place. The capacity and capability of individual officers is taken in to account in deciding who the crime will be allocated to. Offences which are more serious in nature are discussed at daily meetings and a superintendent decides which specialist unit will assume responsibility for the investigation.

HMIC reviewed 60 police case files across crime types for: robbery, common assault (flagged as domestic abuse), grievous bodily harm (GBH), stalking, harassment, rape and domestic burglary. Files were randomly selected from crimes recorded between 1 January 2016 and 31 March 2016 and were assessed against several criteria. Due to the small sample size of cases selected, we have not used results from the file review as the sole basis for assessing individual force performance but alongside other evidence gathered. Overall, Cheshire Constabulary's gathering of evidence, initial investigation and allocation for subsequent investigation is good.

How effective is the force's subsequent investigation?

Every day police forces across England and Wales investigate a wide range of crimes. These range from non-complex crimes such as some burglary and assault cases through to complex and sensitive investigations such as rape and murder. HMIC referred to national standards and best practice in examining how well forces allocate and investigate the full range of crimes, including how officers and staff can gather evidence to support investigations. These include the more traditional forensics, such as taking fingerprints, as well as more recently developed techniques like gathering digital evidence from mobile telephones or computers to find evidence of online abuse.

Quality of the investigation

Overall the public can have confidence that Cheshire Constabulary investigates crimes to a high standard. Our review of a sample of files found that the constabulary investigates crimes well, across a range of crime types. So-called volume crimes such as theft, burglary and common assault are investigated effectively, with good investigation plans and high levels of supervision.

We also found that specialists investigated more complex cases effectively, including rape, section 18 assaults and incidents of stalking and harassment. Cheshire Constabulary has sufficient capacity and capability to ensure that high risk cases are investigated by officers who have the appropriate levels of skills. The file review identified that complex investigations into serious crime were well structured with

comprehensive investigation strategies and had effective supervision. Victims are at the centre of investigations from the outset, and special measures are applied to provide further support through the court process.

Support to investigations

In HMIC's 2015 effectiveness report, we found that Cheshire Constabulary had an effective process for triaging computers at crime scenes, thus preventing backlogs in completing effective examinations. The constabulary has retained this capability and at the time of this year's inspection, we found no evident backlog of devices awaiting examination.

Despite the positive position for the examination of computers, the constabulary has limited capability to manage the increasing submission of other digital devices. HMIC found examples of this having a serious detrimental effect on the timeliness of investigations, which in turn restricts opportunities to charge offenders. We were made aware of one particular investigation into a serious assault, in which the investigator had to extend the bail of two suspects while waiting for the results of an examination of a telephone that was believed to hold evidence to support a prosecution. HMIC understand that there are well-developed plans in place to purchase seven kiosks for the examination of digital devices and train sufficient staff to manage the situation more efficiently.

The constabulary made 3,845 DNA and fingerprint forensic recoveries in the 12 months to 30 June 2016, and had a backlog of 857 forensic recoveries awaiting examination. At the time of our inspection, 113 positive forensic results with named suspects were awaiting action. The constabulary needs to assure itself that everything is being done to effectively manage forensic submissions and arrest those persons who it has identified through the forensic process.

Overall, Cheshire Constabulary is good at investigating crime; the constabulary assigned a charged/summonsed outcome to 19.9 percent to offences recorded in the 12 months to 30 June, compared to an England and Wales rate of 12.1 percent.

Supporting victims

The new outcomes framework introduced in 2014 includes some outcomes where there were evidential difficulties,[11] which had not previously been recorded. This was to gain an insight into the scale of crimes that the police could not progress further through the criminal justice process due to limited evidence. Furthermore, these outcomes can be thought of as an indicator for how effective the police are at working with victims and supporting them through investigative and judicial

---

[11] Evidential difficulties also includes where a suspect has been identified and the victim supports police action, but evidential difficulties prevent further action being taken.

processes, as they record when victims are unwilling or unable to support continued investigations or when they have withdrawn their support for police action.

Figure 5: Percentage of 'Evidential difficulties; victim does not support action' outcomes assigned to offences recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2016, by force[12,13]
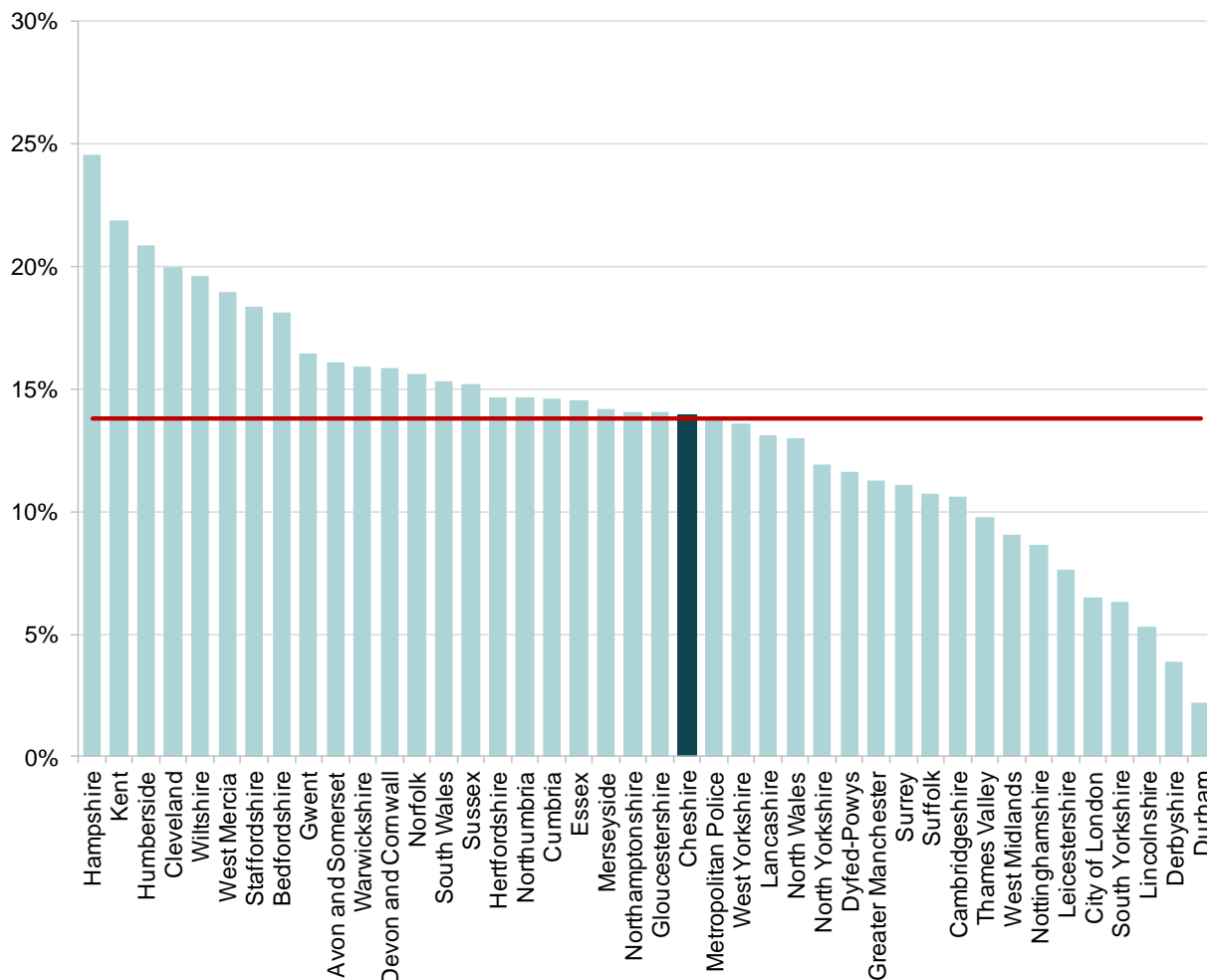
Source: Home Office crime outcomes data
For further information about these data, please see annex A

For all offences recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2016, Cheshire Constabulary recorded 13.9 percent as 'Evidential difficulties; victim does not support police action'. This compares with 13.8 percent for England and Wales over the same period. However, it should be noted that not all of the offences committed in the 12 months to 30 June 2016 were assigned an outcome and consequently, these figures are subject to change over time.

---

[12] Percentages of evidential difficulties can be affected by the level of certain types of crime within a force, such as domestic abuse related offences.

[13] Dorset Police is excluded from the graph. Therefore, figures for England and Wales will differ from those published by the Home Office. For further details see annex A.

The constabulary continues to provide a good service for victims of crime. HMIC found that victims were at the centre of investigators' priorities. Officers are compliant with the *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime*, and we found good evidence that victim impact statements are regularly taken, which means that victims can explain how a crime has affected them and strengthens their voice in the criminal justice system.

How effectively does the force reduce re-offending?

We assessed how well the force works with other policing authorities and other interested parties to identify vulnerable offenders and prevent them from re-offending, and how well it identifies and manages repeat, dangerous or sexual offenders.

How well does the force pursue suspects and offenders?

The public can have confidence that Cheshire Constabulary pursues known suspects and identifies foreign national offenders to protect the public. The constabulary completes a Police National Computer check on all arrested suspects. In the 12 months to 30 June 2016, the constabulary made 20,025 arrests, 1,641 of whom were foreign nationals. The constabulary's policy is that all arrested foreign nationals should be subject to an ACRO check, which provides enhanced information on criminality and allows the constabulary to identify and manage risk more effectively. HMIC is satisfied that these checks are completed. The constabulary has a number of outstanding suspects that is in line with the number for England and Wales; and has a robust system for actively managing them, which we saw working effectively during our inspection. Wanted people are pursued at a local level with the constabulary actively targeting those it deems the most dangerous.

How well does the force protect the public from the most harmful offenders?

The constabulary's integrated offender management (IOM) unit, called 'Navigate', operates across the county. As at 1 July 2016, there were 248 individuals on the IOM scheme, an increase of 6 when compared to same time last year. The Navigate teams are co-located with partner organisations and there are effective agreements in place to share intelligence. The level of partnership support has become more limited over recent years with both local housing and drug support workers being withdrawn due to reductions in local authority budgets. Despite this, we found that the scheme has dedicated, committed and enthusiastic staff. Offenders join the scheme after multi-agency discussions through the joint agency group (JAG). The scheme remains almost exclusively concerned with serious acquisitive crime offenders, with a small number of offenders who have links to domestic abuse, violence and organised crime. This minority are only selected to join the scheme because they are also prolific acquisitive offenders and not because of the threat and

risk that they pose. The constabulary has developed plans to re-align the scheme with those individuals who pose a threat in line with constabulary priorities, however this is still some time away.

The constabulary is good at identifying and monitoring those people who pose the greatest risk to the community. There are 1,299 registered sex offenders in Cheshire, of whom two are very high risk and 80 are high risk. The constabulary makes good use of placing restrictions on offenders. In the 12 months to 30 June 2016, 123 sexual harm prevention orders (SHPOs) had been issued and reported that 11 SHPOs were breached.. SHPOs are designed to protect the public by detailing a series of prohibitions intended to prevent future offending. The constabulary also recognises the risk posed by individuals who have yet to face prosecution and at the time of the inspection had just issued a sexual risk order against an individual whose sexual conduct was deemed so significant that the public needed to be protected. Inspectors found that neighbourhood officers have a good level of knowledge of the high-risk offenders living within their locality and this is reinforced through daily meetings and briefings.

The unit within the public protection directorate (PPD) which has responsibility for managing registered sexual offenders (RSOs) is under-staffed. HMIC found staff to be highly motivated and the constabulary to have introduced an effective methodology that reduces the time to complete an active risk management system (ARMS) risk assessment from an average time of approximately eight hours to just two to three hours. The constabulary is recruiting sufficient staff to reduce the number of RSOs per officer to appropriate levels.

Cheshire Constabulary's multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPAs) are well managed. They are used by the constabulary and partner organisations, including prisons and probation, to monitor those offenders assessed as presenting a high risk to the public and to stop them re-offending. Partners within MAPPA considered the involvement of local policing teams to be good as they were aware of individuals in their local areas who were managed by MAPPA and the relevant restrictions placed on them.

Summary of findings

Good

Cheshire Constabulary's approach to investigating crime and managing offenders is good.

The constabulary allocates crime for investigation to the appropriate department and officers with the required level of skill. Processes within the control room enable call-takers to correctly assess areas of risk and gather sufficient information to assist in

the early stages of investigation. The handover of investigations from the first attending officer to trained investigators was found to be to an acceptable standard, but lacked supervisory oversight. This does not appear to have a detrimental effect on the overall quality of investigations which, are generally completed to a high standard with supervisors at this stage taking an active role in reviewing and providing guidance. However, capacity to process the large number of digital devices that are seized as part of investigations is having a negative impact on timeliness.

Cheshire Constabulary has processes in place that ensure that individuals who pose a risk to the public are actively managed. The individuals who pose the greatest risk are managed appropriately through the MAPPA process. The constabulary's integrated offender management scheme is well managed, but it only has a narrow focus on offenders who commit large numbers of offences, rather than on those offenses which cause the most harm. This approach does not reflect the constabulary's priorities of tackling harm and risk. The number of registered sex offenders managed by each individual officer is high, but the constabulary has developed an efficient method for completing risk assessments that ensures those who are identified as posing the greatest threat are managed appropriately.

Officers put victims at the centre of any investigation and this is supported by compliance with the *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime*.

Areas for improvement

- The constabulary should improve its ability to retrieve digital evidence from mobile phones and other electronic devices quickly enough to ensure that investigations are not delayed.

- The constabulary should consider widening its approach to integrated offender management to maximise its impact on reducing threat, harm and risk. There should be clear measures of success which enable the constabulary to evaluate how effectively it is protecting the public from prolific and harmful offenders.

How effective is the force at protecting those who are vulnerable from harm, and supporting victims?

Protecting the public, particularly those who are most vulnerable, is one of the most important duties placed on police forces. People can be vulnerable for many reasons and the extent of their vulnerability can change during the time they are in contact with the police. Last year HMIC had concerns about how well many forces were protecting those who were vulnerable. In this section of the report we set out how the force's performance has changed since last year.

Has the force improved since HMIC's 2015 vulnerability inspection?

Following HMIC's 2015 effectiveness (vulnerability) inspection, in which Cheshire Constabulary was graded as 'good', the constabulary has continued to build on its support and provision of services to vulnerable people. We are pleased to see that it has continued to develop its understanding of hidden crimes such as child sexual exploitation and domestic abuse and is working towards an improved understanding of modern-day slavery, so-called honour-based violence and female genital mutilation. Operation Emblem, a mental health street triage which the constabulary was trialling on one area last year, has now been implemented across the four local authority areas that the constabulary covers.

The constabulary is also strong at identifying vulnerability at the first point of contact and investigates to a high standard criminality linked to vulnerability, with good levels of supervision. The constabulary works well with partnership agencies, provides effective safeguarding support using restrictive orders such as DVPNs and DVPOs and supports the Right to Ask process. The constabulary is particularly effective at arresting domestic violence perpetrators and charges a larger proportion of offenders with domestic abuse offences than any other force in England and Wales.

However the constabulary needs to ensure that response officers become more proficient at completing risk assessments on first attendance and there is sufficient initial supervision to ensure that opportunities are not missed. Body-worn video cameras are still not available, although the availability of remote working devices will enhance officers' ability to take digital images of domestic violence.

How effectively does the force identify those who are vulnerable and assess their level of risk and need?

In order to protect those who are vulnerable effectively forces need to understand comprehensively the scale of vulnerability in the communities they police. This requires forces to work with a range of communities, including those whose voices may not often be heard. It is important that forces understand fully what it means to be vulnerable, what might make someone vulnerable and that officers and staff who come into contact with the public can recognise this vulnerability. This means that forces can identify vulnerable people early on and can provide them with an appropriate service.

Understanding the risk

Forces define a vulnerable victim in different ways. This is because there is not a standard requirement on forces to record whether a victim is vulnerable on crime recording systems. Some forces use the definition from the government's *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime*,[14] others use the definition referred to in ACPO guidance[15] and the remainder use their own definition.

Cheshire Constabulary uses the government's *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime* definition of a vulnerable victim, which is:

> "You are eligible for enhanced entitlements under this Code as a vulnerable victim if:
>
> (a) You are under 18 years of age at the time of the offence, or
> (b) The quality of your evidence is likely to be affected because:
> 1) You suffer from mental disorder within the meaning of the Mental Health Act 1983:
> 2) You otherwise have a significant impairment of intelligence and social functioning; or
> 3) You have a physical disability or are suffering from a physical disorder"

Data returned by forces to HMIC show that in the 12 months to 30 June 2016, the proportion of crime recorded which involves a vulnerable victim varies considerably between forces, from 3.9 percent to 44.4 percent. For the 12 months to 30 June

---

[14] *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime*, Ministry of Justice, 2013. Available from www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/254459/code-of-practicevictims-of-crime.pdf

[15] 4 The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) is now the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC). ACPO Guidance on Safeguarding and Investigating the Abuse of Vulnerable Adults, NPIA, 2012. Available from: www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/major-investigation-and-public-protection/vulnerable-adults/

2016, 18.8 percent of all recorded crime in Cheshire was identified as having a vulnerable victim, which is broadly in line with the England and Wales figure of 14.3 percent.

Figure 6: Percentage of police-recorded crime with a vulnerable victim identified, by force, for the 12 months to 30 June 2016[16]
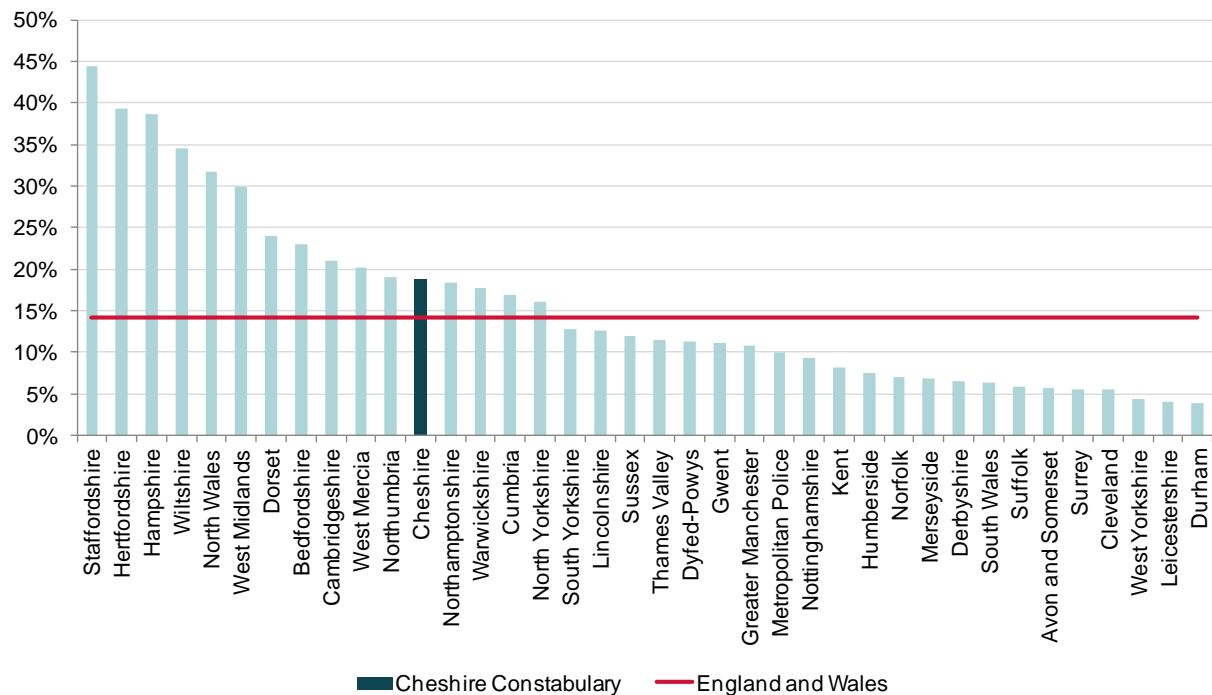
Source: HMIC data return, Home Office data
For further information about these data, please see annex A

Cheshire Constabulary has a good understanding of the nature and scale of vulnerability in its local areas. The constabulary has developed problem profiles for vulnerable people such as those at risk of child sexual exploitation and domestic abuse with other profiles in an advanced stage of development, such as modern-day slavery, honour-based violence and female genital mutilation. A problem profile uses intelligence and information to improve understanding of a particular crime type or emerging issue. Bringing together data and intelligence in a problem profile can help the constabulary identify possible victims, intelligence gaps and opportunities for prevention or reassurance. The chief constable has made domestic abuse a priority for the constabulary. Victims and vulnerable people are central to the police and crime commissioner's Police and Crime Plan and this has been reflected in the constabulary performance framework. Areas of focus for 2016/17 include perpetrator management, stalking and harassment, coercive and controlling behaviour and risk management. The constabulary has continued to work through the domestic abuse action plan.

---

[16] City of London, Devon and Cornwall, Essex, Gloucestershire and Lancashire forces were unable to provide data for recorded crimes with a vulnerable victim identified. Therefore, these forces' data are not included in the graph or in the calculation of the England and Wales rate.

Cheshire Constabulary takes its definition of a vulnerable person from national guidance. We spoke to officers from across the organisation and although they were unable to repeat the definition verbatim, they nonetheless had a comprehensive understanding of how to identify vulnerable people and their role in ensuring safeguarding actions are implemented.

The constabulary's recognition of mental health issues is good. It identified that 2.7 percent of all calls coming into the control room were linked to mental health issues. This is in line with the England and Wales rate of 2.4 percent. The constabulary works well with local mental health professionals, who have provided training to frontline staff. This training included how to identify signs of mental illness; how to respond to people displaying potential mental health issues; and the support and treatment available to support vulnerable people. Operation Emblem, which is a joint working initiative between the constabulary and mental health workers, provides a street triage service for individuals who present mental health symptoms. The initiative has been extended to cover the whole of the constabulary area.

Staff in the control room have an excellent understanding of vulnerability and they see this as their main priority when calls are received. They have access to the constabulary's computer system, including intelligence and crime reporting, which enables a 'fast time' ability to identify repeat victims. The constabulary puts a marker on its computer system to identify people and incidents where vulnerability is an issue, to indicate that additional attention is required.

Cheshire Constabulary's good performance at identifying vulnerable people and the number of repeat victims at the first point of contact was reflected in the figures presented to HMIC. The constabulary identifies repeat victims in 30 percent of all cases, compared to 12 percent in England and Wales.

The constabulary deploys its resources appropriately to incidents that involve people who are vulnerable, and its grading policy for incidents is directly linked to the assessment conducted by staff. The call handling policy provides clear guidance on the identification of vulnerability and assessment of risk. We found good evidence that staff understand the policy and apply it consistently. Supervisors in the control room undertake daily dip-sampling of incidents, including listening to incoming calls; to ensure that operators apply correct standards and that callers receive a consistent quality of service.

How effectively does the force initially respond to vulnerable victims?

The initial work of officers responding to a vulnerable person is vital, because failure to carry out the correct actions may make future work with the victim or further investigation very difficult. This could be the first time victims have contacted the police after suffering years of victimisation or they may have had repeated contact with the police; either way, the response of officers is crucial. The initial response to a vulnerable victim must inspire confidence that the victim's concerns are being taken seriously as well as provide practical actions and support to keep the victim safe. The officer should also assess the risk to the victim at that moment and others in the same household, and collect sufficient information to support the longer-term response of the force and other partner organisations.

Do officers assess risk correctly and keep victims safe?

The Home Office has shared domestic abuse related offences data, recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2016, with HMIC. These are more recent figures than those previously published by Office for National Statistics. These data show that in the 12 months to 30 June 2016, police-recorded domestic abuse in Cheshire increased by 19 percent compared with the 12 months to 31 March 2015. This compares with an increase of 23 percent across England and Wales. In the same period, police-recorded domestic abuse accounted for 13 percent of all police-recorded crime in Cheshire, compared with 11 percent of all police-recorded crime across England and Wales.

The rate of arrest for domestic abuse offences can provide an indication of a force's approach to handling domestic abuse offenders. Although for the purpose of this calculation arrests are not directly tracked to offences, a high arrest rate may suggest that a force prioritises arrests for domestic abuse offenders over other potential forms of action (for further details, see annex A). HMIC has evaluated the arrest rate alongside other measures during our inspection process to understand how each force deals with domestic abuse overall.

In Cheshire Constabulary, for every 100 domestic abuse related offences recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2016, there were 63 arrests made in the same period.

Figure 7: Domestic abuse arrest rate (per 100 domestic abuse crimes), by force, for the 12 months to 30 June 2016[17]
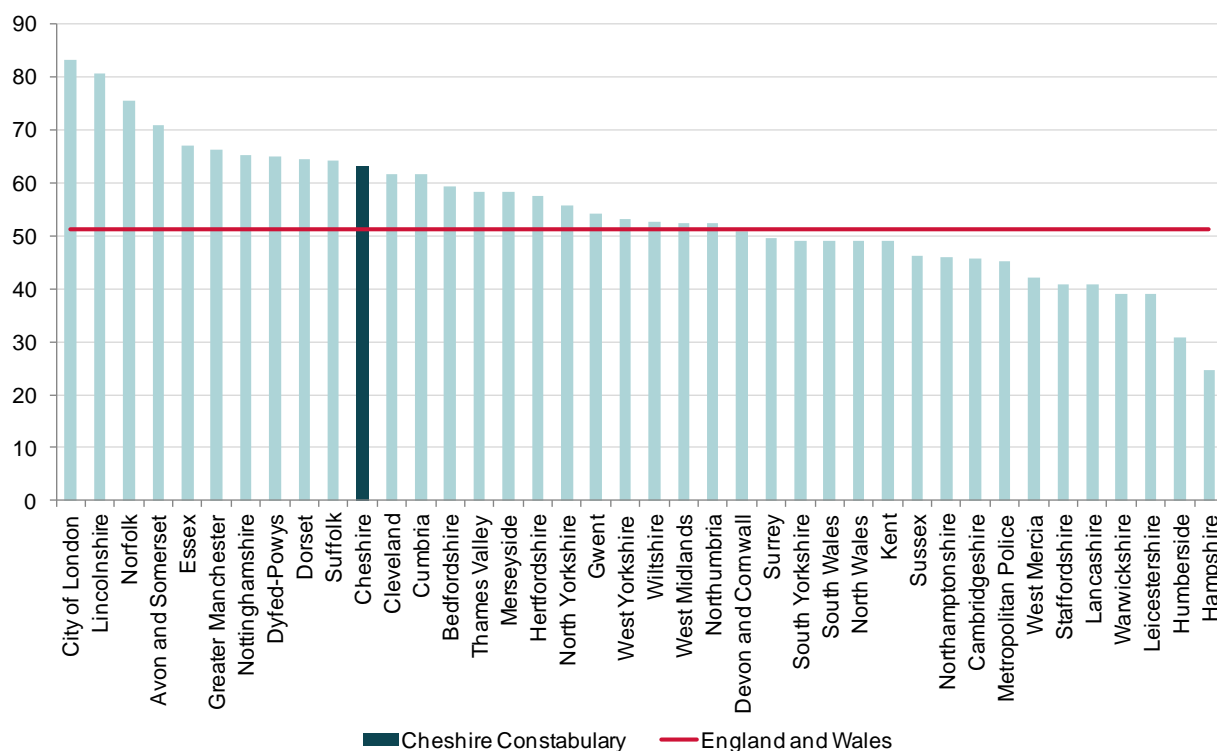
At the initial response stage, Cheshire Constabulary assesses vulnerability inconsistently. Officers use a standard DASH form for domestic abuse incidents or the vulnerable persons assessment (VPA) form when attending other relevant incidents. HMIC found that the forms are not always completed to the highest standard, and they are not signed-off by a supervisor prior to submission. However, all forms are scrutinised by a detective sergeant from the referral unit and incidents will only be closed once a risk assessment had been entered onto the incident log, which helps to ensure that opportunities are not missed. We found that the link between missing children and the risks of child sexual exploitation was recognised by officers and staff across the organisation. The constabulary has both a 'missing from home' co-ordinator and a child sexual exploitation co-ordinator who work closely with each other and ensure that information is shared is effectively.

Frontline staff were found to have a good understanding of their role in ensuring that initial safeguarding actions are put in place. HMIC found many examples of officers using their knowledge and understanding of risk to trigger further action. Cheshire Constabulary makes arrests in just over 60 percent of recorded domestic abuse crimes. This is above the rate for England and Wales and demonstrates a strong

---

[17] Derbyshire, Durham and Gloucestershire forces were not able to provide domestic abuse arrest data. Therefore, these forces' data are not included in the graph or in the calculation of the England and Wales rate.

commitment to protecting victims and pursuing suspects. We also found that 'the voice of the child' was being considered when officers attended domestic abuse incidents. The constabulary does not have access to body-worn video cameras and although HMIC accepts that the ability to record still images is available, this does not compensate for the compelling evidence that can be gathered by body-worn video cameras.

As part of the inspection methodology, we spoke with people from a cross-section of partner organisations. We found an overwhelming belief that Cheshire Constabulary is a driving force behind identifying and supporting vulnerable people at the first response. Partners spoke highly of the quality of referral forms (which have all been checked by a specialist sergeant) and believed that the multi-agency response provided by the 'single front door' ensures that the right agencies are able to put long-term safeguarding in place where necessary.

How effectively does the force investigate offences involving vulnerable victims and work with external partners to keep victims safe?

Those who are vulnerable often have complex and multiple needs that a police response alone cannot always meet. They may need support with housing, access to mental health services or support from social services. Nonetheless, the police still have an important responsibility to keep victims safe and investigate crimes. These crimes can be serious and complex (such as rape or violent offences). Their victims may appear to be reluctant to support the work of the police, often because they are being controlled by the perpetrator (such as victims of domestic abuse or child sexual exploitation).

Cheshire Constabulary investigates offences involving vulnerable people to a high standard. This was reflected in the review of a cross section of investigation files carried out as part of our inspection process. Offences linked to vulnerability are investigated by officers from within the public protection directorate (PPD). HMIC found officers within the department to be well trained and they are available between 8.00am and 10.00pm every day.

Of the files HMIC reviewed as having identified as involving a vulnerable victim, the vast majority of cases found that the investigation had completed all lines of enquiry and were well supervised. We found good evidence that the right staff with the right skills had been allocated quickly to these cases, and the resulting investigations were of a high standard, well-supervised and clearly focused on the victims' needs.

The constabulary makes wide use of preventative measures to place restrictions on perpetrators of offences against vulnerable victims. In the 12 months to 30 June 2016, the constabulary made 238 applications for Domestic Violence Prevention

Notices[18] of which 195 were granted by a superintendent. In the same time period, 5 DVPNs have were breached. The constabulary also applied for 191 Domestic Violence Prevention Orders[19] (DVPOs) at court of which 184 were granted, and 32 DVPOs have been breached. The constabulary has also been active with the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme.[20] In the 12 months to 30 June 2016, the 'Right to Ask' has been used 122 times and the 'Right to Know' has been used 101 times.

The constabulary has had two such incidents in which officers had abused their position of trust for sexual gain. One victim has refused support on the basis that she does not believe she has been a victim, while the second female has been fully supported by staff from the professional standards department.

Cheshire Constabulary works with partner organisations to ensure appropriate ongoing safeguarding arrangements are in place for vulnerable people. There are four multi-agency safeguarding hubs (MASHs) that are located within each of the four local authority areas. The constabulary has seen a rise in the number of cases discussed at multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARACs); in the 12 months to 31 March 2016, 1,706 cases were discussed compared to 1,476 in the same period in 2015. Officers play a prominent role in the MARAC proceedings with over half of referrals being made by the constabulary.

The constabulary is committed to Operation Encompass. This enables the sharing of information between the police and schools when a child has been exposed to an incident of domestic abuse. We spoke to several officers who were aware of the

---

[18] A DVPN is the initial notice issued by the police to provide emergency protection to an individual believed to be the victim of domestic violence. This notice, which must be authorised by a police superintendent, contains prohibitions that effectively bar the suspected perpetrator from returning to the victim's home or otherwise contacting the victim. A DVPN may be issued to a person aged 18 years and over if the police superintendent has reasonable grounds for believing that: the individual has been violent towards, or has threatened violence towards an associated person, and the DVPN is necessary to protect that person from violence or a threat of violence by the intended recipient of the DVPN.

[19] DVPOs are designed to provide protection to victims by enabling the police and magistrates courts to put in place protection in the immediate aftermath of a domestic abuse incident. Where there is insufficient evidence to charge a perpetrator and provide protection to a victim via bail conditions, a DVPO can prevent the perpetrator from returning to a residence and from having contact with the victim for up to 28 days, allowing the victim time to consider their options and get the support they need.

[20] The domestic violence disclosure scheme (DVDS), also known as Clare's Law, increases protection for domestic abuse victims and enables the police to better identify domestic abuse perpetrators. For more information see: www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/major-investigation-and-public-protection/domestic-abuse/leadership-strategic-oversight-and-management/#domestic-violence-disclosure-scheme-clares-law

commitment, and who recorded details of the child's school when attending domestic abuse incidents and passed this on to the appropriate authorities.

Victims of domestic abuse

In April 2015, the Home Office began collecting information from the police on whether recorded offences were related to domestic abuse. Crimes are identified by the police as domestic abuse related if the offence meets the government definition of domestic violence and abuse.[21]

The rate of outcomes recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2016 for domestic abuse offences is shown in figure 8. Domestic abuse crimes used in this calculation are not necessarily those to which the outcomes have been assigned and are only linked by the fact that they both occur in the 12 months to 30 June 2016. Therefore, direct comparisons should not be made between general outcomes in figure 4, where each crime is linked to its associated outcome (for further details see annex A).

Figure 8: Rate of outcomes recorded in 12 months to 30 June 2016 for domestic-related offences in Cheshire Constabulary[22]

Outcome type / group	Cheshire Constabulary	England and Wales
Charged / Summonsed	36.4	23.2
Caution – adults	3.1	5.6
Caution – youths	0.4	0.3
Community resolution	4.9	1.4
Evidential difficulties prevent further action; victim supports police action	13.9	24.1
Evidential difficulties prevent further action; victim does not support police action	32.8	35.4

Source: HMIC data return, Home Office data
For further information about these data, please see annex A

In the 12 months to 30 June 2016, Cheshire Constabulary's use of 'charged / summonsed' and 'community resolution' was among the highest in England and Wales in cases with identified domestic abuse. However, any interpretation of outcomes should take into account that outcomes will vary dependent on the crime types that occur in each force area, and how it deals with offenders for different crimes.

---

[21] Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.

[22] Dorset Police and Nottinghamshire Police were unable to submit domestic abuse outcomes data. Therefore, these forces' data are not included in the graph or in the calculation of the national rate.

Summary of findings

Good

Cheshire Constabulary is good at protecting vulnerable people from harm and supporting victims.

The constabulary has continued to build on its support and provision of services to vulnerable people. We are pleased to see that it has continued to develop its understanding of hidden crimes such as child sexual exploitation and domestic abuse and is working towards an improved understanding of modern-day slavery, so-called honour based violence and female genital mutilation. Operation Emblem (mental health street triage) which was being trialled in one area last year has now been implemented across the four local authority areas that the constabulary covers.

The constabulary identifies vulnerability at the first point of contact and investigates criminality linked to vulnerability to a high standard, with good levels of supervision. The constabulary works well with partner organisations and provides effective safeguarding support. It makes good use of restrictive orders such as DVPNs and DVPOs and supports the Right to Ask process. The constabulary is particularly effective at arresting the perpetrators of domestic violence and has achieved the highest rate of charging of any constabulary in England or Wales.

The constabulary does however need to ensure that response officers become more effective at identifying vulnerable people on first attendance and that sufficient supervision is in place to ensure that opportunities are not missed. Body-worn video cameras are still not available, although the increased availability of remote working devices will enhance officers' ability to take digital images of victims of domestic violence.

Area for improvement

- The constabulary should ensure that response officers become more proficient at completing risk assessments at initial response, and provide sufficient supervisory oversight to prevent opportunities to safeguard vulnerable victims from being missed.

# How effective is the force at tackling serious and organised crime?

Serious and organised crime poses a threat to the public across the whole of the UK and beyond. Individuals, communities and businesses feel its damaging effects. Police forces have a critical role in tackling serious and organised crime alongside regional organised crime units (ROCUs), the National Crime Agency (NCA) and other partner organisations. Police forces that are effective in this area of policing tackle serious and organised crime not just by prosecuting offenders, but by disrupting and preventing organised criminality at a local level.

How effectively does the force understand the threat and risk posed by serious and organised crime?

In order to tackle serious and organised crime effectively forces must first have a good understanding of the threats it poses to their communities. Forces should be using a range of intelligence (not just from the police but also from other partner organisations) to understand threats and risks, from traditional organised crime such as drug dealing and money laundering to the more recently-understood threats such as cyber-crime and child sexual exploitation.

As at 1 July 2016, Cheshire Constabulary was actively disrupting, investigating or monitoring 33 organised crime groups (OCGs) per one million of the population. This compares to 46 OCGs per one million of the population across England and Wales.

Figure 9: Organised crime groups per one million population, by force, as at 1 July 2016[23]
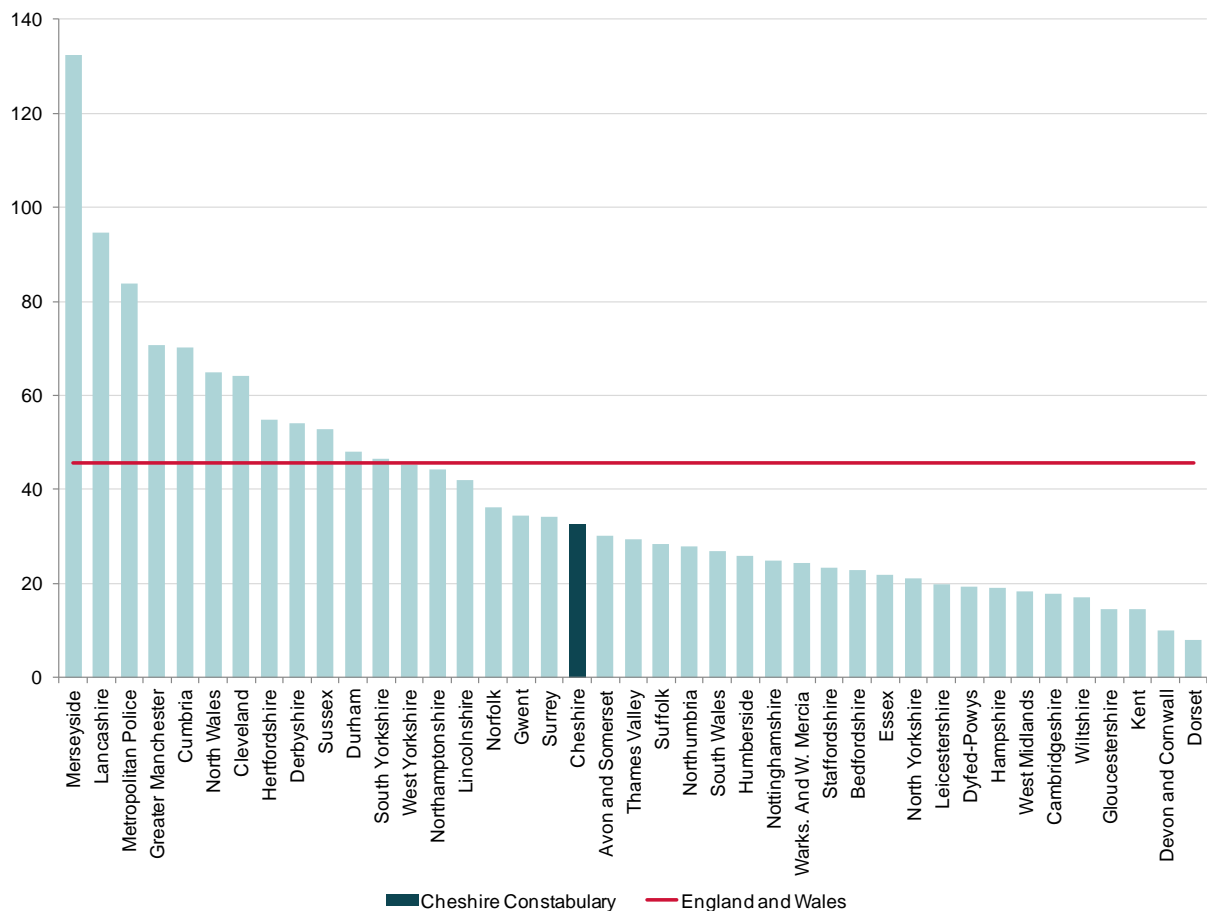
Source: HMIC data return
For further information about these data, please see annex A

 Forces categorise OCGs by the predominant form of criminal activity in which the group is involved. Although OCGs are likely to be involved in multiple forms of criminality (for example groups supplying drugs may also be supplying firearms and be involved in money laundering), this indicates their most common characteristic. 'Drug activity' was the most common predominant crime type of the OCGs managed by Cheshire Constabulary as at 1 July 2016. This was also the most common OCG crime type recorded by all forces in England and Wales.

---

[23] City of London Police data have been removed from the chart and the national rate as its OCG data are not comparable with other forces due to size and its wider national remit.

Figure 10: Active organised crime groups by predominant crime type in Cheshire, as at 1 July 2016

Cheshire Constabulary

England and Wales

- ■ Drug activity
- ■ Specialist money laundering
- ■ Economic crime
- ■ Violent criminal activity
- ■ Other
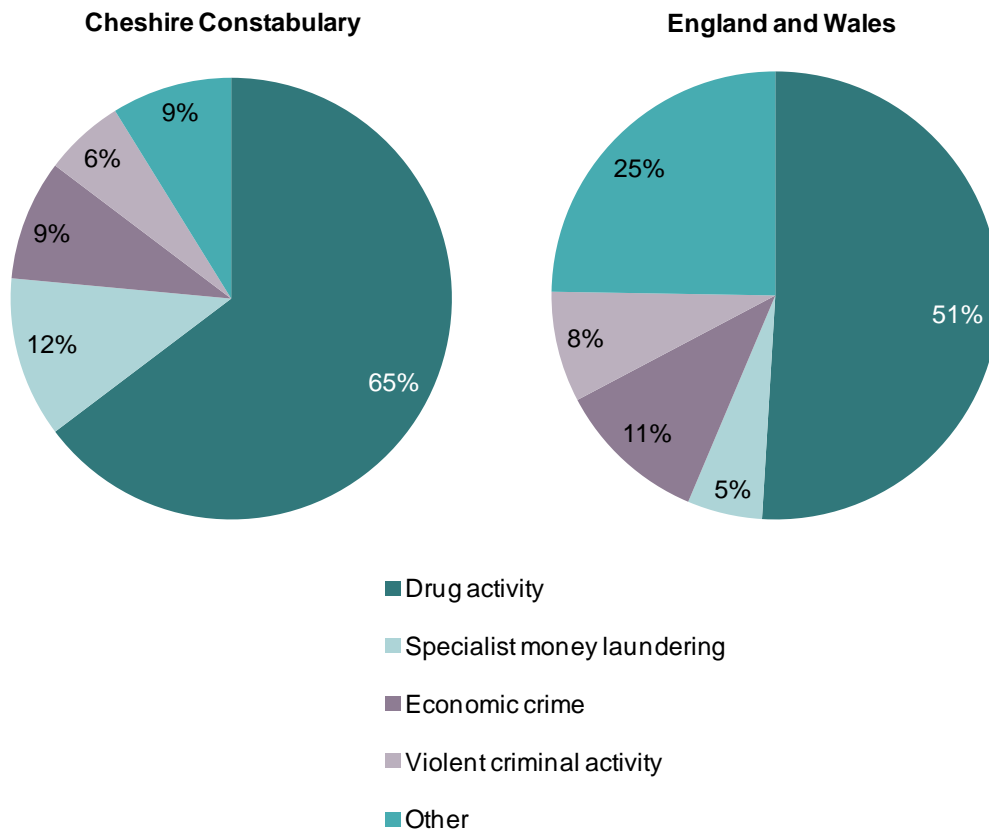
Source: HMIC data return
Note: Figures may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding. For further information about these data, please see annex A.

Cheshire Constabulary has a good understanding of the threat posed by serious and organised crime and has either completed or has plans to complete problem profiles on emerging threats such as child sexual abuse, cyber-crime and modern slavery. The constabulary has recognised that there are intelligence gaps around emerging crime types and has put a number of recommendations forward in order to improve this position. Its strategic threat and risk assessment (STRA) is completed on an annual basis and contains specific detail relating to serious and organised crime. The STRA gives due consideration to the main serious and organised crime threats, including those identified by the National Crime Agency. The constabulary introduced the nationally-recognised MoRILE risk assessment process two years ago, which it has used to support the production of its STRA.

In HMIC's 2015 effectiveness report, the constabulary was given an area for improvement relating to the inclusion of data from partner agencies in its serious and organised crime local profiles. We are pleased to see that the constabulary has now completed four serious and organised crime local profiles, covering each of the four

local authority areas, that include data from partners. This has improved the constabulary's understanding of organised crime, although it should continue to develop and refresh the profiles on a regular basis.

The constabulary has the capability to gather intelligence from a variety of sources and there is sufficient oversight and analysis to identify any gaps in coverage. The constabulary's decision to retain intelligence officers within each of the eight LPUs has enabled a greater degree of local responsibility to gather intelligence on crime groups. The constabulary works closely with neighbouring forces such as Greater Manchester Police and Merseyside Police, as they both have organised crime groups actively engaged in criminality within the Cheshire area. The constabulary's relationship with the North West Regional Organised Crime Unit (ROCU) is effective and the constabulary has access to prison intelligence and the Government Agency Intelligence Network (GAIN) as and when required.

Cheshire Constabulary was given a further area for improvement in HMIC's 2015 effectiveness report:

> "The constabulary should improve the awareness of organised crime groups among neighbourhood teams to ensure that they can reliably identify these groups, proactively collect intelligence and disrupt their activity."

HMIC spoke to staff across the organisation and is satisfied that there is a much greater understanding of their role in gathering intelligence and disrupting organised crime groups. This has been achieved through regular briefings and the introduction of 'OCG on a Page' which provides all the pertinent information on OCGs that are active in the area.

Organised crime group mapping is completed by the constabulary in line with national guidelines. The re-scoring process takes place on a regular basis which is also in line with national requirements. Officers are encouraged to identify emerging organised crime groups and have a good understanding of their role in gathering intelligence and disrupting OCGs when opportunities arise. Each of the scored OCGs has an appointed lead responsible officer (LRO) who is generally the detective inspector from the LPU.

How effectively does the force respond to serious and organised crime?

An effective force will pursue and prosecute offenders and disrupt organised criminality at a local level. The force will use specialist capabilities, both in the force and at regional level, and non-specialist capabilities such as its neighbourhood teams. While it can be complex for a force to assess the success of its actions against serious and organised crime, it is important that the force understands the extent to which it disrupts this crime and reduces harm.

Cheshire Constabulary has access to sufficient capacity and capability to deal with emerging threats from organised crime groups operating within its area. The constabulary has an established governance structure which ensures that each of the LPUs aligned with the four local authority areas meets on a monthly basis to assess progress in tackling organised crime groups. The constabulary also has a monthly covert task assignment and co-ordination meeting which is used to make decisions regarding the use of the constabulary's assets, (including covert assets) to ensure that they are aligned with respond to priorities that represent the greatest threat, risk and opportunity to the constabulary. The constabulary has the capability to assess emerging threats on a daily basis through management meetings, and is able to direct constabulary resources to mitigate threats from organised crime if required.

Each organised crime group has an assigned lead responsible officer (LRO) who is held to account on a monthly basis. We found the LROs to be enthusiastic with a good understanding of their role and the operational tactics were available to them. LROs have clear operational objectives set at the start of each operation and are held to account for achieving them. Each plan is built around the four elements of the government's serious and organised crime strategy (Pursue, Prevent, Protect, Prepare), however the vast majority of activity is undertaken within the 'pursue' element. LROs should routinely consider 'prevent, protect and prepare' as part of the OCG management process. Sufficient expert knowledge is available to LROs to provide guidance should it be required.

Cheshire Constabulary has a good relationship with the north west's ROCU, known as 'Titan'. The constabulary has provided a detailed action plan for improving its collaboration with Titan. The plan was produced in a common format for all forces in the north-west region and addresses all three principal issues (maximising use of specialist capabilities, minimising duplication, and prioritisation). The constabulary has its own internal capability to covertly target crime groups and further support is available from Titan and the NCA should it be required.

The constabulary has established local organised crime partnership board meetings in each of the four local authority areas. These are in the early stages of development, with the constabulary aspiring to have a constabulary-wide partnership board in the future, as envisaged by the national strategy. This would enhance the constabulary's ability to harness the intelligence and powers of partner agencies in the fight against organised crime.

Cheshire Constabulary has only recently introduced a consistent approach to measuring disruption activity that is in line with national guidance. This provides the opportunity for the constabulary to develop an understanding of where the greatest threat is. The constabulary works with the Government Agency Intelligence Network

(GAIN)[24] and the constabulary was above the England and Wales rate for GAIN referrals made during the previous 12 months. The constabulary has links to prison intelligence through the regional Prison Intelligence Unit and makes use of the national referral mechanism when reporting incidents of human trafficking. The constabulary has recently transferred its undercover capability to Titan, which is a positive development and will provide access to specialist support as and when required, without it having to maintain a separate unit.

Neighbourhood teams are used in the fight against organised crime. This is predominantly in the form of disruption activity which includes activity such as compliance of bail conditions and disqualified driver checks. Local teams are also used when the constabulary takes a more proactive approach during the investigation stage. This is limited to the execution of warrants, however it is an example of the constabulary using all available assets to impact on criminals linked to organised crime.

How effectively does the force prevent serious and organised crime?

A force that effectively tackles serious and organised crime needs to be able to stop people being drawn in to this crime. Many of these people may be vulnerable and already involved in gang and youth violence. It should also be using a range of approaches and powers to prevent those known criminals continuing to cause harm. HMIC expects a force's approach to prevention to be a significant element of its overall strategy to tackle the harm that serious and organised crime causes communities.

Cheshire Constabulary is yet to fully establish working arrangements with partner organisations which would deter people from being drawn into organised crime. There are, however, several initiatives that have been introduced to prevent people being involved in serious and organised crime. One such initiative provides the opportunity for offices to submit a risk assessment (known as a vulnerable person assessment form) for family members of individuals linked to organised crime into the 'single front door' system as described previously in this report. This provides an opportunity for early intervention to take place. This concept is in its early stages and, as yet, we are not in a position to identify any successful outcomes from this activity. The 'complex families' programme is another means by which the constabulary works with partner organisations to prevent younger siblings being drawn into organised crime, but the constabulary was not able to provide tangible evidence of the success of this approach. The IOM scheme is limited to serious acquisitive crime offenders and although a very small number of the cohort has links

---

[24] The Government Agency Intelligence Network (GAIN) is a large network of partners, including all police forces in England and Wales, which shares information about organised criminals.

to organised crime, this was not the reason why they had been selected. The constabulary plans to change the selection remit of the scheme to include OCG members; however this is still some time away.

Cheshire Constabulary has a limited approach to the lifetime management of offenders to prevent them from re-offending. Activity is limited to the monitoring of convicted prisoners as they move through the prison system and OCG members are referred to the LPU intelligence unit to raise an alert when they are due for release. The constabulary recognises that more could be done to enhance the use of ancillary orders which at this time is restricted to only two serious crime prevention orders, both of which apply to offenders who are still in custody.

Cheshire Constabulary communicates regularly with the public about serious and organised crime. Dedicated school liaison officers visit schools and provide advice and guidance about the risks associated with being drawn into organised crime. Operations targeting organised crime groups have media plans to ensure that messages resulting from seizures or convictions are provided to the public. The aim is to deter those on the periphery of organised crime, and offer reassurance to the wider community. The constabulary also has an established process for providing preventative advice to vulnerable sections of the community. Operation Signature, which supports elderly and vulnerable victims of online fraud, is being tested within the constabulary. The economic crime unit publishes a monthly bulletin via social media and email alerts, highlighting the 'scam of the month'.

Summary of findings

Good

Cheshire Constabulary is assessed as being good at tackling serious and organised crime.

The constabulary has improved from last year's judgment in which it was assessed as requiring improvement. The constabulary has now developed four serious and organised crime local profiles, complete with partnership data, which has improved its understanding of threats. HMIC also found that neighbourhood officers had a much greater understanding of how serious and organised crime affects their local community and the role they play in gathering intelligence and disrupting organised crime groups.

The constabulary has well-established mapping processes which follow national guidelines and it has recently introduced a consistent process for measuring the impact of disruption activity. It also has the capability to deal with the organised crime groups that create the greatest threat and additional support is provided by the

regional organised crime unit. However, greater effort could be made towards lifetime offender management and as the local strategic partnership boards develop, establish a greater emphasis in preventative activity.

Areas for improvement

- The constabulary should engage routinely with partner agencies at a senior level to enhance intelligence sharing and promote an effective, multi-agency response to serious and organised crime.

- The constabulary should take steps to identify those at risk of being drawn into serious and organised crime, and ensure that preventative initiatives are put in place with partner organisations to deter them from offending.

- The constabulary 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, partner agency powers and other tools to deter organised criminals from continuing to offend.

How effective are the force's specialist capabilities?

Some complex threats require both a specialist capability and forces to work together to respond to them. This question assesses both the overall preparedness of forces to work together on a number of strategic threats and whether forces have a good understanding of the threat presented by firearms incidents and how equipped they are to meet this threat.

How effective are the force's arrangements to ensure that it can fulfil its national policing responsibilities?

The *Strategic Policing Requirement* (SPR)[25] specifies six national threats. These are complex threats and forces need to be able to work together if they are to respond to them effectively. These include serious and organised crime, terrorism, serious cyber-crime incidents and child sexual abuse. It is beyond the scope of this inspection to assess in detail whether forces are capable of responding to these national threats. Instead, HMIC has checked whether forces have made the necessary arrangements to test their own preparedness for dealing with these threats should they materialise.

Cheshire Constabulary has the necessary arrangements in place to ensure that it can fulfil its national policing responsibilities. The constabulary has assessed the threats set out in *Strategic Policing Requirement* (public order, civil contingencies, serious and organised crime, cyber-crime, child sexual exploitation and counter terrorism). HMIC found evidence of the constabulary undertaking regular exercises and deployments to ensure that it is ready to meet the requirements demanded of it. The constabulary has conducted a range of exercises in the previous 12 months, including some major live exercises and several exercises designed to test its ability to respond to flooding and severe weather. The constabulary continues to test locally its ability to respond to incidents at the numerous sites throughout the county whose operation is subject to the Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) Regulations.[26]

---

[25] The SPR is issued annually by the Home Secretary, setting out the latest national threats and the appropriate national policing capabilities required to counter those threats. National threats require a co-ordinated or aggregated response from a number of police forces. Forces often need to work collaboratively, and with other partners, national agencies or national arrangements, to ensure such threats are tackled effectively. *Strategic Policing Requirement*, Home Office, March 2015. Available at:
www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/417116/The_Strategic_Policing_Requirement.pdf

[26] Sites are subject to COMAH Regulations if certain dangerous substances are present at or above the qualifying thresholds in the Regulations. For more information see
www.hse.gov.uk/comah/comah-establishments.htm

How well prepared is the force to respond to a firearms attack?

Following the terrorist attacks in Paris on 13 November 2015, the government allocated £143 million to the 43 England and Wales police forces to increase their armed capability. This funding has enabled some forces to increase the number of armed police officers able to respond to a terrorist attack. These attacks include those committed by heavily armed terrorists across multiple sites in quick succession, as in Paris. These attacks are known as marauding terrorist firearms attacks. The funding is for those forces considered to be at greatest risk of a terrorist attack. This also has the effect of increasing the ability of the police service to respond to other forms of terrorist attacks (and another incident requiring an armed policing response). Forces have begun to recruit and train new armed officers. This process is due to be completed by March 2018.

Cheshire Constabulary is part of an operational firearms alliance with North Wales Police where armed response vehicles (ARVs) are fully deployable, by either force, across the two force areas.

As one of six forces in the North West region, Cheshire Constabulary contributes to the completion of a regional annual armed policing strategic threat and risk assessment (APSTRA) to enable it to understand and respond to identified threats. The region last updated the APSTRA in February 2016. The region's threat assessment used a wide range of intelligence sources to assess threat and risk, including national counterterrorism and crime assessments, as well as regional organised crime group threats and force demand analysis. The assessment was in line with the national guidance and codes of practice and has been refreshed since the Paris attacks. Cheshire Constabulary is aware of its broader national responsibilities to support other forces in response to national threats.

As a result of this threat assessment, the constabulary has reviewed its capacity and capability. The constabulary maintains its own cohort of armed officers trained in close protection and a small number of rifle officers. Other firearms resources are available to the constabulary via the service level agreement agreed between all six forces in the north-west region and the National Crime Agency.

The constabulary is providing appropriate training to its firearms officers in the light of current threats, including joint firearms training with other regional forces and partners. It works with surrounding forces to provide mutual support in the case of a terrorist incident. All firearms commanders attend regular training, including joint agency training and training to respond to a marauding terrorist attack involving firearms.

Summary of findings

Ungraded

Cheshire Constabulary has effective specialist capabilities and has good plans in place to mobilise in response to the threats set out in the *Strategic Policing Requirement*. The constabulary regularly takes part in regional exercises to test these plans and makes amendments following the lessons learned. Over the past twelve months the constabulary has taken part in over twenty exercises.

Specialist resources are available to Cheshire Constabulary, both locally through the alliance with North Wales Police, and via the regional service level agreement, as part of its preparation for a firearms attack. The constabulary has reviewed recently its assessment of threat, risk and harm and this now includes the threats posed by marauding firearms terrorists.

Next steps

HMIC assesses progress on causes of concern and areas for improvement identified within its reports in a number of ways. We receive updates through our regular conversations with forces, re-assess as part of our annual PEEL programme, and, in the most serious cases, revisit forces.

HMIC highlights recurring themes emerging from our PEEL inspections of police forces within our national reports on police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy. These reports identify those issues that are reflected across England and Wales and may contain additional recommendations directed at national policing organisations, including the Home Office, where we believe improvements can be made at a national level.

Findings and judgments from this year's PEEL effectiveness inspection will be used to direct the design of the next cycle of PEEL effectiveness assessments. The specific areas for assessment are yet to be confirmed, based on further consultation, but we will continue to assess how forces keep people safe and reduce crime to ensure our findings are comparable year on year.

Annex A – About the data

The information presented in this report comes from a range of sources, including published data by the Home Office and Office for National Statistics, inspection fieldwork and data collected directly from all 43 geographic police forces in England and Wales.

Where HMIC has collected data directly from police forces, we have taken reasonable steps to agree the design of the data collection with forces and with other relevant interested parties such as the Home Office. We have given forces several opportunities to check and validate the data they have provided us to ensure the accuracy of our evidence. For instance:

- We checked the data that forces submitted and queried with forces where figures were notably different from other forces or were internally inconsistent.

- We asked all forces to check the final data used in the report and correct any errors identified.

The source of the data is presented with each figure in the report, and is set out in more detail in this annex. The source of Force in numbers data is also set out below.

Methodology

Data in the report

The British Transport Police was outside the scope of inspection. Therefore any aggregated totals for England and Wales exclude British Transport Police data and numbers will differ from those published by the Home Office.

Where other forces have been unable to supply data, this is mentioned under the relevant sections below.

Population

For all uses of population as a denominator in our calculations, unless otherwise noted, we use Office for National Statistics (ONS) mid-2015 population estimates. These were the most recent data available at the time of the inspection.

For the specific case of City of London Police, we include both resident and transient population within our calculations. This is to account for the unique nature and demographics of this force's responsibility.

Survey of police staff

HMIC conducted a short survey of police staff across forces in England and Wales, to understand their views on workloads, redeployment and the suitability of tasks assigned to them. The survey was a non-statistical, voluntary sample which means that results may not be representative of the population. The number of responses varied between 8 and 2,471 across forces. Therefore, we treated results with caution and used them for exploring further during fieldwork rather than to assess individual force performance.

Ipsos MORI survey of public attitudes towards policing

HMIC commissioned Ipsos MORI to conduct a survey of attitudes towards policing between July and August 2016. Respondents were drawn from an online panel and results were weighted by age, gender and work status to match the population profile of the force area. The sampling method used is not a statistical random sample and the sample size was small, varying between 331 to 429 in each force area. Therefore, any results provided are only an indication of satisfaction rather than an absolute.

The findings of this survey will be shared on our website by summer 2017:

www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/data/peel-assessments/

Review of crime files

HMIC reviewed 60 police case files across crime types for: robbery, common assault (flagged as domestic abuse), grievous bodily harm (GBH), stalking, harassment, rape and domestic burglary. The file review was designed to provide a broad overview of the identification of vulnerability, the effectiveness of investigations and to understand how victims are treated through police processes. Files were randomly selected from crimes recorded between 1 January 2016 and 31 March 2016 and were assessed against several criteria. Due to the small sample size of cases selected, we have not used results from the file review as the sole basis for assessing individual force performance but alongside other evidence gathered.

Force in numbers

A dash in this graphic indicates that a force was not able to supply HMIC with data.

Calls for assistance (including those for domestic abuse)

These data were collected directly from all 43 forces. In 2016, the questions contained a different breakdown of instances where the police were called to an incident compared to the 2015 data collection, so direct comparisons to the equivalent 2015 data are not advised.

Recorded crime and crime outcomes

These data are obtained from Home Office police-recorded crime and outcomes data tables for the 12 months to 30 June 2016 and are taken from the October 2016 Home Office data release, which is available from:

www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-recorded-crime-open-data-tables

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

Figures about police-recorded crime should be treated with care, as recent increases are likely to have been affected by the renewed focus on the quality and compliance of crime recording since HMIC's national inspection of crime data in 2014.

For crime outcomes, Dorset Police has been excluded from the England and Wales figure. Dorset Police experienced difficulties with the recording of crime outcomes for the 12 months to 30 June 2016. This was due to the force introducing the Niche records management system in Spring 2015. Problems with the implementation of Niche meant that crime outcomes were not reliably recorded. The failure to file investigations properly meant that a higher than normal proportion of offences were allocated to 'Not yet assigned an outcome'. During 2016, the force conducted additional work to solve the problem. In doing so, some crime outcomes from the 12 months to 30 June 2016 were updated after that date and are reflected in a later period. This makes Dorset Police's crime outcome data inconsistent with that provided by other forces. HMIC has decided not to use Dorset Police's outcome data in the interests of consistency of data use and to maintain fairness to all forces.

Other notable points to consider when interpreting outcome data are listed below and also apply to figure 4.

- For a full commentary and explanation of outcome types please see Crime Outcomes in England and Wales: year ending March 2016, Home Office, July 2016. Available from: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/53944 7/crime-outcomes-hosb0616.pdf

- Crime outcome proportions show the percentage of crimes recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2016 that have been assigned each outcome. This means that each crime is tracked or linked to its outcome.

- These data are subject to change, as more crimes are assigned outcomes over time. These data are taken from the October 2016 Home Office data release.

- Providing outcomes data under the new framework is voluntary if not provided directly through the Home Office Data Hub. However, as proportions are used, calculations can be based on fewer than four quarters of data. For the 12 months to 30 June 2016, Derbyshire Constabulary and Suffolk Constabulary were unable to provide the last quarter of data. Therefore, their figures are based on the first three quarters of the year.

- Leicestershire, Staffordshire and West Yorkshire forces are participating in the Ministry of Justice's out of court disposals pilot. This means these forces no longer issue simple cautions or cannabis/khat warnings and they restrict their use of penalty notices for disorder as disposal options for adult offenders, as part of the pilot. Therefore, their outcomes data should be viewed with this in mind.

- It is important to note that the outcomes that are displayed in figure 8 are based on the number of outcomes recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2016, irrespective of when the crime was recorded. Therefore, the crimes and outcomes recorded in the reporting year are not tracked, so direct comparisons should not be made between general outcomes and domestic abuse related outcomes in this report. For more details about the methodology for domestic abuse outcomes please see explanatory notes below, under figure 8.

Anti-social behaviour

These data are obtained from Office for National Statistics data tables, available from: www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/policeforceareadatatables

All police forces record incidents of anti-social behaviour reported to them in accordance with the provisions of the National Standard for Incident Recording (NSIR). Incidents are recorded under NSIR in accordance with the same 'victim focused' approach that applies for recorded crime, although these figures are not subject to the same level of quality assurance as the main recorded crime collection. Incident counts should be interpreted as incidents recorded by the police, rather than reflecting the true level of victimisation. Other agencies also deal with anti-social behaviour incidents (for example, local authorities and social landlords); incidents reported to these agencies will not generally be included in police figures.

When viewing this data the user should be aware of the following:

- Warwickshire Police had a problem with its incident recording. For a small percentage of all incidents reported during 2014-15 and 2015-16 it was not possible for the force to identify whether these were anti-social behaviour or other types of incident. These incidents have been distributed pro rata for

Warwickshire, so that one percent of anti-social behaviour in 2014-15 and two percent of anti-social behaviour in 2015-16 are estimated.

- From May 2014, South Yorkshire Police experienced difficulties in reporting those incidents of anti-social behaviour that resulted from how it processed calls for assistance, specifically for scheduled appointments. In November 2016, South Yorkshire Police resolved this problem and resubmitted anti-social behaviour data to Office for National Statistics. HMIC has used corrected data for South Yorkshire Police which are available in the November 2016 release of anti-social behaviour incidents data in the link above.

- Bedfordshire Police resubmitted anti-social behaviour data to Office for National Statistics for the 12 months to 30 June 2016. This was because data had been double counted for the second quarter of the financial year. HMIC has used corrected data for Bedfordshire Police which are available in the November 2016 release of anti-social behaviour incidents data in the link above.

Domestic abuse

Data for domestic abuse flagged offences were provided by the Home Office for the 12 months to 30 June 2016. These are more recent figures than those previously published by Office for National Statistics.

Data relating to domestic abuse arrests, charges and outcomes were collected through the HMIC data collection.

Further information about the domestic abuse statistics and recent releases are available from:

www.ons.gov.uk/releases/domesticabuseinenglandandwalesyearendingmarch2016

Organised crime groups (OCGs)

These data were collected directly from all 43 forces. City of London Police is excluded from the England and Wales rate as its OCG data are not comparable with other forces due to size and its wider national remit.

The number of OCGs in the Warwickshire Police and West Mercia Police force areas is a combined total of OCGs for the two force areas. The OCGs per one million population rate is based upon their areas' combined population figures.

OCGs which are no longer active – for example because they have been dismantled by the police – can be archived. This means that they are no longer subject to disruption, investigation or monitoring. From 1 September 2014 to 31 December 2015, forces were given a directive by the National Police Chiefs' Council to suspend archiving, pending a review of OCG recording policy. This directive was removed on

1 January 2016, but resulted in many forces archiving more OCGs than they otherwise would have in the 12 months to June 2016. Therefore, direct comparisons should not be made with OCG figures from previous years.

Victim satisfaction

Forces were required by the Home Office to conduct satisfaction surveys with specific victim groups. Force victim satisfaction surveys are structured around principal questions exploring satisfaction responses across four stages of interactions:

- initial contact;

- actions;

- follow-up;

- treatment plus the whole experience.

The data used in this report use the results to the question relating to the victim's whole experience, which specifically asks, "Taking the whole experience into account, are you satisfied, dissatisfied, or neither with the service provided by the police in this case?"

The England and Wales average is calculated based on the average of the rates of satisfaction in all 43 forces.

Figures throughout the report

Figure 1: Police-recorded crime rates (per 1,000 population) for the five year period to 30 June 2016

Please see 'Recorded Crime and Crime Outcomes' above.

Figure 2: Police-recorded crime rates (per 1,000 population) for the 12 months to 30 June 2016

Please see 'Recorded Crime and Crime Outcomes' above.

Figure 3: Percentage change in the rate of anti-social behaviour incidents (per 1,000 population), by force, comparing the 12 months to 31 March 2016 with the 12 months to 31 March 2015

Please see 'Anti-social behaviour' above.

Figure 4: Proportion of outcomes assigned to offences recorded, in 12 months to 30 June 2016, by outcome type

Please see 'Recorded Crime and Crime Outcomes' above.

The outcome number has been provided to improve usability across multiple publications and is in line with Home Office categorisation.

For these data, we state whether the force's value is 'one of the highest', 'one of the lowest' or 'broadly in line with' all forces in England and Wales. This is calculated by ranking the usage of outcomes and then highlighting the top and bottom 25 percent of forces. All other forces will be broadly in line with England and Wales. However, any interpretation of outcomes should take into account that outcomes will vary dependent on the crime types that occur in each force area, and how the force deals with offenders for different crimes.

This methodology is not comparable with figure 8, so direct comparisons should not be made between the two tables.

Figure 5: Percentage of 'Evidential difficulties; victim does not support action' outcomes assigned to offences recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2016, by force

Please see 'Recorded Crime and Crime Outcomes' above.

In addition, it is important to understand that the percentages of evidential difficulties can be affected by the level of certain types of crime within a force, such as domestic abuse related offences. The category of evidential difficulties also includes where a suspect has been identified and the victim supports police action, but evidential difficulties prevent further action being taken.

Figure 6: Percentage of police recorded crime with a vulnerable victim identified, by force, for the 12 months to 30 June 2016

Please see 'Recorded Crime and Crime Outcomes' above.

The number of offences identified with a vulnerable victim in a force is dependent on the force's definition of vulnerability.

City of London, Devon and Cornwall, Essex, Gloucestershire and Lancashire forces were unable to provide data for the number of recorded crimes with a vulnerable victim identified. Therefore, these forces' data are not included in the graph or in the calculation of the England and Wales rate.

When viewing this data the user should be aware of the following:

- Suffolk Constabulary was only able to provide eight months of vulnerability data to the 30 June 2016 due to transferring to a different crime management system. Its previous system did not record vulnerability. Therefore, these are the most reliable data it can provide.

Figure 7: Domestic abuse arrest rate (per 100 domestic abuse crimes), by force, for the 12 months to 30 June 2016

Please see 'Domestic abuse' above.

Derbyshire, Durham and Gloucestershire forces were unable to provide domestic abuse arrest data. Therefore, these forces' data are not included in the graph or in the calculation of the England and Wales rate.

The arrest rate is calculated using a common time period for arrests and offences. It is important to note that each arrest is not necessarily directly linked to its specific domestic abuse offence recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2016 in this calculation. It is also possible to have more than one arrest per offence although this is rare. In addition, the reader should note the increase in police-recorded crime which has affected the majority of forces over the last year (39 out of 43). This may have the effect of arrest rates actually being higher than the figures suggest. Despite this, the calculation still indicates whether the force prioritises arrests for domestic abuse offenders over other potential forms of action. HMIC has evaluated the arrest rate alongside other measures (such as use of voluntary attendance or body-worn video cameras) during our inspection process to understand how each force deals with domestic abuse overall.

When viewing this data the user should be aware of the following:

- Cambridgeshire Constabulary identified a recording issue and that it could only obtain accurate data from a manual audit of its custody records. This means its data may indicate a lower arrest rate. However, at the time of publication this was the most reliable figure the force could provide for the 12 months to 30 June 2016. The force plans to conduct regular manual audits while the recording issue is resolved. HMIC will conduct a further review to test this evidence when more data are available.

- Lancashire Constabulary experienced difficulties in identifying all domestic abuse flagged arrests. This affected 23 days in the 12 months to 30 June 2016. The force investigated this and confirmed that the impact on data provided to HMIC would be marginal and that these are the most reliable figures it can provide.

Figure 8: Rate of outcomes recorded in 12 months to 30 June 2016 for domestic-related offences

Please see 'Domestic Abuse' above.

Dorset Police is excluded from our data for the reasons described under 'Recorded Crime and Crime Outcomes' above.

Nottinghamshire Police has been excluded from domestic abuse outcomes data. The force experienced difficulties with the conversion of some crime data when it

moved to a new crime recording system. This means that the force did not record reliably some crime outcomes for domestic abuse related offences. The force subsequently solved the problem and provided updated outcomes figures. However, this makes Nottinghamshire Police's outcomes data for domestic abuse related offences inconsistent with that provided by other forces. HMIC has decided not to use Nottinghamshire Police's outcomes data for domestic abuse related offences in the interests of consistency of data use and to maintain fairness to all forces.

In April 2015, the Home Office began collecting information from the police on whether recorded offences were related to domestic abuse. Crimes are identified by the police as domestic abuse related if the offence meets the government definition of domestic violence and abuse:

"Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality."

In figure 8, the rate is calculated by the number of each outcome recorded for domestic abuse flagged offences in the 12 months to 30 June 2016, divided by the total number of domestic abuse offences recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2016. The domestic abuse-related crimes used in this calculation are not necessarily those to which the outcomes have been assigned. Therefore, direct comparisons should not be made between general outcomes in figure 4, where each crime is linked to its associated outcome, and domestic abuse outcomes in figure 8.

For these data, we state whether the force's value is 'one of the highest', 'one of the lowest' or 'broadly in line with' all forces in England and Wales. This is calculated by ranking the usage of outcomes and then highlighting the top and bottom 25 percent of forces. All other forces will be broadly in line with England and Wales. However, any interpretation of outcomes should take into account that outcomes will vary dependent on the crime types that occur in each force area, and how the force deals with offenders for different crimes.

Figure 9: Organised crime groups per one million population, by force, as at 1 July 2016

Please see 'Organised Crime Groups' above.

Figure 10: Active organised crime groups by predominant crime type, as at 1 July 2016

Humberside Police was unable to provide the full data for predominant crime types in the time available. Therefore, this force's data are not included in the graph or in the calculation of the England and Wales proportion.

Numbers may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.