



Promoting improvements
in policing to make
everyone safer

PEEL: Police effectiveness 2016

An inspection of Merseyside Police



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Contents

Introduction	4
Force in numbers	5
Overview – How effective is the force at keeping people safe and reducing crime?	7
How effective is the force at preventing crime, tackling anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe?	9
How much crime and anti-social behaviour is there in Merseyside?	9
How effectively does the force understand the threat or risk of harm within the communities it serves?	12
How effectively do force actions and activities prevent crime and anti-social behaviour?	14
Summary of findings	18
How effective is the force at investigating crime and reducing re-offending? .	19
How well does the force bring offenders to justice?	19
How effective is the force's initial investigative response?	21
How effective is the force's subsequent investigation?	23
How effectively does the force reduce re-offending?	27
Summary of findings	30
How effective is the force at protecting those who are vulnerable from harm, and supporting victims?	32
How effectively does the force identify those who are vulnerable and assess their level of risk and need?	32
How effectively does the force initially respond to vulnerable victims?	36
How effectively does the force investigate offences involving vulnerable victims and work with external partners to keep victims safe?	38
Summary of findings	40
How effective is the force at tackling serious and organised crime?	42

How effectively does the force understand the threat and risk posed by serious and organised crime?	42
How effectively does the force respond to serious and organised crime?	45
How effectively does the force prevent serious and organised crime?	47
Summary of findings	49
How effective are the force's specialist capabilities?.....	50
How effective are the force's arrangements to ensure that it can fulfil its national policing responsibilities?	50
How well prepared is the force to respond to a firearms attack?	51
Summary of findings	52
Next steps	53
Annex A – About the data.....	54

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 Merseyside Police.

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/merseyside/).

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

Merseyide Police

318

England and Wales

240



Crime (excluding fraud)

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

Merseyide Police

74

England and Wales

68

Change in recorded crime 12 months to 30 June 2015 against 12 months to 30 June 2016

Merseyide Police

+3.2%

England and Wales

+7.8%

Change in recorded crime for the 5 years to the 12 months to 30 June 2016

Merseyide Police

+3.6%

England and Wales

-3.4%



Crime outcomes*

Charged/summonsed

Merseyide Police

12.2%

England and Wales

12.1%

Evidential difficulties: suspect identified but victim does not support action

Merseyide Police

9.2%

England and Wales

10.6%

Investigation completed but no suspect identified

Merseyide Police

48.8%

England and Wales

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

Merseyide Police

England and Wales

39

31

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

Merseyide Police

England and Wales

41

34



Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse calls for assistance per 1,000 population 12 months to 30 June 2016

Merseyide Police

England and Wales

20

16

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

Merseyide Police

England and Wales

11.4%

11.1%

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

Merseyide Police

England and Wales

7.5%

10.0%



Organised crime groups

Organised crime groups per million population as at 1 July 2016

Merseyide Police

England and Wales

132

46



Victim satisfaction rate

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

Merseyide Police

England and Wales

80.0%

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 judgment²





Merseyside Police is good at keeping people safe and reducing crime. The force has an effective approach to preventing crime and anti-social behaviour, investigating crime and reducing re-offending, protecting vulnerable people and supporting victims. It is outstanding at tackling serious and organised crime. Our overall judgment this year is the same as last year, when we judged the force to be good in respect of effectiveness.

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?  **Outstanding**

How effective are the force's specialist capabilities? **Ungraded**

Merseyside Police is good at keeping people safe and reducing crime. It is good at preventing crime and anti-social behaviour. It has a structured approach to identifying threats, and a good understanding of the threats and risks that pose the greatest harm to local communities. Neighbourhood teams have effective ways of connecting with local communities both in their own environment, and through representatives. However, given the limitations of the formal engagement structure

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

(which it recognises); the force could do more to involve local people in the setting of local priorities.

The force is good at investigating crime and supporting victims. It provides an initial investigative response in its assessment of calls from the public. A thorough assessment is completed, and in most cases, the force provides immediate advice on the preservation of evidence and crime prevention.

In HMIC's 2015 effectiveness report, we found that the force responded well to vulnerable victims and this year we found that the force continues to provide the same level of support through consistent completion of risk assessments of vulnerable victims and appropriate safeguarding. Officers and staff understand how to identify vulnerable victims, and are doing so correctly and consistently, with access to a full range of information to inform their initial assessment. This means that vulnerable victims can be assured that the force will identify their vulnerability, ensure an appropriate response, and provide the necessary immediate support. The force continues to be outstanding in the way it tackles serious and organised crime. Merseyside Police has effective arrangements in place to ensure that it can fulfil its national policing responsibilities. It has reviewed its response to each of the *Strategic Policing Requirement* threats in line with national standards and best practice.

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.

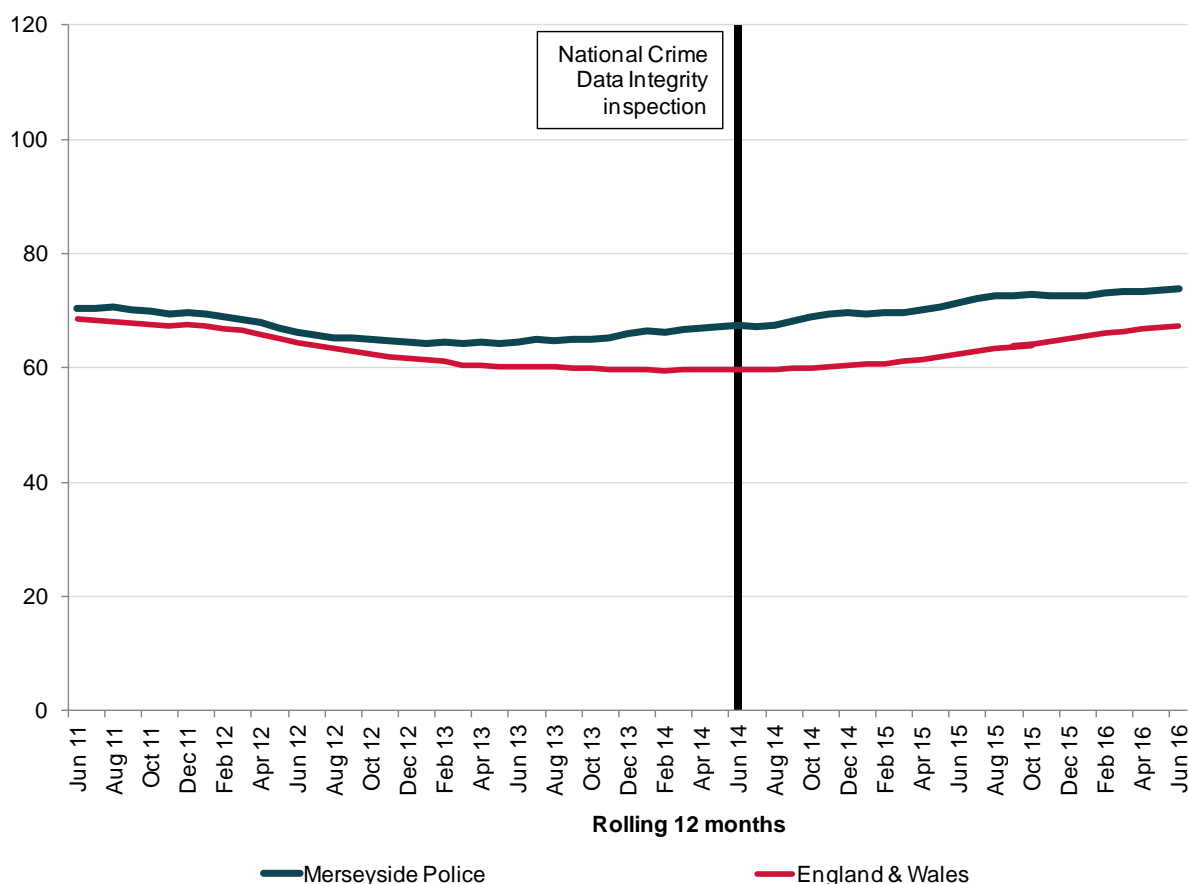
How much crime and anti-social behaviour is there in Merseyside?

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 2014 inspection of crime data in all forces across England and Wales.

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 increased by 3.6 percent in Merseyside compared with a decrease of 3.4 percent across all forces in England and Wales.

Over this same period, victim-based crime increased by 14.9 percent in Merseyside, 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 Merseyside, 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 Merseyside increased by 3.2 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 Merseyside 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 Merseyside, for the 12 months to 30 June 2016

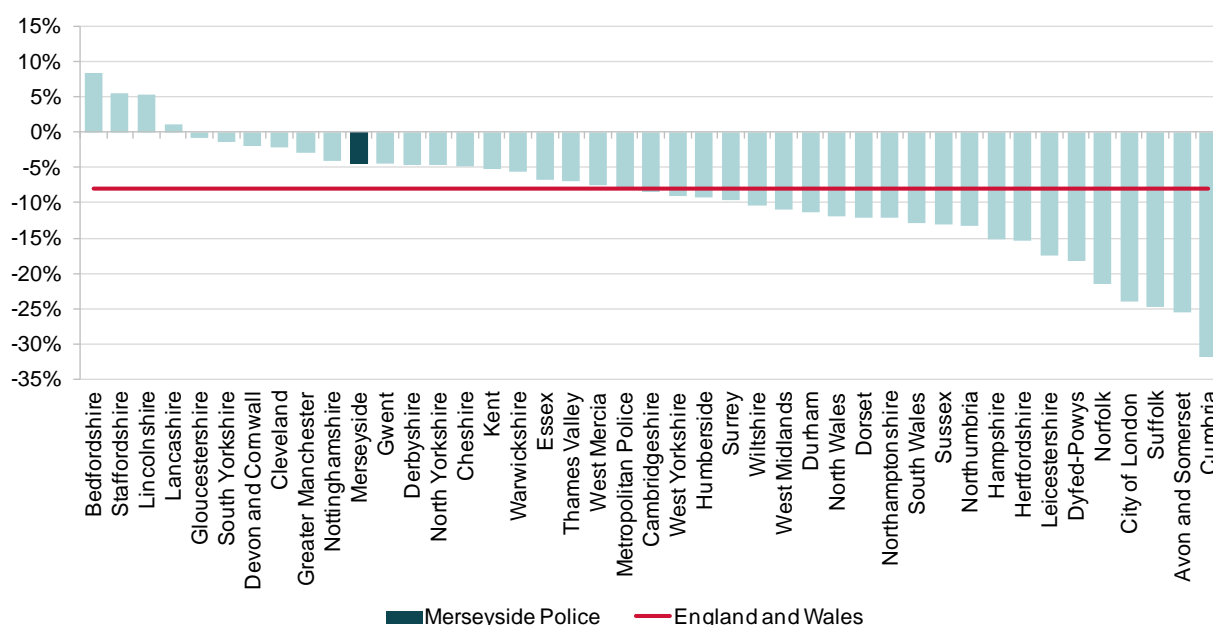
Rates per 1,000 population	Merseyside Police	England and Wales
Recorded crime (excluding fraud)	73.7	68.2
Victim-based crime	64.1	60.4
Sexual offences	1.7	1.9
Assault with injury	8.0	7.0
Burglary in a dwelling*	10.7	8.1

* 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, Merseyside Police recorded 39 incidents of anti-social behaviour per 1,000 population. This is 4 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 Merseyside Police understand the risk posed to its communities?

Merseyside Police has an effective neighbourhood policing model. The police community support officers (PCSOs) who work within neighbourhood teams in Merseyside are often referred to as community support officers (CSOs). Other PCSOs in Merseyside work in other roles. Dedicated neighbourhood teams, which include officers and CSOs, are responsible for community engagement, intelligence gathering, crime prevention and providing support to high-risk victims. We found that neighbourhood teams have a good understanding of their neighbourhoods, officers are infrequently removed ('abstracted') for periods from their regular duties to carry out other functions or diverted from their role and CSOs have dedicated roles in neighbourhoods.

The force understands the threats facing its communities. It has a structured approach to identifying threats through its intelligence framework and meeting structure.

The force has developed a strategic understanding of the threats and risks which pose the greatest harm to local communities, using the 'management of risk in law enforcement' (MoRiLE) process developed by the National Police Chiefs' Council. This tool assesses the types of crimes which most threaten communities, and highlights where the force does not currently have the capacity or capability to tackle them effectively. The MoRiLE process is supported by analysis of emerging threats and risks. To enhance this understanding, the force makes a dynamic assessment of

risk and threat each day to ensure that it responds to any intelligence indicating an imminent risk or threat to a community. At a local level, each area assesses the local issues, risks, threats and intelligence through products which map local crime trends. This entails examining a specific area of concern such as the misuse of off-road bikes, or car key burglaries, to gain a better understanding of the trends within these offences, the potential offenders, the items being targeted and the profile of the victims.

How does Merseyside Police engage with the public?

The force recognises the limitations of its formal engagement structure. In this structure, members of the local community can attend meetings to discuss local issues and concerns but this only allows the force to understand the things that matter to local people rather than also involving them in the setting of local priorities. However, we found effective engagement by neighbourhood teams. These make valuable connections with local communities while working in local establishments and through meetings with representatives of communities.

The force is connecting with local communities to engage in different ways to understand local issues and concerns. Formal methods of engagement are available, such as 'Have Your Say' meetings which are open to the public to, neighbourhood teams have found that these have become less effective over time. In some areas these formal methods have been supplemented with 'surgeries' held in local bingo halls, supermarkets, local coffee establishments and care homes to connect with the local communities to understand their concerns and issues. These work well. When neighbourhood teams are aware that an organised crime group is operating in an area, targeted anonymous surveying takes place with the local community to allow the public to speak honestly and openly but anonymously about the issue. We also found examples of good engagement with groups with less trust or confidence in the police; for instance where officers attend a church group that had been set up for asylum seekers. The force makes some use of an online 'Have Your Say' tool to allow members of the public to feed in issues and concerns, and the communications department proactively monitors social media for any potential issues which require a response. Outside office hours this monitoring is carried out by the force's contact centre. While all this information provides a good understanding of local issues and concerns, it is not clear how this is fed back to the community to allow it to influence the setting of police priorities.

The police and crime commissioner (PCC) has local engagement workers who are located within each local area to engage with the local communities and provide feedback on their issues and concerns. A youth advisory group, separate from the local force youth independent advisory group, is run by the PCC. This separate group has a membership of 50 young people from diverse backgrounds who advise from their perspective on what it is like to be young, including problems relating to mental health concerns, ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder), and autism.

For example they have worked with the force, through the PCC, to prevent crime by talking to people, and handing out leaflets and cards such as 'stop hate UK' cards.

The force has plans to establish community action groups across all local areas by the end of November 2016. These will replicate an effective community action group in Liverpool city centre which comprises a wide range of representatives from vulnerable and groups and groups with less trust and confidence in the police and so represents the views of, for instance, the Traveller community, different faith groups, and the transgender community.

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 Merseyside Police. Some 404 people were interviewed and 51 percent were very or fairly satisfied with local policing in their area. This is a 6 percent increase on 2015.³

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?

Merseyside Police has an effective problem solving model and good governance of its mechanisms for preventing crime and anti-social behaviour. The force engages well with partners in problem solving and makes good use of the powers and legislation available.

The force's crime prevention and problem solving framework is focused on prevention in the short, medium and long terms. It is aligned to the force's 'Community First' principles (right first time, do the right thing, innovate, use common sense and discretion, and understand your business). The problem solving framework facilitates consideration of a range of information including crime patterns, incidents that have an impact on the wider community, large events, community engagement and reputational risks. A risk assessment is then carried out using THRIVE.⁴ This initial risk assessment informs the level of prevention judged to be

³ For further details, see annex A.

⁴ THRIVE is a structured assessment based on the levels of threat, harm, risk and vulnerability faced by the victim, rather than simply by the type of incident or crime being reported in order to help staff determine the appropriate level of response to a call.

required and whether it is required in the short, medium or long term. The type of prevention to support the likely duration is then determined; short term problem solving is led at a local level, medium term is led by a strategic responsible officer and long term is led by a named officer at force level – this ensures that those problems requiring medium to longer term prevention receive the level of priority and resourcing required. All prevention is expected to follow the SARA model (scan, analyse, response, assessment/evaluation).⁵

The force engages well with partners in problem solving and makes good use of the powers available including anti-social behaviour powers and legislation such as closure orders and public space protection orders. Crime prevention continues to be the primary role of CSOs who focus on local problems of crime and anti-social behaviour. Neighbourhood teams have contributed to a reduction in anti-social behaviour through the increased use of anti-social behaviour contracts with those children responsible for such behaviour. The contracts are monitored proactively. The force also monitors changes in behaviour through research to understand how these may effect anti-social behaviour, where to deploy resources and what tactics to use.

Does the force use effective approaches and tactics to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour?

A strategic responsible officer leads on reducing crime and anti-social behaviour and ensures that successful operations and the use of evidence-based practice are evaluated and lessons learned communicated throughout the force. At a local level, we found some inconsistency in the approach used for problem solving where the full SARA approach was not always consistently applied to lower-level problems. The force has recognised this and recently provided face-to-face training in problem solving, crime prevention, and evidence based practice for 370 people across neighbourhood teams and new student officers. Through SRO meetings the force has a good understanding of its performance and takes effective action in the form of operations and the use of a wide range of tactics to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour

The force uses marketing campaigns effectively, informed by the views of victims, to prevent crime. It is supported well through small-scale projects run by local communities, volunteers and charities to prevent people carrying out crime.

We found examples of the force working well with partners and the private sector on its 'what works' site. This includes Operation Aquila, which was a joint operation with the business community. It used academic research to consider how to prevent business robberies. A researcher was asked to explore the motivation for offending

⁵ SARA is an acronym for scanning, analysis, response, and assess. The process is aimed at identifying legal and ethical solutions to policing problems such as anti-social behaviour.

behaviour. The research included 'tips from thieves' about what they thought would stop them from committing a business robbery, which then informed the prevention approach applied by the businesses. The force's evaluation demonstrated a 50 percent reduction in business robberies in Liverpool North. A second example is Operation Darton, which was an off-road bike project run jointly between the force, the National Police Air Service, and Liverpool City Council. An increase in complaints about the use of off-road bikes led to this operation. It is difficult for the police to pursue off-road bikes so the force had to consider other ways of dealing with the problem, primarily by addressing areas where bikes were 'grouping'. The force considered and implemented tactics for obtaining best evidence in order to achieve prosecutions for driving offences. The tactics worked effectively and all the drivers were arrested and found guilty of dangerous driving, plus a range of other driving offences. The case file we reviewed included the considered points of a previous successful case. The results of the operation were reductions in public concern, in the number of calls to the police and in the diversion of police resources from other work.

The PCC provides funding for small scale projects to keep people safe run by local communities, volunteers and charities. Examples are 'It's not ok!', an established violence prevention education programme providing interactive resources for teachers to use with children, and the Merseyside Youth Challenge Trust programme whose aim is to build confidence, skills and resilience in young people and change their view of education, work and life in general in order to prevent them engaging in crime. Funding has also been allocated for small projects to prevent anti-social behaviour around hotspots or at peak times. These include youth diversion on the run up to 'mischief night' – a tradition in the north of England where people play pranks on one another, normally around Halloween. These projects include a film night being planned on Halloween, and Anfield Boxing Club, which works with young people who are unlikely to take part in traditional forms of engagement.

The force is effective in its use of marketing campaigns to prevent crime. Jointly with the office of the police and crime commissioner (OPCC), the force has engaged with victims in focus groups to establish their views about what words and imagery are most likely to be effective. This approach works well because victims will speak openly with staff within the OPCC; and the force's communications staff can share their ideas and seek feedback.

The force is examining new ways of preventing crime and anti-social behaviour. It is beginning with a pilot of early intervention in March 2017. This will bring together partners within a community safety hub in the Wirral to focus on troubled families.⁶

⁶ Troubled Families is a programme of targeted-intervention for families with multiple problems, including crime, anti-social behaviour, mental health problems, domestic abuse and unemployment. Local authorities identify 'troubled families' in their area and usually assign a key worker to act as a single point of contact. Central government pays local authorities by results for each family they 'turn around'.

Although the force is not yet using predictive policing, it has run a controlled trial of 'pulse policing'⁷ with Cambridge University to understand the impact of policing styles on the behaviour of the public in Liverpool city centre.

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

Merseyside Police has progressed well in understanding and researching evidence-based policing (EBP), which is a way of making decisions about what works in policing. It helps the police service to make more informed decisions about what policies and practices are cost-effective and what will improve its service to the public. The force is using this to inform the improvement of its services to the public to protect and keep them safe.

In September 2016, in collaboration with Lancashire Constabulary, a seminar about EBP was held with a leading Cambridge University academic. This seminar was the precursor to a one year Merseyside-based EBP programme. Following a successful bid to the Knowledge Fund,⁸ the PCC, Merseyside Police, and Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU) are now in partnership to develop research capability aimed at embedding evidence-based practice in public protection and crime prevention. Three officers with relevant experience have been seconded to work with LJMU on a part-time basis for two years. They act as advanced practitioners working with senior research fellows to develop bespoke programmes of accredited learning. They are supported by 43 Merseyside officers and staff who are undertaking funded post-graduate certificates in advanced policing studies. Merseyside Police is also a member of the Open University research consortium which funds jointly agreed research and development work and is participating in several research projects with the force. The Open University provides free access to resources and there is a learning section on the consortium website that is relevant to policing.

Crime prevention continues to be the primary role of CSOs, who focus on local problems of crime and anti-social behaviour. Merseyside Police has an effective neighbourhood policing model, and the CSOs work within neighbourhood teams. Dedicated neighbourhood teams, which include officers and CSOs, are responsible for community engagement, intelligence gathering, crime prevention and providing support to high risk victims. We found that neighbourhood teams have a good

⁷ Predictive policing is the analysis of crime trends (such as time-bound and seasonal trends) to identify and understand where most crime is occurring ('hot-spotting'), and in some cases predict where crime and anti-social behaviour is most likely to occur. Pulse policing is a tactic used to create the perception of additional resources.

⁸ The Police Knowledge Fund is made up of £5m of funding from the Home Office and £5m from the Higher Education Funding Council for England, secured through the College of Policing. It will support education and research collaborations between police forces and academic institutions.

understanding of their neighbourhoods, officers are not often abstracted or diverted from their role and CSOs are assigned to neighbourhoods.

Summary of findings



Good

Merseyside Police is good at preventing crime and anti-social behaviour. It has a structured approach to identifying threats to its local communities. It has a good understanding of the threats and risks which pose the greatest harm to local communities. While the force recognises the limitations of the formal engagement structure, neighbourhood teams connect in effective ways with local communities both in their own environment and through representatives. However, the force could do more to involve local people in the setting of local priorities.

The force has an effective problem solving model and good governance of its mechanisms for preventing crime and anti-social behaviour, although consistency of application could be improved. The force engages well with partners in problem solving and makes good use of the powers and legislation available. It is effective in its use of preventative marketing campaigns, informed by the views of victims. Merseyside Police is supported effectively to prevent people engaging in crime through a range of small-scale projects run by local communities, volunteers and charities. The force has progressed well in its understanding of and research relating to evidence-based policing. It is using this to improvement how it keeps the public safe from harm.

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/khat⁹ 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

⁹ 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 Merseyside Police, in 12 months to 30 June 2016, by outcome type^{10,11}

Outcome number	Outcome type / group	Merseyside Police	England and Wales
1	Charged/Summoned	12.2	12.1
4	Taken into consideration	0.0	0.2
	Out-of-court (formal)	2.6	3.2
2	Caution - youths	0.1	0.4
3	Caution - adults	1.3	2.3
6	Penalty Notices for Disorder	1.2	0.6
	Out-of-court (informal)	3.8	3.6
7	Cannabis/Khat warning	1.4	0.9
8	Community Resolution	2.5	2.8
*	Prosecution prevented or not in the public interest	4.8	1.8
	Evidential difficulties (victim supports police action)		
15	Suspect identified	5.4	8.3
	Evidential difficulties (victim does not support police action)	14.2	13.8
16	Suspect identified	9.2	10.6
14	Suspect not identified	5.0	3.2
18	Investigation complete – no suspect identified	48.8	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	92.0	91.3
	Not yet assigned an outcome	8.0	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

¹⁰ 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.

¹¹ '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, Merseyside Police's use of 'prosecution prevented or not in the public interest' was among the highest in England and Wales. Its use of 'taken into consideration' and '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. The force has been monitoring the use of these outcomes. In November 2015 the force found that officers may not be clear on when to use these outcomes. Further communication has since been provided to officers.

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

Merseyside Police is thorough in its assessment of calls from the public which require police assistance. It completes a thorough assessment, and in most cases provides immediate advice on the preservation of evidence and crime prevention. Call resolution officers record the lower level crimes at source, which means that the public can be assured that their crime is being recorded appropriately. The force has progressed well in response to its area for improvement from HMIC's 2015 effectiveness report and improved the allocation of crimes to trained investigators. It has developed a new model for the allocation of crimes as part of its new operating model, which will be introduced in late 2016.

The force received 318 direct calls for assistance per 1,000 population in the year ending 30 June 2016. We found that call resolution officers record the circumstances of the incident thoroughly most of the time and in the majority of calls they assessed, the incident was triaged appropriately using a THRIVE approach. We found that the force has introduced a system called 'Call Assist' which provides call resolution officers with access to a full range of information to assist in the assessment of the call. In most cases where there was an opportunity to provide advice on the preservation of evidence and/or crime prevention we found that this was done. We did see some inconsistency with call resolution officers' understanding of what

should be recorded when a caller reports they have been a victim of fraud but in every such instance the calls were referred to Action Fraud for investigation.

How well do response officers investigate?

The structured assessment of calls is aligned to the force's call response policy. This informs the allocation of resources in line with the urgency determined from the assessment. We found that subsequent allocation is appropriate in the majority of incidents we reviewed, although we did find a small number of instances where a delayed response, due to the demand from calls, negatively affected the quality of the subsequent investigation. Of the calls received, 28 percent were dealt with as telephone resolution, either over the phone or at the front enquiry counter, and without the deployment of an officer. This is line with the rate England and Wales as a whole.

In HMIC's 2015 effectiveness report, we reported that the force should ensure that crimes are allocated promptly to investigators with the appropriate skills, accreditation and support to investigate them to a good standard. This year we found that the force is continuing to work to its crime allocation policy. It has improved the way in which crimes are allocated to investigators once they have reached a basic command unit.

The quality of information in the handovers from the initial call to the officer attending is inconsistent. Officers told us that sometimes they did not know what to expect when they complete the crime report. This was partly because the content of the incident recorded onto the crime system is automatically transferred and information is often in the wrong fields. We also found that, although in the majority of criminal investigations the investigating officers were supervised, in only a third of those we reviewed was the supervision effective and provided specific direction to the officers.

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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

Merseyside Police investigates crime well in most cases, particularly those involving vulnerable victims and where there is a higher level of threat, harm or risk to the victim. However, we found that some early investigative opportunities are being missed; for instance CCTV footage is overlooked, abusive text not pursued or downloaded from the victim's phone, and social media not consistently reviewed.

We noted the force's crime allocation process as an area for improvement in HMIC's 2015 effectiveness report, and this is still not as effective as it could be. While we found that the promptness and consistency in the allocation of crimes to investigators had improved, some officers continue to investigate complex enquiries without the correct level of training or experience. HMIC was impressed to find that the force has developed a new investigation allocation model, which will consider the complexity and seriousness of each crime and determines to which level of investigator it should be allocated. This should ensure that crimes are allocated based on the threat, risk and harm to the victim or local community and the complexity and seriousness of the crime, rather than purely by crime type. The model is being introduced as part of the force's new operating model from November 2016. Although some officers reported higher caseloads than previously, they were happy with them as they could deal with them in a timely way. This is because lower level and less complex investigations are now being dealt with through planned

demand teams, which have been introduced to investigate those less complex crimes such as criminal damage.

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.

The review concluded that approximately two thirds of the case files showed effective investigation demonstrating further improvements needed. In a small number of cases relating to less complex crimes, however, we found a small number of poor investigations by individual officers; the supervision of the investigation of such crimes was also not always as effective as it was in the case of more complex ones.

The force makes good use of intelligence and information from partners to improve its investigative opportunities. Partners include public services like the Probation Service and private sector organisations such as taxi firms and charities, which provide information through data protection agreements.

The force is improving its processes relating to the quality of investigation files so that they may be appropriate for use in court. File quality training has been provided to investigators and to supervisors. The force has introduced police decision makers to assess prosecution cases before referral to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). This is to ensure that officers are provided with advice and guidance in building effective prosecution cases so that good case files are referred to CPS to improve the likelihood of the prosecution of offenders.

Support to investigations

In HMIC's 2015 effectiveness report, we reported that the force should improve its ability to retrieve digital evidence from mobile phones, computers and other electronic devices quickly enough to ensure that investigations are not delayed. During our inspection in 2016, officers told us that in some cases there are still delays in the evidential examination of computers and phones. Although the force's computer and phone examination units were able to demonstrate an improvement in their own turnaround times, we found that this did not apply to cases of indecent images. The original investigating officer is required to review those images that are to be fully evidenced for the case. At this point, the computer examination 'suspends' its timescale until the request is received; this artificially reduces the recorded end-to-end processing time. In addition, the unit which examines computers has not received any additional staffing within the last 12 months. The result of this is that a number of cases of serious sexual offences and other priority crimes, where there is

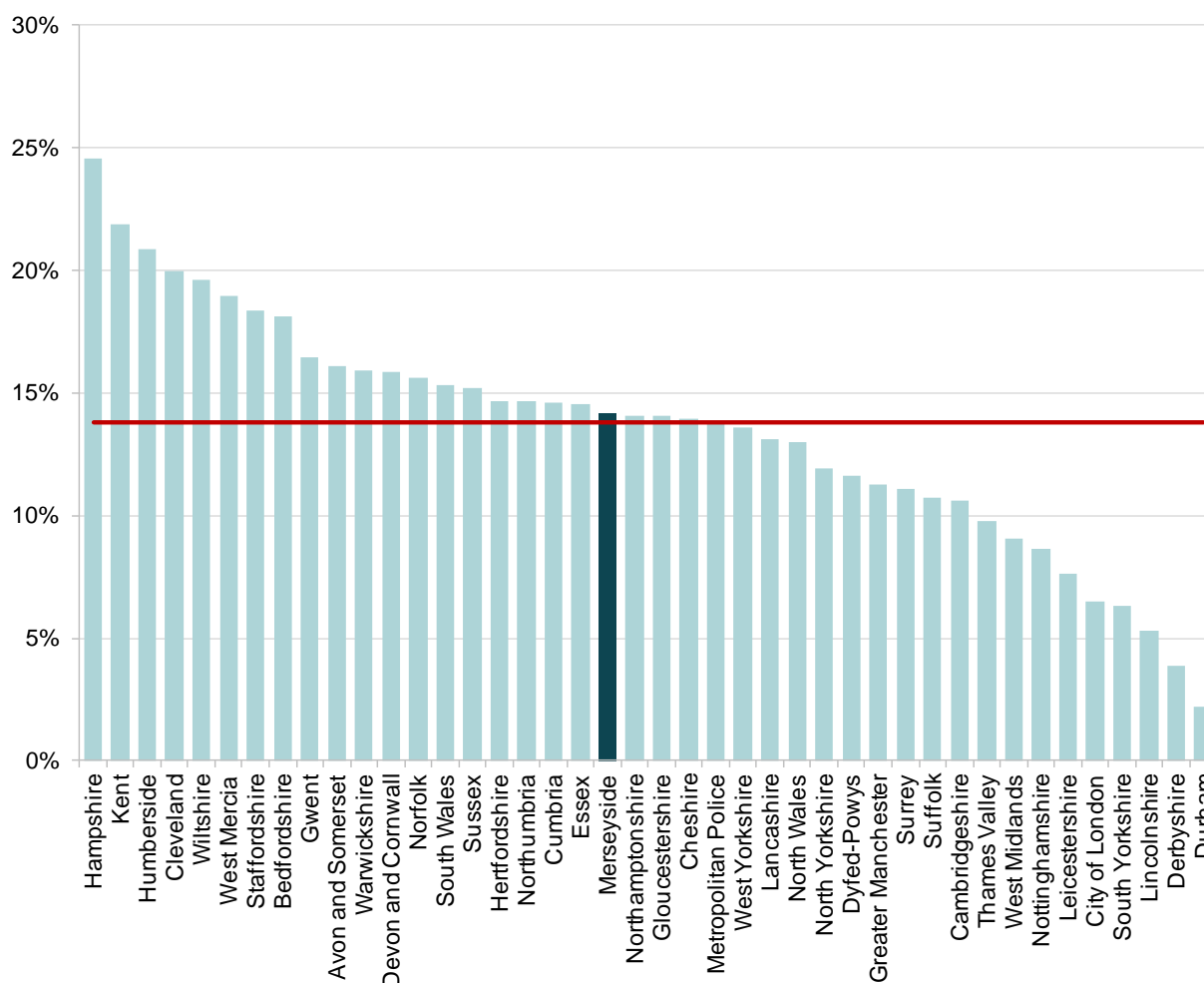
evidence contained within digital devices, are not making progress in a timely manner. This delay could represent a considerable risk in some cases. We found that the force is currently reviewing its response to cyber-crime and this includes the examination of digital devices. A business case for additional resources has been prepared which includes an examination of current and future demand to determine resources and processes, including the force's response to digital forensic examinations.

Supporting victims

The new outcomes framework introduced in 2014 includes some outcomes where there were evidential difficulties,¹² 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 processes, as they record when victims are unwilling or unable to support continued investigations or when they have withdrawn their support for police action.

¹² 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 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^{13,14}



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, Merseyside Police recorded 14.2 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.

Protecting vulnerable people and supporting victims is a clear priority for Merseyside Police. In HMIC's 2015 effectiveness report, we reported that victims are generally kept well informed as investigations progress and the force uses victim contact contracts to establish how and when the victim would like to be contacted. The force

¹³ Percentages of evidential difficulties can be affected by the level of certain types of crime within a force, such as domestic abuse related offences.

¹⁴ 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.

fully complies with the *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime* in the majority of cases. It continues to make good use of body-worn cameras to inform domestic abuse investigations, and to proceed with victimless prosecutions.

The force is making progress with victimless prosecutions.¹⁵ Investigations continue to trace suspects even when the victim may not wish to pursue a prosecution. Unless the victim has a particular reason for not wishing the police to take such action, the force takes a rigorous approach to victimless investigations where there is a named suspect and suspects are arrested or interviewed. The force considers alternative ways to proceed with investigations should the victim not want to go any further.

The force uses a range of methods to support victims including those who do not want to proceed with a complaint. These methods include for example, victim perception statements, achieving best evidence interviews, child protection awareness leaflets, and the use of other support services such as mental health and homelessness teams and agencies offering support around so-called honour based crime. All these methods support the victim.

The force has a clear policy on the use of body-worn video cameras. It is standard that at every domestic abuse incident attended officers use their body-worn video cameras. Because of this, the force has secured convictions when the victim did not support prosecution. As a result, staff feelings towards the use of the body-worn video cameras is very positive, and staff are able to use them at their own discretion. They would normally use body-worn video cameras at Taser deployment, or at other incidents where their use would provide evidential value.

The force identifies and manages the vulnerability or needs of victims of every crime or incident reported. When a crime or incident is reported, the attending officer will either, due to crime type or vulnerability, complete a risk assessment or, where vulnerability is not identified, will complete an initial assessment of need for the victim. Where an initial assessment identifies needs, the officer will complete a detailed assessment of need for the victim. These assessments identify the partner agency or police resource that will engage with the victim to manage safeguarding or meeting of need. The vulnerability or needs of victims of crime are identified and managed by police or other agencies to support the victim.

¹⁵ Evidence-based prosecution' (sometimes termed "victimless prosecution") refers to a collection of techniques utilised by prosecutors in domestic violence cases to convict abusers without the cooperation of an alleged victim.

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?

Merseyside Police continues to work well with partners to reduce re-offending. The force is actively seeking and arresting those persons who are wanted or outstanding suspects in a timely way. It ensures the risk of criminality from individuals who are foreign nationals is identified and managed. The force works well with partners to manage registered sex offenders and prevent them from re-offending and has arrangements in place to manage the most dangerous offenders.

The force has good governance arrangements in place for the monitoring of outstanding and wanted suspects, and within each local area there is a team which searches out and arrests these individuals. The number of people per 1,000 of population wanted and circulated via the police national computer (PNC) is notably lower for the force than the England and Wales rate. Most of the names relate to on-bail offences. Outstanding suspects not circulated on PNC are also fewer than the England and Wales rate, and the majority of these have been outstanding for under three months and not for longer periods. This means that the public can be reassured that the force is actively seeking and arresting in a timely way those persons who are wanted or outstanding suspects.

Merseyside Police completes checks on all arrested suspects. In the 12 months to 30 June 2016 the force made 30,999 arrests; of these 2,649 were foreign nationals. The force's policy is that all arrested foreign nationals are subject to a criminal records office (ACRO)¹⁶ check which provides further information on their criminality of and allows the force better to identify and manage the risk they may pose.

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

The re-offending rate for IOM offenders in the force area is 36 percent, which is lower than the England and Wales rate of 57 percent. Across Merseyside there are five integrated offender management (IOM) hubs where police and partners are located together to varying extents.¹⁷ There is a robust policy for the selection of

¹⁶ ACRO Criminal Records Office manages criminal record information and is able to receive/share information with foreign countries in relation to foreign offenders arrested within the United Kingdom.

¹⁷ Integrated offender management (IOM) brings a multi-agency response to the crime and reoffending threats faced by local communities. The most persistent and problematic offenders are identified and managed jointly by partner agencies working together.

offenders for the integrated offender management programme. Cohorts within the programme include domestic abuse perpetrators and violent and organised criminals. The cohorts are determined not only by offence type, but also by the level of threat, harm and risk the offender poses to the local community. At 1 July 2016, there were 601 individuals on the scheme, an increase of 103 from the previous year, with the largest increase being in the domestic abuse perpetrator and violent and acquisitive crime cohorts. The force also has a local 'Compass' cohort; this covers a wider offending group defined as those offenders causing the greatest harm but not currently subject of the intensive supervision IOM brings. More recently, Liverpool has introduced a dedicated violent offender management unit to focus on the high numbers within this specific cohort.

The number of registered sex offenders (RSOs) in Merseyside continues to rise in line with the England and Wales trend. At 1 July 2016, there were 1,996 RSOs, of whom 52 are very high risk and 318 high risk. This is an increase of 252 compared with 1 July 2015, although, through the use of an active risk management approach, the force has reduced the number of high risk offenders and continues to do so. The force actively uses and enforces ancillary and preventative orders to prevent and reduce offending. Officers routinely monitor and enforce orders, including sexual offence prevention orders (SOPOs) and sexual harm prevention orders (SHPOs).¹⁸ An example was provided of a case where, during a visit to monitor a preventative order, an officer identified the packaging for a mobile phone as not being related to the phone that the offender had declared they were using. Enquiries were conducted to link the packaging to a potential breach of the order, which allowed positive action to be taken against the offender to prevent further offending and reduce the risk of harm to any other individual. The force has also used preventative orders effectively where the terms did not cater for the possibility. That RSOs may be storing using information technology otherwise than on hardware, for instance on a 'cloud' network. The force worked with the local judiciary to explain and demonstrate how preventative orders can be used to include such issues. Where we have previously found high caseloads for staff dealing with sex offenders, the force has recruited additional staff to provide support with investigations.

The force works well with partners to monitor, manage and enforce orders. Police sex offender managers work with staff from probation and prisons, and are developing a collaborative approach of co-location within police premises with probation officers to manage high and very high risk sex offenders. It is expected

¹⁸ Sexual Harm Prevention Orders (SHPOs) can be applied to anyone convicted or cautioned for a sexual or violent offence. They can place a range of restrictions on individuals depending on the nature of the case, such as limiting their internet use, preventing them from being alone with a child under 16, or preventing travel abroad. Sexual Offences Prevention Orders (SOPOs) were introduced by the Sexual Offences Act 2003 and are designed to protect the public or any particular members of the public from serious sexual harm from an offender. As of March 2015, SOPOs were re-named Sexual Harm Prevention Orders (SHPOs).

that this will allow for joint assessment visits to be conducted providing efficiencies between the services. This co-location is expected to start in January 2017.

Multi-agency protection arrangements (MAPPAs) are in place to manage the most dangerous offenders.¹⁹ A range of tactics and options is considered in managing these offenders to ensure that local communities are protected from harm and actions are assigned to local areas in relation to those offenders who pose the greatest risk to local communities. Despite neighbourhood teams being aware of the most dangerous offenders, however, they did feel that if they knew even more they could proactively contribute in the day-to-day management of all sexual and dangerous offenders.

Summary of findings



Good

Merseyside Police is good at investigating crime and supporting victims. It provides an initial investigative response in its assessment of calls from the public. A thorough assessment is completed, and in most cases immediate advice on the preservation of evidence and crime prevention is provided.

Officers are effective in their initial investigation of crime most of the time, although we found that some early investigative opportunities are being missed. While we found that the promptness and consistency in the allocation of crimes to investigators has improved, and the force makes good use of specialist officers to conduct complex and serious investigations, some officers continue to investigate complex cases without the correct level of training or experience. We identified this as an area for improvement last year; in response, the force has developed a new investigation allocation process as part of its new operating model. We also found that there are still delays in the examination of digital devices.

Merseyside Police continues to work well with partner organisations in its approach to prevent re-offending. It actively seeks and arrests those persons who are wanted or outstanding suspects in a timely way, and works with partners to manage the most dangerous offenders.

¹⁹ Multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPAs) are in place to ensure the successful management of violent and sexual offenders. Agencies involved include as responsible bodies the police, probation trusts and prison service. Other agencies may become involved, for example the Youth Justice Board will be responsible for the care of young offenders.

Areas for improvement

- The force should ensure that all evidence is retrieved at the first opportunity in order to maximise the likelihood of investigations being concluded successfully.
- The force should improve its ability to retrieve digital evidence from mobile phones, computers and other electronic devices quickly enough to ensure that investigations are not delayed.

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?

In HMIC's 2015 effectiveness inspection, Merseyside Police was judged to be good in the way it protected vulnerable victims from harm through safeguarding and ongoing support. Although the force had no specific areas for improvement, we did report that there were some gaps in the information to which the staff had access within its own systems. The force has responded positively to this; it has continued to improve its processes, making a full range of information available to call resolution officers so that their initial assessment of vulnerability may be better informed. It also further enhanced its processes in managing and monitoring missing and absent children.

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,²⁰ others use the definition referred to in ACPO guidance²¹ and the remainder use their own definition.

Merseyside Police uses its own definition of a vulnerable victim, which is:

“Adults at Risk are anyone: Aged 18 years or over and

a) Appears to have needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and

b) Is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect and;

c) as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of or the experience of abuse or neglect

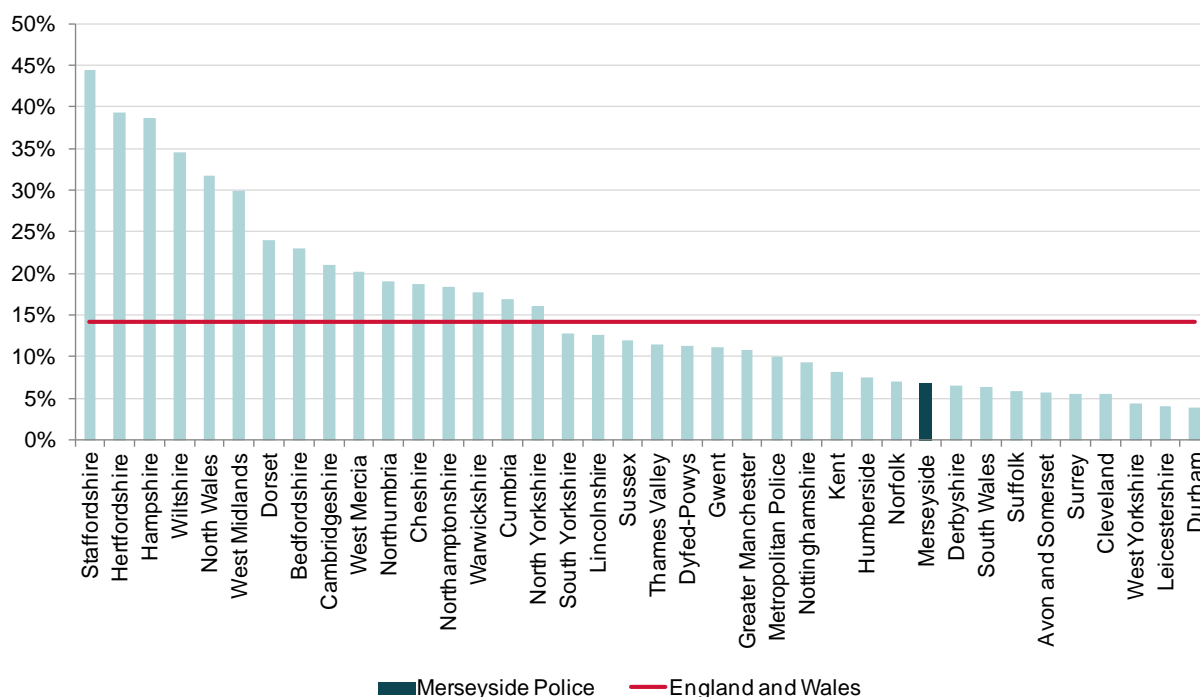
Age can be a factor in vulnerability, but age alone does not make a person vulnerable.”

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 2016, 6.8 percent of all recorded crime in Merseyside was identified as having a vulnerable victim, which is below the England and Wales figure of 14.3 percent.

²⁰ *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

²¹ 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/

Figure 6: Percentage of police-recorded crime with a vulnerable victim identified, by force, for the 12 months to 30 June 2016²²



Source: HMIC data return, Home Office data

For further information about these data, please see annex A

Merseyside Police has a good understanding of the nature and scale of vulnerability, and aims for a full understanding of the depth and breadth of a person’s vulnerability. This is determined not just by a definition of ‘vulnerability’ but is also based on the threat, risk and harm to the individual, and then by ‘vulnerability type’ in line with the force’s risk assessments. For example, the force defines a vulnerable adult as:

“Any person aged 18 years or over who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental, physical, or learning disability, age or illness AND is or may be unable to take care of him or herself or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.”

It will then add to this each victim’s circumstances and context.

It has completed analysis to inform its understanding on specific types of vulnerability such as domestic abuse and child sexual exploitation, and is further developing its understanding of the breadth of vulnerability as a whole. Officers and staff understand how to identify vulnerable victims, and are doing so correctly and consistently. They have access to a full range of information to inform their initial assessment. This means that victims who are vulnerable can be assured that the

²² 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.

force will identify their vulnerability, ensure an appropriate response, and provide the necessary immediate support.

The force has completed analysis of child exploitation, including information on missing and absent children, and has analysed domestic abuse. From this analysis it understands the profile of its victims and offenders, and those who are most vulnerable. We found that the force is developing its analysis to incorporate a single profile of all vulnerability through 13 identified critical areas. This profile will include mental health and builds on the force's broad understanding of the demand created by the need to respond to mental health victims. The force has also commenced analysis of possible vulnerability to fraud. Officers and staff consistently demonstrate an understanding of the force's approach to identifying vulnerability through the risk factors to consider.

Merseyside Police constantly reviews and updates its domestic abuse action plan, in line with national requirements. It has created its own comprehensive five year plan around the 4Ps – pursue, prevent, protect and prepare – although it would benefit from input from victims to this work.²³ It has influenced the culture and attitudes of frontline staff by adopting a training strategy which includes face-to-face training with officers to enable them to understand domestic abuse better. To build on the culture it expects from its workforce, the force uses reward and recognition through letters and awards for officers who safeguard, protect and investigate effectively offences against victims of domestic abuse.

The force's information management system has advanced to provide a comprehensive overview of 'risky' victims. A 'risky' victim includes people such as those victims who have already been a victim of domestic abuse and sexual abuse and who are most at risk, based on a full range of information available to the force. The system identifies all new victims and those who are repeat victims. This allows the force to monitor actively, and respond dynamically to, any emerging trends with individual victims or local areas. The force is continuing to develop its methods for assessing victims of domestic abuse. It has calculated a 'risk relationship index' to assist in identifying the 20 most vulnerable victims who require more tailored support.

Vulnerable victims are identified accurately through a risk assessment completed by the call resolution officers at first point of contact. The initial assessment is in line with the force policy and consistently follows a structured assessment and triage which informs the level of response required. 'Call Assist' brings together a range of

²³ Adapted from a national framework for tackling serious and organised crime that has been developed for national counter-terrorist work and has four thematic pillars, often referred to as the 4Ps: Pursue - prosecuting and disrupting people engaged in serious and organised crime (domestic abuse); Prevent – preventing people from engaging in serious and organised crime (domestic abuse); Protect – increasing protection against serious and organised crime (domestic abuse); Prepare – reducing the impact of this criminality where it takes place.

information from different force systems to allow call resolution officers to identify vulnerable and repeat victims more easily at first point of contact. Although all front counter enquiry staff we spoke to understood that they must consider threat, harm and risk, there was inconsistency in the training provided to enable them to make a structured assessment. The force could do more to assure itself on the quality of these initial assessments, particularly as we were told that elderly people prefer to report a crime or anti-social behaviour at the station rather than over the phone or email.

In our previous inspection in 2015, we found that the force responds well to vulnerable victims. This year we found that the force continues to be effective in its response to those victims who are most vulnerable, providing an immediate or priority response (within the hour). The force response to the majority of incidents we reviewed was timely and appropriate. The force works well with mental health nurses who work alongside officers during busy periods and respond to victims with mental health concerns. As part of the force's new operating model, two paramedics will be based in the force's contact centre to assist with providing advice to officers and the triaging of calls which also require an ambulance to respond.

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.

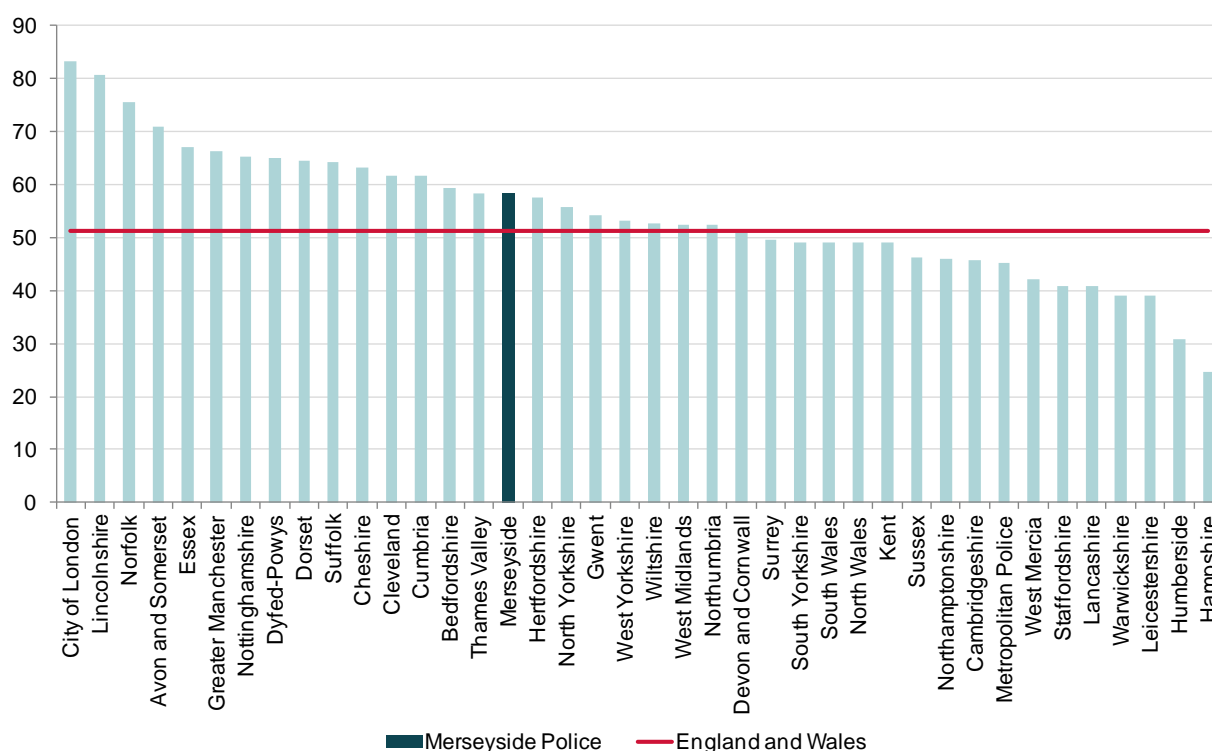
Do officers assess risk correctly and keep victims safe?

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 shows that in the 12 months to 30 June 2016, police-recorded domestic abuse in Merseyside increased by 61 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 11 percent of all police-recorded crime in Merseyside, 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 form 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 Merseyside Police, for every 100 domestic abuse related offences recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2016, there were 58 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 2016²⁴



Source: HMIC data return, Home Office data

For further information about these data, please see annex A

Merseyside Police assesses the vulnerability of victims comprehensively at initial response. It has an effective victim care model, the ‘Merseyside Model for Victim Care’, which provides officers with guidance and a range of support agencies to which they can refer victims. We found that where officers thought the victim was vulnerable they considered safeguarding in the majority of cases, and in most cases also considered additional safety measures beyond initial safeguarding. Good evidence shows that officers assess the vulnerability and/or the risk of others

²⁴ 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.

involved in incidents and that where appropriate they also refer them for support. This means that the majority of victims identified as being vulnerable are immediately safeguarded to protect them from further threat or harm.

The initial risk assessment by officers continues to be effective and is comprehensive in the breadth of vulnerability considered and depth of questioning required to determine a person's overall vulnerability. The assessment also includes an assessment of others in the household, including children and elderly persons, who may also be at risk and require safeguarding or support. Although officers could not recite the force's vulnerability definition, they knew the risk factors to look for and the areas to consider as part of the initial assessment.

The 'Merseyside Model for Victim Care' provides officers with guidance on the processes which frontline officers and staff use to identify the needs of victims. It provides officers with access to a wide range of external support agencies and internal specialist departments. The model has been created by the force and the PCC; it allows for greater support to victims 'from call to court' and is based on their individual needs, rather than an on perception of their need based on a particular crime type. The officer's initial risk assessment of vulnerability and need is at the centre of the model, which then allows officers to draw on a far greater range of information and support networks.

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).

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.²⁵

²⁵ 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.

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 Merseyside Police²⁶

Outcome type / group	Merseyside Police	England and Wales
Charged / Summoned	29.5	23.2
Caution – adults	1.3	5.6
Caution – youths	0.2	0.3
Community resolution	0.9	1.4
Evidential difficulties prevent further action; victim supports police action	25.2	24.1
Evidential difficulties prevent further action; victim does not support police action	33.1	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, Merseyside Police's use of 'caution – adults' was among the lowest in identified domestic abuse cases 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.

Merseyside Police continues to respond well to victims of domestic abuse, with a positive rate of arrest at the scene for domestic abuse. Specialist advice on safeguarding and investigations is available to officers 24 hours a day, every day. Officers assess the vulnerability of domestic abuse victims in a consistent way, determine effective immediate safeguarding requirements such as panic alarms, advice and ongoing safeguarding, and support from independent domestic violence advisors (IDVAs), independent sexual violence advisors (ISVAs), housing, social services and multi-agency safeguarding hubs. Where risks are identified to children within the household, these are recorded and communicated through 'Encompass'. The force continues to make good use of body-worn video cameras to inform domestic abuse investigations, and proceed with victimless prosecutions.

²⁶ 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 England and Wales rate.

Investigations which carry a higher level of threat, risk and harm to the victim are investigated well by trained domestic abuse investigators. Low risk domestic abuse cases are the responsibility of response or planned demand teams. The force makes good use of preventative orders further to safeguard victims. There has been a notable increase in the proactive use of domestic violence protection orders. This increase in use means that more victims of domestic abuse are given additional protection by the perpetrator being prevented from returning. The force has made significant investment in the training of frontline officers in understanding ‘coercion, control and intimidation’, and held a one day conference for all domestic abuse investigators covering the psychological aspect of crimes against vulnerable people, investigation and gathering evidence.

The force takes seriously cases where officers have abused victims for their own sexual gain. In HMIC’s 2016 legitimacy report,²⁷ we have reported that the force successfully takes these cases through to prosecution. The victims of these cases are provided with good protection, are safeguarded and allocated a point of contact through a sexual offence liaison officer. We found, however, that victims had not been offered independent support, for example through ISVAs, because of the risk of exposing the confidentiality of the victim and the case.

Summary of findings



Good

In HMIC’s 2015 effectiveness report, we found that the force responded well to vulnerable victims. In 2016, the force continues to provide the same level of support through consistent completion of risk assessments of vulnerable victims and appropriate safeguarding. Officers and staff understand how to identify vulnerable victims, doing so correctly and consistently. They have access to a full range of information to inform their initial assessment. The force has an effective victim care model, the ‘Merseyside Model for Victim Care’, which provides officers with guidance and a range of support agencies to which they can refer victims.

Merseyside Police is generally good at investigating crimes that involve vulnerable people. The force has effective arrangements in place with partners through multi-agency safeguarding hubs, with additional provision for the safeguarding for victims of domestic abuse, harmful practices, and missing and absent children. The force works well with partners, including educational establishments, and neighbourhood teams support the ongoing safeguarding of victims in their area. The force works well in the provision of ‘best evidence’, including that from vulnerable children in crown court cases, to support effective investigations and outcomes.

²⁷ *PEEL: Police legitimacy 2016 – An inspection of Merseyside Police*, HMIC, 2016. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/peel-police-legitimacy-2016-merseyside/

Areas for improvement

- The force should improve its initial investigation and evidence gathering by staff working on front enquiry counters, ensuring that they are appropriately trained in the full application of the THRIVE risk assessment tool.

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

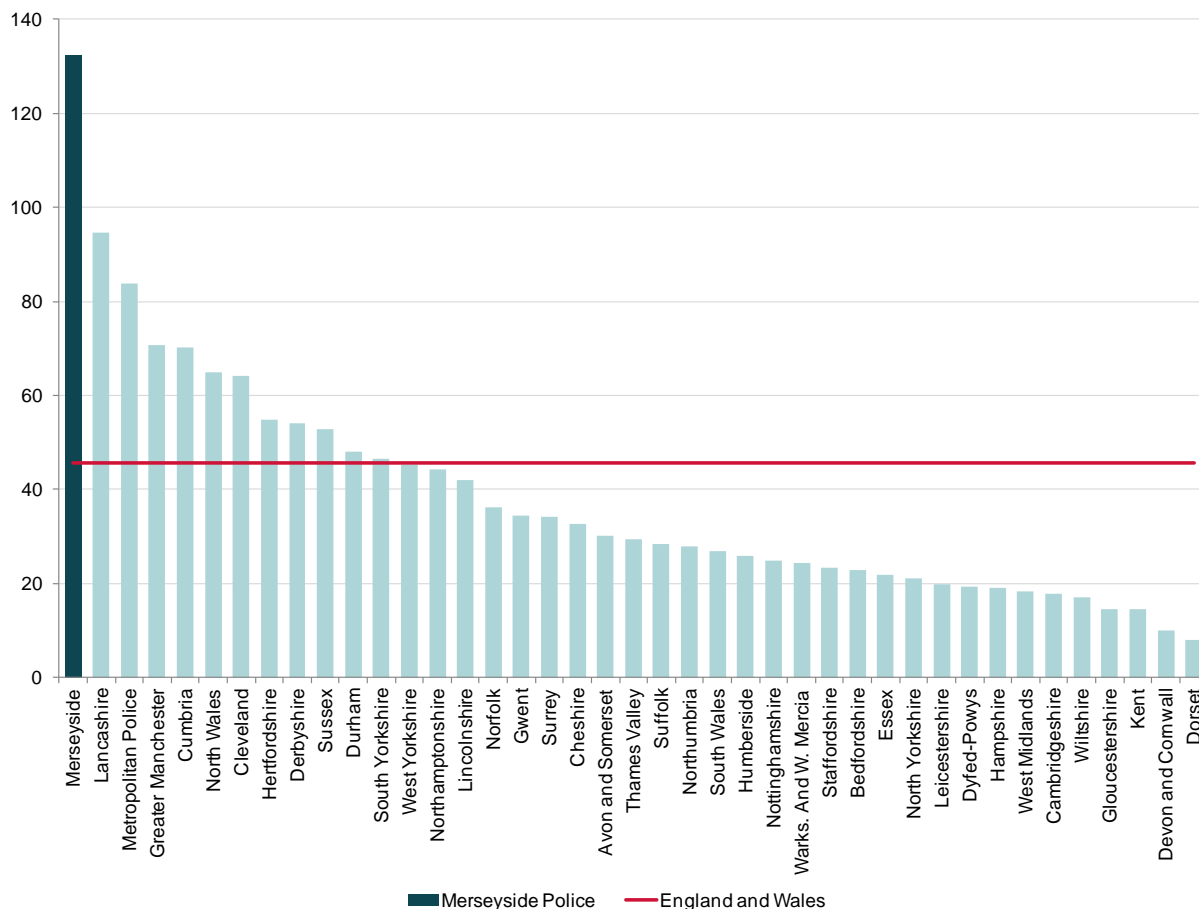
Serious and organised crime poses a threat to the public across the whole of the UK and beyond. Individuals, communities and businesses feel its damaging effects. Police forces have a critical role in tackling serious and organised crime alongside regional organised crime units (ROCU), the National Crime 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, Merseyside Police was actively disrupting, investigating or monitoring 132 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 2016²⁸



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 Merseyside Police as at 1 July 2016. This was also the most common OCG crime type recorded by all forces in England and Wales.

Merseyside Police has a comprehensive understanding of the risk and threat posed by serious and organised crime. This type of crime remains a priority for the force with the level of threat being assessed daily, and it continues to make good use of intelligence in developing its understanding. The force assesses organised crime groups (OCGs) in line with national guidance, and is thorough in its review of OCGs who present the highest threat and risk to the public. The force now identifies problematic peer groups in addition to urban street gangs which means that the force is starting to monitor and work with young people early to prevent them from

²⁸ City of London Police data have been removed from the chart and the England and Wales rate as its OCG data are not comparable with other forces due to size and its wider national remit.

becoming involved in organised criminality. This means that the public can be assured that the highest threats and risks associated with serious and organised crime in Merseyside are identified in a timely way to allow the force to respond appropriately.

The force's meetings are informed by comprehensive analysis assessing both traditional and emerging serious and organised crime threats. More could nonetheless be done to incorporate data from partners into these analyses and to consider the potential longer-term impact of organised crime. Last year we found that, in line with guidance, the force had produced a comprehensive serious and organised crime local profile.²⁹ This was informed by a wide range of partner data and included a clear action plan and allocation of responsibility for achieving elements of the plan. This year, the force is revising the profile to make it more sophisticated. The force makes good use of its established strategic and local level partnership meetings to progress actions to disrupt serious and organised crime.

The force uses a full range of intelligence to increase its understanding of OGCs including information from local communities, partners, and digital media. Officers and staff, particularly neighbourhood support teams, have good knowledge of the OCGs in their areas and are tasked with intelligence collection. The force continues to make extensive use of other intelligence sources such as the regional confidential unit,³⁰ and since last year the force has seen an improvement in its engagement with the prison service and prison intelligence has improved. However, the force has acknowledged that the government agency intelligence network (GAIN) is not routinely used and the force could exploit it better.³¹

OCGs continue to be quickly identified and mapped thoroughly once this has happened. This is a process which assesses each group in relation to its criminality, capability and intent. The force assesses most OCGs in line with national guidance, and those that pose a higher risk are reassessed more frequently than national guidance requires. The force does not routinely reassess all OCGs which are subject to routine intelligence monitoring rather than active disruption (as they are least active or threatening) every six months, as set out in national guidance. However,

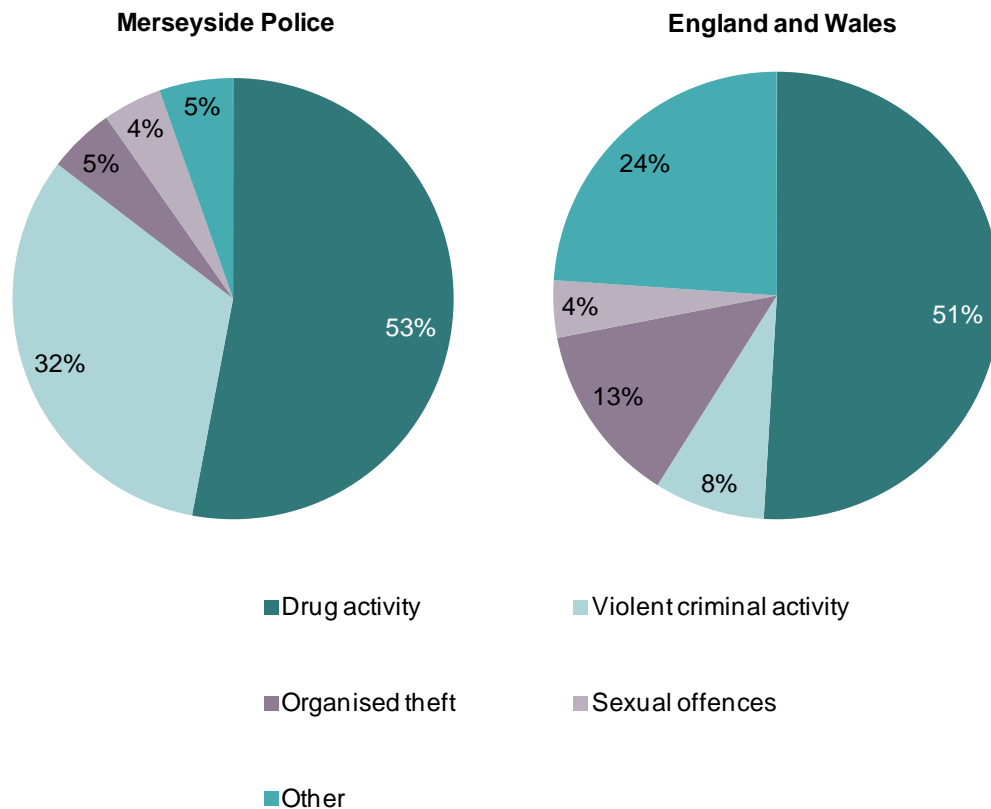
²⁹ A local profile is a report that outlines the threat from serious and organised crime within a specific local area. SOC local profiles are available from: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/371602/Serious_and_Organised_Crime_local_profiles.pdf

³⁰ The regional confidential unit is the organisational unit responsible for managing the sharing of protectively marked information across Merseyside, Lancashire, Cheshire, Cumbria and Greater Manchester police forces.

³¹ 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.

the force manages the risk that these groups pose appropriately, and reassessment does occur if relevant intelligence is received.

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



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.

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.

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activities against serious and organised crime, it is important that the force understands the extent to which it is disrupting organised crime and reducing harm.

Merseyside Police continues to have a strong approach to tackling serious and organised crime. It manages OCGs well through involving all parts of the force, and continually disrupts OCGs in collaboration with a wide range of partners at a local level. The force prioritises its activity well and works to deter others groups from becoming engaged in organised crime. There is a comprehensive process in place for managing OCGs with strong oversight and governance. This means that organised crime is being actively managed by the force and partners with the aim of reducing the risk of threat and harm to local communities and individuals.

A comprehensive process, with strong oversight and governance, is in place for managing OCGs. The long term management of OCGs is allocated to lead responsible officers (LROs) at senior level to provide direction and ensure the achievement of management plans. LROs have a clear understanding of their role and work with others to manage the day-to-day plan of activity. Thorough and tailored plans, structured around the 4Ps (prevent, pursue, protect, and prepare), are in place for all OCGs with the aim of reducing the risk of threat and harm to local communities and individuals. LROs provide progress updates, and OCG activity is scrutinised in detail, at weekly meetings. The recording of activity on force systems prompts LROs to consider tactics, enables good handovers and provides an auditable record of activity which assists with the force's understanding of 'what works'.

The force continually carries out disruption activity on OCGs through its specialist teams, neighbourhood teams and partnership activity. Each of the force's basic command units has a support team that focuses on disruption activity. Neighbourhood teams are aware of the OCGs operating in their local area and are routinely involved in disruption. These teams are also engaged in post-operation consolidation to ensure that another OCG does not fill the void that has been left by disruption, for example if a local drug dealer has been removed they will ensure support is in place for those who are drug dependent.

Through local multi-agency meetings there is an effective partnership response to serious and organised crime. One example is 'Disarm', which is a response to gun crime that includes partners and is chaired by the local authority. This and other multi-agency meetings focus on problem solving with partners to provide a more rounded approach to tackling OCGs, making good use of other legislation such as trading standards, environmental, and licensing legislation, particularly where the group is operating through a local business.

The force obtains specialist support for its operations from the regional organised crime unit (ROCU) network and National Crime Agency (NCA) for example; this support includes the provision of undercover officers and specialist surveillance.

While the force works well with the ROCU, it is self-sufficient through the range of support teams available in the force except for prison intelligence. The force intends to maintain its current level of capability when it moves to its new force operating model in January 2017.

The force can demonstrate a positive impact on serious and organised crime as a result of its activity. It uses the disruption scale to assess the impact of individual disruption activities, although the overall impact of activity against an OCG is not assessed.³²

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.

Merseyside Police continues to engage well with those at risk of being drawn into serious and organised crime. The force has further developed its process to deter those groups who may be influenced by organised crime and acts promptly to stop them developing into OCGs. It has a range of effective and tailored initiatives in place to deter people from becoming involved in organised crime such as the Terriers programme in schools, creative and innovative communication campaigns, and joint projects with partners and charities. The force excels in the successful use of gang injunctions and makes good use made of other ancillary orders to prevent those engaged in organised crime from re-offending.

The Terriers programme is a stage-based drama shown to 150,000 children during Spring 2016. Stage performances were given to all schools over a ten-week period and events were held at the Royal Court Theatre, Liverpool. Schools found the stage performance to be "completely absorbing, thought-provoking and very moving drama which delivered effective and relevant safeguarding messages to students" and "an excellent production which gave students much to discuss. A great addition to our PSHE [personal and sexual health] programme".³³ The effectiveness of the programme was evaluated by Liverpool John Moores University in 2015 to determine whether drama-based crime prevention was effective in engaging with young people.

³² A scoring system used by forces to record and measure the effectiveness of their disruption and dismantling activity on OCGs.

³³ Quotations are from the draft evaluation of the Terriers programme.

At the time of our inspection, the final report on the evaluation was due to be published later in 2016 or early in 2017. The draft evaluation indicated that there was now considerable interest in the potential role that arts and drama-based intervention could play within youth crime prevention strategies.

Merseyside Police continues to develop creative and innovative ways to communicate with the public about organised crime, with an underlying message of deterring those who may be on the cusp of becoming involved, and of providing support and a way out to those already involved. Last year we commented on the force's plans for a creative communication campaign called 'The Catwalk' focused on raising awareness about the dangers and consequences of joining gangs, to encourage young females not to get involved, and persuade those who already are to seek pathways out of this lifestyle. This campaign ran in October 2015 and a subsequent evaluation demonstrates its success. The force has also used a giant gift box in wrapping paper with a walk-in art installation. Its most recent campaign for child sexual exploitation is 'listen to my story', which has been funded by the police and crime commissioner (PCC). It includes a micro-site to encourage the public to visit to further their understanding and access support.

The force works well with the community through projects which are funded by small grants provided by the PCC with the aim of deterring young people from becoming victims of organised crime. 'Making Waves' provides advice and support to individuals living within Everton and Anfield areas of Merseyside who may have concerns about organised gangs, youth crime, or anti-social behaviour and may experience threats and intimidation but do not know how to access help and support. The force is also working with the Ariel Trust, an educational charity, to provide educational programmes and resources to teachers for use in schools. It is jointly developing a new primary school programme for the next phase of child sexual exploitation campaigns. This focuses on giving young children the skills they need to make decisions themselves, particularly in creating an awareness of online grooming.

The force effectively manages existing offenders through use of ancillary and civil orders to tackle serious and organised crime with effective monitoring through a force-level serious and organised crime meeting. The force excels in its use of gang injunctions and can demonstrate the positive effect these have had in reducing offending during and after the injunction period. The force uses serious crime prevention orders to prevent offending while in prison. It has commenced the implementation of a lifetime management approach for OCG members focusing on 'iconic individuals', who are those individuals who may cause disruption in prison and continue to organise crime in communities while in prison.

Summary of findings



Outstanding

Merseyside Police continues to be outstanding in the way it tackles serious and organised crime.

The force has a comprehensive understanding of the risk and threat posed by serious and organised crime, with the level of threat assessed daily. This means that the public can be assured that the threats and risks associated with serious and organised crime in Merseyside are identified in a timely way to allow the force to respond appropriately.

Merseyside Police has a strong approach to tackling serious and organised crime which means the threat of organised crime to local communities is being managed effectively. It manages organised crime groups well through its 'whole force' approach and in collaboration with local partners. The force is proactive in the way it prevents serious and organised crime. It continues to engage well with those people at risk of being drawn into serious and organised crime or at risk of becoming victims of organised crime. It does this through creative and innovative communication with the public, and a range of specific support programmes, to which those at risk can be referred. It excels in the successful use of gang injunctions to prevent re-offending, and works well to prevent offenders re-offending while in prison.

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)³⁴ 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.

Merseyside Police has effective arrangements in place to ensure that it can fulfil its national policing responsibilities. These are overseen by a chief officer through a protective services meeting. The force has used authorised professional practice, minimum standards and national best practice and guidelines to review and rate its response to each of the SPR national threats. It has comprehensively mapped its response to firearms and public order and understands its own capability and capacity with regard to a regional and national response in these areas.

The force has conducted joint exercises and operations with partners to test its response to the SPR threats. It has conducted 17 exercises within the last 12 months. These include exercises for civil emergencies, chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear attacks, and public order. It has also included a live mobilisation test. In addition, the force recently engaged in an exercise to test its counter terrorism response, and its response to casualties, for maritime threats. The

³⁴ 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

force has subsequently worked with partner organisations to review and update its response to a major incident within the docks and river areas of Merseyside.

The chief officer lead is also the lead for the joint emergency services interoperability programme (JESIP) across Merseyside. A recent JESIP exercise has been completed involving all emergency services and local authority partners.

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.

Merseyside Police is part of a North West collaboration of six neighbouring forces with regional governance in place for firearms. The forces have developed a regional armed policing strategic risk assessment (APSTRA) to assess the level of firearms threat across Merseyside and the other five forces. The APSTRA is reviewed every six months in line with national guidance; it has been reassessed in light of recent terrorist incidents and submitted to the College of Policing as required.

Merseyside Police has tested its preparedness against the firearms threat. The firearms exercise regime is determined at a regional level, and there is multi-agency testing of a regional response to firearms incidents. The force also runs its own exercises with local partners. It has conducted two recent public order exercises in addition to several others designed to test firearms capability. A regional three-day marauding terrorist firearms attack simulation has also been undertaken within the last 12 months; this was de-briefed with local partners and contingency plans were refreshed as a result.

Merseyside Police is not part of the national armed policing uplift programme. As part of the new force operating model, it planned to reduce the number of its firearms officers. However, following a further review the number of officers is being maintained to provide sufficient capability. An expected skills loss has been identified through regional units drawing on Merseyside Police's expertise and on foreseen retirements, including those of instructors. The force plans to increase the number of officers to provide the required resilience.

Summary of findings

Ungraded

Merseyside Police has effective arrangements in place to ensure that it can fulfil its national policing responsibilities. It regularly tests its ability to respond to national threats with partners including public order, civil emergencies, counter terrorism and unannounced tests of its ability to mobilise. The force has reviewed its response to each of the *Strategic Policing Requirement* threats in line with national standards and best practice.

Merseyside Police is part of a North West collaboration of six neighbouring forces with regional governance in place for firearms. The forces have assessed the level of firearms threat across Merseyside and the other five force areas. The threat is reviewed regularly through governance meetings with a formal review every six months in line with national guidance, and has been reassessed in light of recent terrorist incidents. The force has thoroughly tested its preparedness against the firearms threat through firearms exercises and a three day marauding terrorist firearms exercise with partners. Merseyside Police is not part of the national armed policing uplift programme but has reviewed and maintained firearms officer numbers and responded to a foreseeable loss of skills.

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/539447/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.