PEEL: Police effectiveness 2016

An inspection of Staffordshire Police

Contents

Introduction

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

What is police effectiveness and why is it important?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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[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

Staffordshire Police	England and Wales
242	240

Crime (excluding fraud)

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

Staffordshire Police	England and Wales
63	68

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

Staffordshire Police	England and Wales
+13.2%	+7.8%

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

Staffordshire Police	England and Wales
+3.1%	-3.4%

Crime outcomes*

Charged/summonsed

Staffordshire Police	England and Wales
13.7%	12.1%

Evidential difficulties: suspect identified but victim does not support action

Staffordshire Police	England and Wales
15.1%	10.6%

Investigation completed but no suspect identified

Staffordshire Police	England and Wales
34.0%	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

Staffordshire Police	England and Wales
30	31

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

Staffordshire Police	England and Wales
29	34

Domestic abuse

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

Staffordshire Police	England and Wales
21	16

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

Staffordshire Police	England and Wales
18.1%	11.1%

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

Staffordshire Police	England and Wales
15.6%	10.0%

Organised crime groups

Organised crime groups per million population as at 1 July 2016

Staffordshire Police	England and Wales
23	46

Victim satisfaction rate

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

Staffordshire Police	England and Wales
86.5%	83.3%

For further information about the data in this graphic please see annex A

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

Overall judgment[2]

⬤⬤◯◯ **Requires improvement**

Staffordshire Police requires improvement in respect of its effectiveness at keeping people safe and reducing crime. Our overall judgment this year is the same as last year, when we also judged the force to require improvement. The force has improved its investigation of crime and the way it protects vulnerable people, but still has work to do. Crime prevention activity is good, but the force's approach to tackling serious and organised crime requires improvement in some specific areas.

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?	⬤⬤◯◯ **Requires improvement**
How effective is the force at protecting those who are vulnerable from harm, and supporting victims?	⬤⬤◯◯ **Requires improvement**
How effective is the force at tackling serious and organised crime?	⬤⬤◯◯ **Requires improvement**
How effective are the force's specialist capabilities?	**Ungraded**

Staffordshire Police requires improvement in respect of its effectiveness at keeping people safe and reducing crime.

The force is effective at preventing crime, tackling anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe. It ensures that its engagement methods are tailored to the public's needs. It shows continued commitment to working collaboratively with local partner

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

organisations. Its approach to solving problems in the community could be improved by adopting a more structured model.

The force has improved the way it investigates crime and reduces re-offending, but it still requires further improvement. Most investigations are allocated appropriately and investigation quality, particularly among non-specialists, is improving. However, managers are not consistently supervising investigations to check quality and progress where required. Innovative use of integrated offender management is helping the force achieve consistent reductions in re-offending, but a lack of capacity is causing delays to routine visits to sex offenders.

The force has improved significantly how well it protects from harm those who are vulnerable, but it still requires improvement.

The force has introduced improved policies for tackling cases of domestic abuse and of missing persons. Marked improvements in the quality and quantity of domestic abuse risk-assessments have been sustained throughout 2016. The force works effectively with partner organisations to ensure appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place for vulnerable people. However, the rationale for assessing risk in missing person cases is not always being recorded in sufficient detail, and officers are not always using trigger plans to their full effect. Specialist investigators sometimes fail to use investigation plans and victim contact contracts in cases involving vulnerable people.

The force needs to improve its approach to tackling serious and organised crime. The force has conducted work to assess the threat from serious and organised crime, but this has not provided it with a complete understanding. It has not completed a force-wide serious and organised crime profile and is not mapping all organised crime groups thoroughly. It is making much greater use of its local policing teams in a co-ordinated all-force effort, but needs to implement a more balanced approach to tackling organised crime which places a greater emphasis on protective measures as well as more traditional pursuit and reactive investigation.

The force and its partners use tailored projects to deter people from being drawn into organised crime, and it uses a range of innovative methods to raise awareness about the threat from organised crime and reassure the public about its response.

The force has arrangements in place to respond to the threats set out in the *Strategic Policing Requirement* and, although not part of the national uplift programme, it has increased its firearms capacity.

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 Staffordshire?

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 3.1 percent in Staffordshire compared with a decrease of 3.4 percent across all forces in England and Wales.

Over this same period, victim-based crime increased by 5.5 percent in Staffordshire, 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 Staffordshire, for the five-year period to 30 June 2016
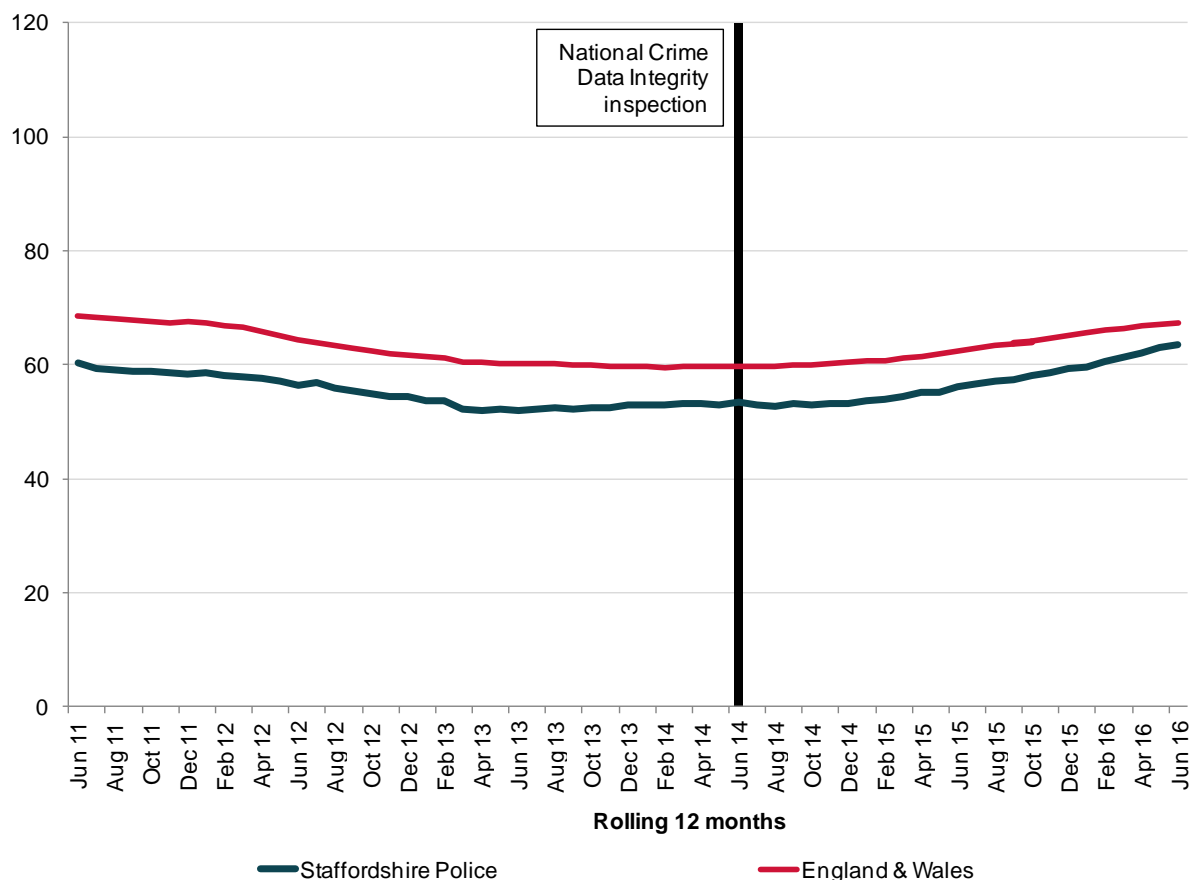
Source: Home Office data
For further information about these data, please see annex A

More recently, when compared with the previous 12 month period, police-recorded crime (excluding fraud) in Staffordshire increased by 13.2 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 Staffordshire 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 Staffordshire, for the 12 months to 30 June 2016

Rates per 1,000 population	Staffordshire Police	England and Wales
Recorded crime (excluding fraud)	63.5	68.2
Victim-based crime	57.2	60.4
Sexual offences	2.3	1.9
Assault with injury	8.9	7.0
Burglary in a dwelling*	5.6	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
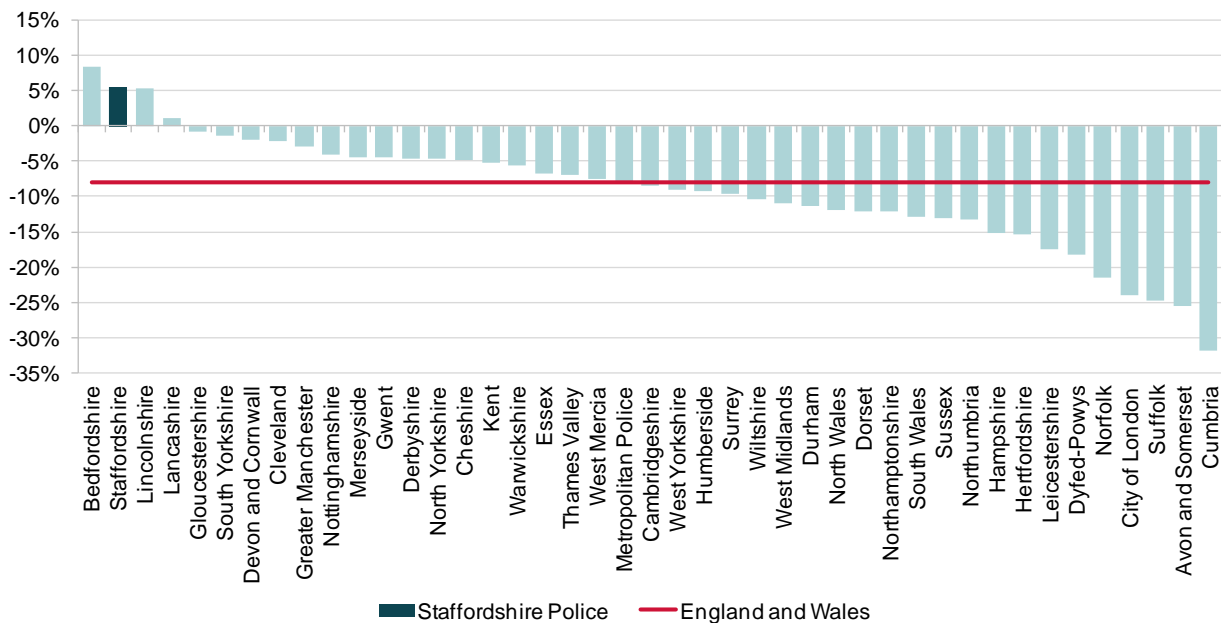
Source: Home Office data
For further information about these data, please see annex A

In the 12 months to 31 March 2016, Staffordshire Police recorded 31 incidents of anti-social behaviour per 1,000 population. This is 6 percent more 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 Staffordshire Police understand the risk posed to its communities?

Staffordshire Police has a satisfactory understanding of the threat or risk of harm within its communities. The force has a strong focus on neighbourhood policing and maintains a visible uniformed presence in each of its eleven local policing areas. The force's policing plan sets out its vision of keeping communities safe and reassured by providing outstanding service, preventing crime and disorder and dealing with what matters to communities. In every neighbourhood a named team of police officers and PCSOs spend most of their time carrying out community engagement and prevention work.

Staffordshire Police's planned spending on local policing and investigations was 52 percent of its 2015/2016 budget, in line with the rest of England and Wales. The force is effective at ensuring that neighbourhood officers and PCSOs have time to work closely with communities to carry out problem-solving work and foot patrols. The force does not have a formal policy setting out how frequently neighbourhood officers can be redeployed to support response officers to deal with incidents, nor has it conducted a central analysis of neighbourhood staff redeployments. However, local commanders operate local 'mutual aid' arrangements to ensure that neighbourhood staffing levels are maintained. Bi-monthly scrutiny of local policing teams takes place at superintendent level to oversee staffing levels, and this ensures that redeployments are minimised.

The force uses intelligence and analysis effectively to develop a satisfactory understanding of the threats faced by the community. It uses the 'management of risk in law enforcement' (MoRiLE) process endorsed by the National Police Chiefs' Council. This process, supported by good use of partner organisation data, identifies and assesses a range of strategic threats and risks. The force's analysts produce problem profiles, offender profiles and victim profiles that support effective interventions for both police and partner organisation. However, in some parts of the force local neighbourhood profiles are not being used to their full extent and are in need of updating.

How does Staffordshire Police engage with the public?

In order to understand and prioritise what matters most to the public, Staffordshire Police makes good use of a broad range of tailored engagement activities, some of which are innovative.

The force adjusts its approach to contact and engage with groups within its area who are otherwise difficult to reach. It ensures that its various engagement methods are adapted to meet the needs of different communities. The force area includes a large rural component and the force works hard to engage with the rural community, attending farmers' markets and other countryside events. The force holds poaching awareness days, recruits rural volunteers and operates 'farm watch' and 'horse/tack watch' schemes to meet the needs of more isolated communities.

In more urban areas, the force understands that a high proportion of its population prefer to access services online. In conjunction with the office of the police and crime commissioner, it has developed 'Staffordshire Smart Alert' in consultation with residents and businesses. This enables targeted and timely community safety information to be shared with specific sections of the public. This facility is soon to be further enhanced using 'geo-location' technology in conjunction with the mobile data devices issued to all operational officers.

The force works with a charity, Nash Dom, to provide 'drop-in sessions' in Stoke-on-Trent to aid understanding of matters affecting members of eastern European communities. The force co-ordinates a hate crime forum for the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community. PCSOs also use citizen contact records and structured questionnaires to engage directly with particular sections of the communities at their homes and in supermarkets. This engagement is encouraging active citizen participation in local policing; examples are the use of foreign language volunteers, and of street pastors to work with the homeless.

The force has recently set up a community engagement board, chaired at chief officer level, to co-ordinate its various engagement activities. At the time of inspection, this board was about to publish a force engagement strategy called 'a new relationship with the community'. The force has commenced an engagement preference mapping exercise to find out how different groups prefer to be contacted,

and is analysing the volume of intelligence originating from different sections of the community. This analysis will help Staffordshire Police understand more clearly which engagement methods are most effective for different parts of the force. The new strategy overseen by the engagement board is intended to strengthen further the force's capability to provide tailored and prioritised responses to meet the needs of the various and diverse communities of Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.

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 Staffordshire Police. Some 400 people were interviewed and 56 percent were very or fairly satisfied with local policing in their area. This is a 3 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?

The force's approach to solving problems in the community could be improved with a more structured 'problem-solving approach' such as the SARA model (scan, analyse, respond, assess). There are isolated examples of neighbourhood teams using the SARA model to structure their approach, but this is not consistent.

In some areas of the force we found that officers and PCSOs are seeking to tackle problems without fully understanding the SARA model or using any other structured problem-solving model. We found an emphasis on the 'response' element of the model, and local problem-solving plans consisting merely of a list of actions. Little analysis is taking place of local problems using the problem analysis tool of victim, offender and location. This means the force is not focusing on the underlying causes of problems and tailoring its responses accordingly.

The force is also not evaluating the success of its actions. For problem-solving to be successful, a force should assess the effectiveness of its interventions on a rolling basis so they can be modified, if necessary. The lack of analysis and absence of any assessment of interventions means the force cannot be confident that activities

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[3] For further details, see annex A.

being conducted to tackle problems in its communities are effective. This is an area for improvement for the force.

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

HMIC's 2015 effectiveness report found that Staffordshire Police had a strong commitment to working in partnership with other organisations, sharing information to understand local community concerns and developing joint plans and activities to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour. This is consistent with what we found this year.

The force recognises the need to build upon the relationships that it has with partner organisations. We found that the force is continuing to work collaboratively with local partners. This is evident in the broad range of public and private sector partnership arrangements which are in place throughout the county of Staffordshire and the city of Stoke-on-Trent. Neighbourhood officers and PCSOs routinely dedicate time to preventative work with a range of organisations.

The force works well with other organisations to address community concerns and this helps to keep people safer in local neighbourhoods. We found examples of how the force responded to different types of concerns. During the summer months PCSOs conducted a successful operation providing diversionary activity in areas with a high incidence of anti-social behaviour. PCSOs operate the 'VIP scheme' with partner organisations, providing crime prevention advice, reassurance and improved physical security for 'valued independent people' in areas of increased anti-social behaviour. The force works jointly with charities to address problems such as gang-related crime, sex workers and homelessness.

The organisations working on community safety welcome the routine sharing of information about long-term problems and individual cases, which is enabling them to prioritise jointly their use of resources. For example, in Stoke-on-Trent the force is a signatory to a three-year local co-operative working project with approximately twenty organisations including housing providers, social services, the YMCA, the fire service, environmental services and public health organisations. The force and its co-operating organisations are together committing resources to, and exchanging information about, tackling locally-identified problems.

Neighbourhood officers are well supported by specialists. Registered social landlords provide advice on housing matters and the force's vulnerability hubs co-ordinate activities in respect of vulnerable people. The force uses a range of tactics and interventions including a wide range of civil instruments such as public space protection orders. We also found examples of 'designing out crime'. For instance, in Tamworth and Cannock landscaping was used to reduce anti-social behaviour involving quad bikes.

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

In 2015, HMIC found the force was not evaluating and recording the effect of its activities. There was some evidence of staff sharing 'what works', but this was not consistent. Although local policing teams were making some use of the learning mechanism built into the force's citizen focus toolkit (CFT), we advised that this facility could be more widely used across the force to spread good practice. HMIC identified this as an area for improvement. We advised that the force should use evidence of 'what works' drawn from other forces, academics and partner organisations, to improve continually its approach to the prevention of crime and anti-social behaviour. There needed to be routine evaluation of tactics and sharing of effective practice.

The force has responded positively and made improvements, but it still has more work to do. In 2016 HMIC found examples of good practice being shared across the force in a more structured manner. The force is working with Staffordshire and Keele universities and other police forces to research and identify good practice. It is using knowledge-exchange groups to consolidate this learning. It also convenes panels of practitioners to develop new and improved ways of working. It recently held a PCSO development day, bringing PCSOs from across the force to share problem-solving experience and good practice. PCSOs told us how useful this had been and gave examples of how this had led to the replication of successful projects in other parts of the force.

The force has not, however, brought its good practice together in one central repository and the good practice facility within the CFT continues to be used inconsistently. This means the force is not effectively learning from its experience to improve services to the public. The force acknowledges this and plans to introduce a dedicated 'what works toolkit', which will assist neighbourhood teams.

Summary of findings

Good

The force is effective at preventing crime, tackling anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe. This is consistent with last year's finding. The force uses the MoRiLE process to develop a satisfactory understanding of the threats faced by the community. The force ensures that its various engagement methods are tailored to the public's needs. Its community engagement board is soon to launch an engagement strategy called 'a new relationship with the people of Staffordshire'.

In conjunction with the office of the police and crime commissioner, the force has developed 'Staffordshire Smart Alert' in consultation with residents and local businesses. In rural areas crime prevention projects address the needs of isolated communities. The force has started an engagement preference mapping exercise and is analysing the volume of community intelligence originating from different sections of the community. The force continues to work collaboratively with local partner organisations. Routine sharing of information is enabling community safety partners to prioritise their resources jointly. The force uses a range of tactics and interventions, including a wide range of civil orders. The force's approach to solving problems in the community could be improved by the use of a more structured problem-solving approach and routine sharing of good practice.

Areas for improvement

- The force should adopt a structured and consistent problem-solving process to enable it to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour more effectively.

- The force should evaluate and share effective practice routinely, both internally and with partners, to improve its approach to the prevention of crime and anti-social behaviour continually.

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 prosecution of offenders; typically these include types of crime such as cannabis misuse. If this type of crime is particularly prevalent in the force then it is likely that the level of 'cannabis/khat[4] 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 partner organisations 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

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[4] 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.

crime types such as sexual offences, the delay between a crime being recorded and 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 Staffordshire Police, in 12 months to 30 June 2016, by outcome type[5,6]

Outcome number	Outcome type / group	Staffordshire Police	England and Wales
1	**Charged/Summonsed**	**13.7**	**12.1**
4	**Taken into consideration**	**0.2**	**0.2**
	Out-of-court (formal)	**2.1**	**3.2**
2	Caution - youths	0.2	0.4
3	Caution - adults	1.8	2.3
6	Penalty Notices for Disorder	0.0	0.6
	Out-of-court (informal)	**3.3**	**3.6**
7	Cannabis/Khat warning	0.0	0.9
8	Community Resolution	3.3	2.8
*	**Prosecution prevented or not in the public interest**	**0.8**	**1.8**
	Evidential difficulties (victim supports police action)		
15	Suspect identified	10.7	8.3
	Evidential difficulties (victim does not support police action)	**18.4**	**13.8**
16	Suspect identified	15.1	10.6
14	Suspect not identified	3.2	3.2
18	**Investigation complete – no suspect identified**	**34.0**	**47.4**
20	**Action undertaken by another body / agency**	**1.9**	**0.6**
21	**Further investigation to support formal action not in the public interest**	**0.4**	**0.1**
	Total offences assigned an outcome	**85.4**	**91.3**
	Not yet assigned an outcome	**14.6**	**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

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[5] 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.

[6] '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, Staffordshire Police's use of 'action undertaken by another body / agency' was among the highest in England and Wales. Its use of 'investigation complete – no suspect identified' 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.

Staffordshire Police are also participating in the Ministry of Justice's out-of-court disposals pilot. This means these forces no longer issue simple cautions, 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.

Compared to forces in the rest of England and Wales in the 12 months to 30 June 2016, a slightly higher proportion of offences in Staffordshire Police resulted in offenders being charged/summonsed. However, a higher proportion of offences also encountered evidential difficulties, with a higher proportion of offences where victims did not support police action. Although the force is improving its overall approach to investigation, it acknowledges that there are still areas where it could improve the way that it supports victims of crime.

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

Staffordshire Police assesses incidents and calls from members of the public thoroughly, using a structured process, and this ensures that an appropriate response is almost always provided.

The system for tasking and operational resource management (STORM) provides readily accessible call data history to identify quickly previous incidents from the

same location or calls from the same telephone number. Staff in contact services[7] have access to force intelligence systems to help them to assess calls from the public. They are supported by a 24/7 real-time intelligence unit (RTIU) which routinely conducts additional research on incidents. The force uses the threat, harm, risk, vulnerability and engagement (THRIVE)[8] risk-assessment model to assess all calls received from the public in a structured manner, although we found that THRIVE decisions are not always documented in detail on STORM logs, leaving the potential for vulnerabilities to be overlooked. The recording of THRIVE decisions has improved following the introduction of a revised graded response policy earlier in 2016 and the force will need to ensure that this improvement continues.

All the force's police vehicles are fitted with SPIRIT (Staffordshire Police intelligent resourcing information technology). The system uses GPS positioning combined with an operational skills audit of staff to identify the nearest appropriately skilled officer to deploy. We found that the revised graded response policy combined with the use of SPIRIT technology ensures appropriate responses are consistently being despatched to incidents.

How well do response officers investigate?

Initial investigation by Staffordshire Police response officers is improving and in many cases investigations are being conducted thoroughly leading to satisfactory outcomes.

In HMIC's 2015 effectiveness report we identified that the force needed to take steps to ensure that all available evidence at crime scenes was recorded. This year we found improvement. Frontline staff demonstrate a good understanding of the need to conduct prompt initial investigation in the 'golden hour' (the critical early stages of an investigation). We found that in most cases crime scenes are being prioritised and appropriate forensic strategies are used to identify and record available evidence. Response officers are equipped with body-worn video cameras, and this technology helps them to retrieve evidence.

HMIC also found supervisors taking a more active role in providing guidance on initial investigations and attending scenes to direct activity where necessary. This increased emphasis on 'golden hour' activities is contributing to improved initial investigation.

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[7] Contact services is the department within Staffordshire Police which deals with calls for service from the public, comprising 999 and non-emergency control room operators in the control room at headquarters as well as customer service assistants working on the front desks of police stations.

[8] The THRIVE model is used to assess the appropriate initial police response to a call for service. It allows a judgment to be made of the relative risk posed by the call and places the individual needs of the victim at the centre of that decision.

In HMIC's 2015 effectiveness inspection, we identified that Staffordshire Police was not promptly allocating all crimes to investigators with the right skills, accreditation and support to investigate the crimes to a good standard. A new crime allocation policy, with processes to ensure that it is applied consistently has been introduced, and this year we found that as a result the force has improved allocation so that most investigations are conducted by appropriately skilled officers and staff. The revised policy takes into account THRIVE. In deciding on the most appropriate resource to use, the force also considers the seriousness of the crime and the likely requirement for a complex investigation. More complex and serious crimes are allocated to specialist investigators in the force safeguarding and investigation team (FSI), which is a merger of the force's CID and public protection teams formed in June 2016.

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

We are pleased to find that Staffordshire Police's standards of investigation are showing notable improvements particularly among non-specialist investigators. However we found that although the quality of specialist investigations was maintained in the north of the force's policing area, in the south it has declined. The force itself is aware of this and has started a review to find out the reason.

Staffordshire Police operates an 'officer in the case' model in which the initial attending officer generally retains responsibility for any subsequent investigation. This aims to give officers a greater sense of ownership of investigations from the outset and thereby provide an improved service to victims. The FSI provides immediate investigative support to serious and more complex investigations. The force is encouraging early 'case conferencing' with the FSI to ensure crime allocation is appropriate, to provide support to uniformed investigating officers and to enable handover to specialist investigators when necessary. In addition, FSI detective sergeants are nominated to be a point of contact for each local policing team and are available to give advice.

The force daily management meeting provides a further opportunity to monitor crime allocation and to ensure that the investigations are allocated to the officer or staff

member with the right skills. The force acknowledges that these processes are relatively new and are not yet fully accepted and understood throughout the force. HMIC found some isolated examples of complex investigations inappropriately allocated to non-specialists, but the force is clearly committed to ensuring that crimes are allocated to investigators commensurately with their skills and abilities.

Staffordshire Police is making progress and improving the quality of its investigations of crimes. In our 2014 PEEL inspection of the force HMIC found that the quality of investigation was variable, and the force was judged to require improvement. In 2015, we found that some improvement had been made and investigations conducted by specialist staff were more thorough, but that those which were conducted by non-specialist staff still showed limited use of investigation plans and in some cases victims had not been updated on progress. Since then, senior leaders have ensured that the standards of investigations and support for victims continue to improve across the force. Minimum standards for recording investigative activity and victim contact have been put in place and every local policing team has a nominated senior officer responsible for raising standards.

We found that many investigations are now being conducted more thoroughly, with widespread use of investigation plans. The force conducts bi-monthly scrutiny of local policing teams including reviews of investigations with front-line officers, and this is helping to drive improvements. Through its own monitoring, the force has identified a number of cases being investigated by the FSI without investigation plans in the south of the force area. The FSI was formed to assist specialist investigators to meet demand more effectively. The force has now commissioned a review of the FSI to ensure the right culture, resources and responses are in place to meet demand and to maintain an effective focus on investigation and victim care.

In 2015, we identified supervision of investigations as an area for improvement for Staffordshire Police. HMIC advised the force that it should ensure regular and active supervision of investigations to check quality and progress. This year we found that managers are still not consistently supervising investigations. In some cases we found that supervision is taking place but is not being recorded appropriately.

The force's own monitoring and dip-sampling has identified that supervision of investigations remains an area for improvement and it has instigated a number of actions to improve the quality of investigations. It has produced guidance for supervisors and senior officers, and managers have access to performance information about the use of investigation plans and victim contracts. The force monitors progress via its quarterly force effectiveness meeting. Staffordshire Police plans to provide Professional Investigation of Programme (PIP) level 2 training to frontline staff to assist with succession planning for investigative functions and with ensuring that the improvements in investigation which have been achieved are accepted and understood throughout the force.

The force intends to act on the FSI review, once it has been completed, to ensure that its structures are effective in enabling specialist officers to conduct high-quality investigations in the more serious and complex cases. The force is working hard to address the issue of investigative standards and the quality of investigations is improving, particular among non-specialists. However the improved standards of investigation achieved are not yet accepted and understood throughout the whole force. These areas for improvement identified during our 2015 inspection therefore still apply.

Support to investigations

Staffordshire Police has a broad range of effective intelligence and forensic capabilities to support investigations. The force has a clear and consistently applied attendance policy for crime scene investigators (CSI). Attendance of CSIs at individual crime scenes is based on an assessment of threat, harm, risk and vulnerability and the likelihood of successful fingerprint and DNA recovery. The force makes effective use of the tagging facility on STORM to identify cases for CSI deployment, and a forensic co-ordinator is available for consultation with investigators if required. Forensic examination of material recovered from crime scenes also takes into account the nature of the crime and the likelihood of success in securing evidence to support the investigation. Investigators are able to track progress of forensic examinations using an online tracking system.

The force has various intelligence systems to support investigators, including Staffordshire police intelligence network, a daily briefing for local policing teams, the online 'National Intelligence Model (NIM) tasking' system and the active intelligence search tool. Staff use these systems to enter intelligence, access briefings, manage actions and search force systems. The force has a large number of staff trained to conduct open source social media research. There are sufficient numbers of sexual offence trained officers (STOs) and 'achieving best evidence' (ABE)[9] trained staff to provide support all day, every day. Analytical support, covert intelligence assets and financial investigators are also available to support the force's investigations.

The force encourages consideration of digital evidence recovery as part of investigative strategies. The high-tech crime unit (HTCU) has an effective prioritisation procedure in place and this is supported by early engagement with investigating officers. The force grades and prioritises HTCU submissions using a threat, harm and risk matrix. In some cases, HTCU staff accompany investigation teams to crime scenes and to searches of premises. This deployment, known as Operation Safenet, enables an early triage to provide advice on appropriate seizures and examinations, helping officers to identify those devices most likely to contain evidence rather than seizing every computer in a household. The force assesses

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[9] ABE training is provided to police officers and social workers who undertake joint interviews of children and vulnerable adults as part of a criminal investigation.

that the Operation Safenet triage approach has reduced the number of digital devices seized by about 70 percent. There is a turnaround time for examination of about six weeks in most cases. In less complex cases, investigators can request simple downloads from media devices such as mobile phones using the STORM tagging system and completing a simple submission document. There are 28 digital media examiners trained across the force and turnaround for these examinations is mostly within twenty-four hours.

Staffordshire Police is continually seeking new and innovative methods to expand its digital and forensic capabilities. A small digital intelligence team is using cutting-edge technology to support investigations exploiting digital sources of intelligence. The force recently launched an integrated partnership with Staffordshire University, aiming to develop expanded forensic capabilities.

Supporting victims

The new outcomes framework introduced in 2014 includes some outcomes where there were evidential difficulties,[10] 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.

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[10] 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[11,12]
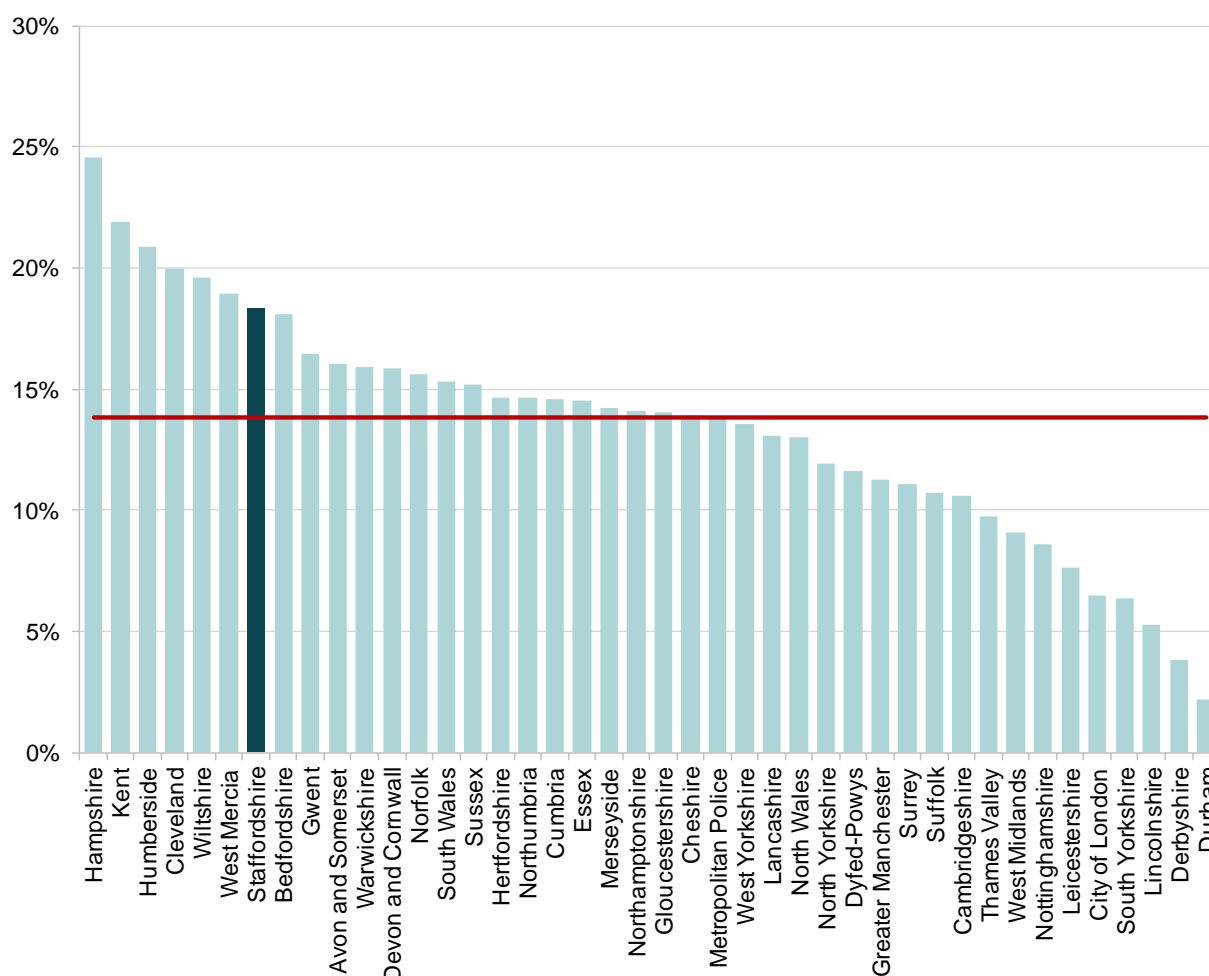
Source: Home Office crime outcomes data
For further information about these data, please see annex A

For all offences recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2016, Staffordshire Police recorded 18.4 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.

Staffordshire Police provides most victims with a satisfactory service and has made positive changes since HMIC inspected in 2015.

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

[12] 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.

These changes have brought about notable improvements in victim care, and HMIC found officers are now more focused on victims. We found increased use of victim care contracts. The force acknowledges that its approach to victims, particularly in respect of updates from investigators, still needs to be improved. The force itself has identified that officers in the southern FSI are not consistently using victim contracts, nor are they keeping victims updated. HMIC found evidence to suggest that this may be linked to greater workload and lower supervisory capacity in the southern FSI compared to the northern one. The FSI review which the force is planning will consider demand, capacity and culture to ensure that the unit is providing a consistent service to victims throughout the force area.

Although Staffordshire Police is continuing to work hard to put victims at the centre of its investigations, it assigns a higher proportion of outcomes where there were evidential difficulties than most forces and also a higher proportion of cases where victims are not supporting police action. The force has more work to do before it can be satisfied that it is achieving the required level of service for all victims of crime.

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?

Staffordshire Police is effective at managing offenders who pose a risk to the public. The force takes action to track and arrest wanted persons and outstanding suspects. Local policing teams receive regular briefings about persons wanted in their area. There is a focus at each daily management meeting on outstanding offenders, with a particular emphasis on domestic abuse and violence suspects, with cases being handed over from one shift to another. In some areas the force conducts specific projects and operations to ensure that offenders are pursued with additional vigour. Officers in Staffordshire make appropriate use of the Criminal Records Office to check foreign national offenders against the international criminal conviction exchange.

Although HMIC found a good local focus on offenders, the force's rate of circulating wanted persons on the PNC was just over half that of England and Wales as a whole. The rate of outstanding suspects not circulated on the PNC (1.8 per 1,000 population) was higher than England and Wales as whole (1.2 per 1,000 population). Some eighteen months ago the force introduced revised Police National Computer (PNC) circulation processes. Before the force circulates wanted persons via the PNC it requires that each case has a completed case file and investigation plan. This provides a robust process to ensure effective management of PNC circulations.

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

The force makes extensive and innovative use of integrated offender management (IOM) with a broad range of partner organisations. This is helping it to achieve impressive and consistent reductions in re-offending by serial perpetrators of violent crime, and by serial thieves, robbers and burglars. Integrated offender management for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent is overseen by a board with senior representation from the force, probation services and the community rehabilitation company (CRC).

The IOM scheme operates with several partner organisations who share offices at various places across the force. These include the probation service, the CRC, drug workers and health professionals. The use of the Empowering Communities and Neighbourhood Management System (E-CINS) database to manage IOM information facilitates effective sharing of information between the various partner agencies and supports effective joint working.

The force and its partner organisations are using a broad range of interventions, many of which are innovative. 'Voices' provides mentoring support to people living chaotic lifestyles and 'Ruby Girls' provides support to potentially vulnerable girls. A local premier league football club runs a project involving football coaching and tournaments, aimed at diverting offenders from involvement in violence.

The force regularly briefs frontline officers and PCSOs about the IOM group and other potentially dangerous offenders living in or visiting their local policing area. The IOM data on E-CINS is available for operational staff to access via their mobile digital devices and enables them to contribute effectively to intelligence gathering and crime prevention.

The force and its IOM partners have together achieved a commendably low re-offending rate among their IOM groups, which is much lower than the England and Wales rate (23 percent compared to 57 percent). The force's IOM overall group numbers have remained fairly stable over the last year but there is an increasing focus away from theft, robbery and burglary. Of the 735 subjects in the total IOM group, the number included on the basis of violent offences has more than doubled to 28. There is now a group of 90 gang members. Measures to reduce domestic abuse re-offending are being piloted with small groups of domestic abuse perpetrators in Stafford and East Staffordshire. This is an encouraging development but the scheme is currently limited to monitoring perpetrators with a view to identifying intervention opportunities.

The force has a centralised violent and sexual offender management unit (VSOM) which has responsibility for managing sex offenders, violent offenders and other potentially dangerous persons. VSOM officers and staff are well-trained to manage offenders and comprehensive risk management plans are in place. However, a lack of capacity within VSOM is resulting in delays to the routine visits to sexual offenders

which are an important part of their overall management. Some of the processes relating to updating risk-assessments following such visits are also falling behind. In particular, supervisors do not have sufficient capacity to quality-assure risk assessments in a timely fashion.

The force is aware of these problems and has taken action to improve resilience. It has trained almost all of its IOM team in sex offender management and has recently started involving them in the management of some registered sex offenders. The force is considering the potential benefits of a full merger of the two units as part of its transformation programme, and is conducting analysis to identify the sites which will best minimise travel time. The force intends to monitor closely how this new approach affects both the management regime for sexual offenders and its integrated offender management.

VSOM officers and staff seek to mitigate the risk posed by lack of capacity by prioritising visits where intelligence indicates there is raised risk or any safeguarding concerns. However the backlog of routine visits and risk-assessment for registered sex offenders is an area for improvement for the force.

The force is conducting a pilot in Stoke-on-Trent giving the local policing team increased access to VSOM information via their mobile digital devices. The pilot has yet to be evaluated but appears to be increasing the awareness within the local policing team of sex offenders. The VSOM works proactively to monitor compliance with sexual harm prevention orders resulting in offenders being prosecuted. This includes innovative work with the digital intelligence team to monitor some misuse of digital devices. This is good practice and is encouraging, particularly as the conditions which apply to so many of the registered sex offenders in the force area include prohibitions on digital activity.

Staffordshire Police works effectively with partners to manage the risk posed by dangerous offenders through multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPAs).[13] Staff managing MAPPA offenders have an average caseload of 2.2 subjects. This is consistent with the rate of offenders to MAPPA staff across England and Wales.

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[13] Arrangements set out in the Criminal Justice Act 2003 for assessing and managing the risk posed by certain sexual and violent offenders. They require local criminal justice agencies and other bodies working with offenders to work together in partnership to reduce the risk of further serious violent or sexual offending by these offenders.

Summary of findings

Requires improvement

Staffordshire Police requires improvement in investigating crime and reducing re-offending. The force has improved since 2015, when we also judged it to require improvement, but it still has work to do.

The force uses the THRIVE model to assess calls from the public in a structured manner. Frontline staff conduct prompt initial investigation in the critical early stages of most investigations, and investigation quality is improving, particularly among non-specialists (though it is still not good enough).

The force operates a clear attendance policy for crime scene investigators and tracks progress of forensic examinations online. The high-tech crime unit effectively prioritises digital evidence recovery. Digital media examiners recover evidence from media devices such as mobile phones. Extensive and innovative use of integrated offender management (IOM) with a broad range of partner organisations is assisting the force to achieve impressive reductions in re-offending. The force applies IOM principles to reduce violence with a large gang group and runs a trial domestic abuse perpetrator scheme. It has addressed delays to routine visits and risk-assessment of sexual offenders caused by a lack of capacity in its violent and sexual offender management unit.

Weaknesses remain. Although the force's new crime allocation policy ensures that it allocates most investigations appropriately, this is not yet part of routine practice. Although investigation quality is improving, particularly among non-specialists it is still not good enough. Officers are more focused on victims, but, again, this improvement is also not yet part of routine practice. Managers are not consistently supervising their teams' investigations. Investigative standards and victim care by specialist investigators in the south of the force's policing area have declined. Some of the processes to manage the risk posed by sex offenders are not managed effectively.

Areas for improvement

- The force should ensure that all investigations are completed to a consistently good standard, and in a timely manner.

- The force should ensure that there is regular and active supervision of investigations to improve quality and progress.

- The force should ensure that the risks posed by registered sex offenders are managed effectively.

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 2015, HMIC inspected how well forces keep people safe and reduce crime. This included an assessment of how effectively forces protect vulnerable people from harm, and support victims.

Staffordshire was one of four forces that HMIC graded as inadequate at protecting those who are vulnerable from harm, and supporting victims. Two causes of concern were identified, one relating to the force's response to domestic abuse and the other to judgemental attitudes displayed by some staff to vulnerable victims. Three areas for improvement were also identified. Earlier in 2016 the force was revisited to assess the progress made against these causes of concern and areas for improvement.

The force has responded positively and made a number of changes to its policies and procedures since our 2015 inspection. Staffordshire Police now takes a more comprehensive approach to the assessment of vulnerability in domestic abuse cases. HMIC found consistent use of DIAL risk assessments, quality reviews by supervisors and comprehensive secondary reviews by the local vulnerability hubs. HMIC did not find any evidence of poor attitudes to victims. On the contrary, we heard from partner organisations that officers across the whole force are now consistently demonstrating positive attitudes and behaviours in relation to vulnerable victims.

Changes introduced by the force have successfully alleviated the two causes of concern but there is still room for improvement in the management of missing persons and investigations. Investigators are now regularly effectively using information from trigger plans and previous missing episodes to direct activity, but this is not yet entirely consistent. Officers are still not always taking into account or acting upon information, such as suggested fast-track or priority actions or information to assist with their assessment of risk. The force also needs to maintain its focus on investigation in relation to, and care for, vulnerable victims.

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

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

Understanding the risk

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

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

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

Data returned by forces to HMIC show that in the 12 months to 30 June 2016, the proportion of crime recorded which involves a vulnerable victim varies considerably

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

[15] 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/

between forces, from 3.9 percent to 44.4 percent. For the 12 months to 30 June 2016, 44.4 percent of all recorded crime in Staffordshire was identified as having a vulnerable victim, which is above the England and Wales figure of 14.3 percent.

Figure 6: Percentage of police-recorded crime with a vulnerable victim identified, by force, for the 12 months to 30 June 2016[16]
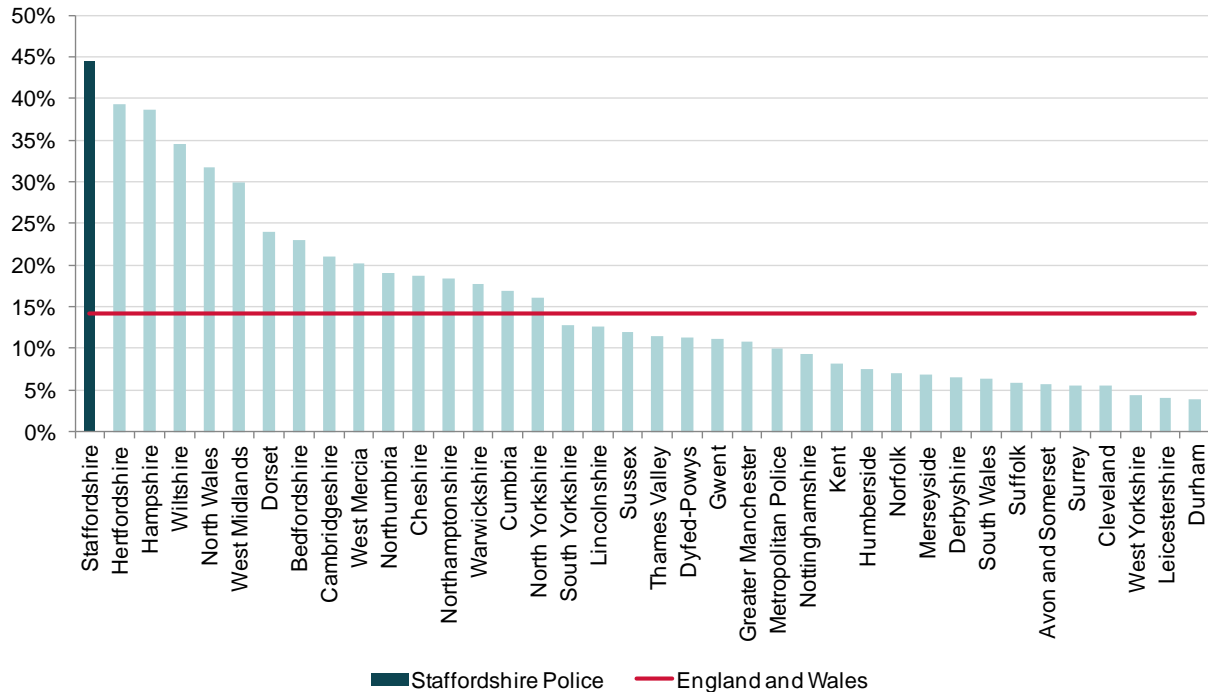
Staffordshire Police ——England and Wales

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

Staffordshire Police has an adequate understanding of the nature and scale of vulnerability, which it has developed in conjunction with partner organisations. The force has made a clear statement that safeguarding those who are vulnerable is a force priority. The force's approach to vulnerability is governed at chief officer level through a police vulnerability meeting supported by working groups driving improvements in respect of different aspects of vulnerability at an operational level across the force.

The MoRiLE process assists the force to understand the range of threats and risks facing the public. Through this process the force identified that crimes against the vulnerable present some of the greatest risks to the safety of people across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. As a result, crimes such as domestic abuse, modern-day slavery, child sexual exploitation, rape and sexual offences are all included in the force's priorities.

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

Officers and staff have a clear understanding of the force's approach to vulnerability and it uses the vulnerability definition from the government's *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime*. Each week, over a five-week cycle, force analysts focus on a different area of vulnerability and produce force-wide studies. In addition the force commissions problem profiles in specific areas such as male victims of domestic abuse and serial perpetrators. The work done is of good quality and helps the force to focus on the most vulnerable victims and tackle the offending behaviour of serial perpetrators. The force has regular meetings with independent domestic violence advisors to secure feedback from victims, and this informs its overall understanding of domestic abuse.

To develop its understanding of the risk of child sexual exploitation, the force and its partners have produced a number of detailed area-based child sexual exploitation profiles to analyse the characteristics of victims and of those at risk of becoming victims, of offenders, and of locations where intervention can be targeted.

The force works hard to understand whether it is responding in the right way with the right staff. It regularly evaluates its capacity and capability to respond to the threats identified. This is supported by a comprehensive performance framework which provides a detailed understanding of how well the force is responding. The force consults with academia and with other forces to identify the best ways of doing things in areas such as domestic abuse and missing persons. The force completes self-assessments including case file audits, and it develops action plans to ensure a strong focus on its objective of making vulnerability a priority.

In 2015 HMIC found that some Staffordshire Police officers demonstrated judgmental and unsupportive attitudes towards some vulnerable victims. This was a cause of concern to HMIC. The force takes these concerns very seriously and works hard to ensure that officers and staff have a clearer understanding of its approach to vulnerability.

The force has worked with Staffordshire and Keele universities to analyse the attitude of its officers and staff towards victims of domestic abuse. The force has also committed a great deal of investment into providing mandatory vulnerability training for all frontline officers. It has evaluated the success of this training and is following up with analysis of victim feedback and a quarterly forum with partner organisations.

HMIC did not find any evidence of poor attitudes to victims in 2016. On the contrary, we heard from partner organisations that the force has made considerable progress in the last eighteen months. Partners told HMIC that officers across the whole force are now consistently demonstrating positive attitudes and behaviours in relation to vulnerable victims. We heard numerous examples of positive action to safeguard the most vulnerable. HMIC is pleased that the cause of concern relating to judgmental and unsupportive attitudes towards vulnerable victims has been alleviated.

Staff in contact services, which include the force contact centre and front enquiry desks, use the STORM system to record calls and incidents. As outlined earlier, the force uses the THRIVE assessment model to assess these calls. Call data history and the use of flags on some computer locations helps to identify repeat victims. Initial assessment of risk is also supported by research from the 24/7 real-time intelligence unit (RTIU).

In 2015, HMIC found weaknesses in the force's initial response to incidents involving vulnerable people. Risk assessment at the initial point of contact was identified as an area for improvement, in particular when assessing the vulnerability of missing and absent children. The supervision of call takers' decision-making in such cases was also identified as an area for improvement. Since then the force has responded positively and HMIC now considers that these areas for improvement have been addressed.

During 2016 Staffordshire Police held a series of 'raising awareness' sessions on vulnerability with contact centre staff, which included input from partner organisations and a victim of domestic abuse. A substantial proportion of contact services staff, including those who work on the front desks at local stations, received this training. We found that this training appears to be contributing to improved performance, and the force has incorporated it into contact services induction training.

A revised missing person policy was introduced in 2016, introducing obligatory reviews of missing person incidents. The new policy provides greater clarity for contact centre staff and places increased emphasis on the role of supervisors and managers in the contact centre. We found supervisors consistently reviewing call takers' decisions, intervening when appropriate. The new procedures ensure that the vast majority of missing person calls are graded and assessed appropriately at the initial point of contact and the correct response is despatched. However, as these changes have only been implemented very recently, it will take time before the force can be confident they are fully understood and acted on by all personnel. In addition we found that the rationale for assessing risk in missing person cases is not always being recorded in sufficient detail. The force has provided guidance to ensure that detailed rationale in missing and absent cases is recorded, but this is an area for improvement for the force.

Staffordshire Police is effective at recognising vulnerability associated with mental health. Street triage teams made up of officers and mental health clinical practitioners are available throughout Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. Some of the clinical practitioners have spent time in the force contact centre to raise staff awareness of mental health vulnerabilities. All response officers have received mental health training within the last twelve months, and the STORM command and control system uses mental health flags to help with the identification of previous mental health-related incidents. In the 12 months to 30 June 2016, 2.0 percent of

incidents within the force area were flagged to identify mental health. This is in line with the 2.4 percent rate for England and Wales as a whole.

The force is maintaining a strong focus on improving its response to incidents involving vulnerable people. Staffordshire Police has the highest percentage of crimes flagged to identify vulnerable victims in England and Wales. This may in part be due to the additional emphasis the force now places on vulnerability.

Following on from its domestic abuse and mental health training earlier in the year, the force has also recently provided specific missing and absent people training for frontline officers and staff. Some contact services officers and staff also attended this training.

The force is planning further missing persons training specifically for contact services officers and staff to ensure that all vulnerable missing persons are identified as early as possible with appropriate rationale recorded. This will enable the force to develop further its approach to the assessment of risk at initial point of contact.

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 the Office for National Statistics. These data show that in the 12 months to 30 June 2016, police-recorded domestic abuse in Staffordshire increased by 35 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 18 percent of all police-recorded crime in Staffordshire, compared with 11 percent of all police-recorded crime across England and Wales.

The rate of arrest for domestic abuse offences can provide an indication of a force's approach to handling domestic abuse offenders. Although for the purpose of this

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

In Staffordshire Police, for every 100 domestic abuse related offences recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2016, there were 41 arrests made in the same period.

Figure 7: Domestic abuse arrest rate (per 100 domestic abuse crimes), by force, for the 12 months to 30 June 2016[17]
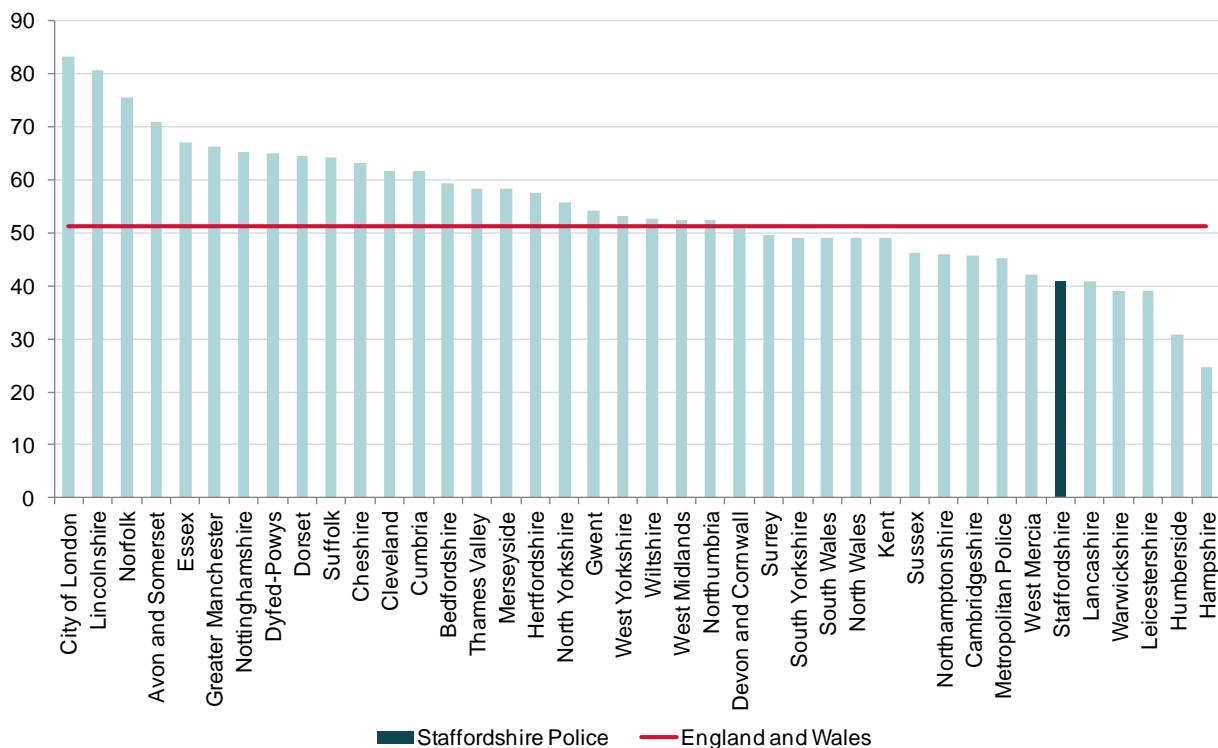
Source: HMIC data return, Home Office data
For further information about these data, please see annex A

Staffordshire Police assesses risk comprehensively at initial response for domestic abuse cases. This supports the force in conducting immediate safeguarding activity in such cases. The force's approach to missing and absent children is continuing to improve, but the force still does not consistently conduct appropriate immediate activity to keep children safer in every case.

When we inspected Staffordshire Police in 2015, HMIC found significant areas where improvement was needed in the services being provided by the force to protect and support some victims. In particular, the force's response to victims of

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

domestic abuse was a cause of concern to HMIC and its response to missing and absent children was judged to require improvement.

In 2015, the force did not require a formal risk-assessment to be carried out in all domestic abuse cases. It specified that this should be done only in respect of those incidents that had resulted in a recordable crime or were non-crime cases where in the officer's professional judgment a risk-assessment was required. Despite this restriction, there were sustained, unacceptably high levels of non-completion of risk-assessments even among this smaller group of cases. This meant that the force could have no confidence that it routinely recognised vulnerability and risk and therefore, no confidence that it was properly providing all vulnerable people with tailored support.

To address this cause of concern, HMIC advised that Staffordshire Police should immediately take steps to review its policy in relation to the completion of domestic abuse risk-assessments, especially in relation to the discretion which was permitted in non-crime cases. We also recommended that the force should supervise effectively the completion and submission of risk-assessments. We found that Staffordshire Police now takes a more comprehensive approach at initial response to the assessment of vulnerability in domestic abuse cases.

In January 2016 the force changed its domestic abuse policy and now requires mandatory completion of domestic incident risk-assessment forms (which it calls domestic incident assessment logs (DIAL) at all domestic abuse incidents including both crime and non-crime cases. The revised policy requires that all domestic abuse incidents and completed DIAL risk-assessments must be subject to a series of reviews. A sergeant conducts the first review before the officer responding finishes his or her shift. The following day a further review by staff in the local vulnerability hub takes place. In all cases where the victim has been assessed as high risk, staff in the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH)[18] carry out a further review.

The force has provided mandatory domestic abuse training for operational staff in the form of public protection unit development days. The training incorporates input from an IDVA,[19] the NCDV[20] and an account, which staff find particularly

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[18] A MASH co-locates principal safeguarding agencies better to identify risks to children (and in some areas, vulnerable adults), and improve decision-making, interventions, and outcomes. It enables the multi-agency team to share all appropriate information in a secure environment, and ensures that the most appropriate response is provided to effectively safeguard and protect the individual.

[19] IDVAs (independent domestic abuse advisors) are advocates who work separately from the police to address the safety of victims (and their children) who are at high risk of harm from intimate partners, former partners and family members.

[20] NCDV (the National Centre for Domestic Violence) specialises in providing free, fast and effective legal support to survivors of domestic violence, usually by helping individuals obtain injunctions from their local county court. The centre's website is www.ncdv.org.uk

thought-provoking, from a domestic abuse victim who explains her variable experience of the service she received from Staffordshire Police.

The force's focus on the domestic abuse risk-assessment process has increased the compliance of completing DIAL risk assessments from 56 percent when we inspected in June 2015, to 98 percent at the time of our revisit in June 2016. HMIC found that this marked improvement has been sustained throughout 2016. When we examined a small sample of domestic abuse cases we found consistent use of DIAL risk assessments, quality reviews by supervisors, and comprehensive secondary reviews by the local vulnerability hub. We found officers consistently recognising risks to others in the same household as the victim and sharing this information with partner organisations. We also heard from partner organisations involved in MARACs[21] that the quality and quantity of DIALs has improved.

The changes that the force has made to its domestic abuse procedures have, together with training, brought about sustained improvement. HMIC is pleased that the cause of concern relating to domestic abuse risk-assessment has therefore been alleviated.

In other cases which are not domestic abuse, but where vulnerabilities might be present, the force's approach is less structured but still effective. The force has trialled the use of a generic vulnerability assessment tool to assist with the identification of vulnerability and appropriate assessment of the level of risk in non-domestic abuse cases. The force is considering whether to introduce this across the force as it currently relies on professional judgment aided by the widening use of vulnerability flags on STORM.

With the force's increasing emphasis on vulnerability, we found that officers are focused on identifying vulnerability in both victims and perpetrators and their understanding is increasing.

HMIC found that Staffordshire Police conducts effective immediate safeguarding actions at initial response for most cases. With the improved overall approach to risk assessment, safeguarding actions are frequently tailored to the specific needs of vulnerable individuals and their families. The use of technology such as body-worn video and mobile digital devices is supporting officers to assess risk and to safeguard the vulnerable.

However, the force still requires improvement in its approach to managing missing and absent children. When HMIC inspected Staffordshire Police in 2015 action taken by staff to respond to reports of missing children was inconsistent, with little evidence of supervision. HMIC advised that the force should understand fully the factors that

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[21] MARACs (multi-agency risk-assessment conferences) are local meetings at which information about high-risk domestic abuse victims (those at risk of murder or serious harm) is shared between local agencies.

escalate the risk of harm to children. We also advised the force to ensure that the initial stages of an investigation included effective supervision to ensure that direct appropriate and timely inquiries were direct and timely and safeguarding action was taken.

In 2016 we found the force was working hard to improve its approach to missing and absent children. Action being taken by the force is driving improvements but the changes made are not yet routine practice and further work is required.

Force inspectors have received briefings and guidance material to support them in supervising and directing the response to missing and absent episodes. The public protection unit co-ordinators review all missing person cases daily to highlight any concerns and they also conduct a small number of monthly case audits. A senior officer in the public protection unit reviews a monthly performance chart, developed in conjunction with partner organisations, which incorporates a broad range of information about missing people. The force provides information to staff about procedures which should be followed in missing person cases, in order to improve their understanding, and is also planning to provide missing person training for frontline officers.

HMIC found examples of good practice, with effective and timely investigative activity to find missing children. We also found some supervisors monitoring the quality of response and appropriately increasing the resources to locate a missing child, by re-assessing the risk, but this is not a consistent practice.

The force records missing person information, including intelligence from return interviews and trigger plans, on the Compact system. This information is readily accessible to investigators and can assist in the early resolution of subsequent missing episodes. The creation and use of trigger plans in relation to persistently missing children, especially those identified as being at risk of child sexual exploitation, has increased since 2015. Although investigators are now regularly and effectively using information from trigger plans and previous missing episodes to direct activity, this is not yet entirely consistent and officers are still not always taking into account or acting on information, such as suggested fast-track or priority actions or information, to assist with their assessment of risk. This is an area for improvement for the force. Active supervision by managers should prevent this occurring but this is not happening in every case. Supervision to ensure direct appropriate and timely inquiries and safeguarding action therefore remains an area for improvement for the force.

The force is showing determination to develop its response to missing and absent children, but the changes it has made are not yet fully part of routine practice. The force will need to continue to address how it conducts the necessary safeguarding actions at initial response to keep missing and absent children safer.

The overall improvements which have been made in Staffordshire Police's approach to the assessment of risks and vulnerabilities adequately support handovers to investigation teams and external organisations.

We found a clear focus in the force's daily management meeting on prioritising cases involving vulnerability and ensuring that safeguarding and investigation responsibilities are properly handed over. Officers and staff can refer cases direct to either adult or children's services. Vulnerability hubs and the MASH carry out secondary risk-assessments of domestic abuse cases and ensure that information relating to risks for victims and others in the household is being shared effectively with partners. The public protection unit co-ordinators maintain oversight of missing person investigations.

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).

Staffordshire Police's approach is that vulnerability is everyone's business, but the force crime allocation policy recognises that some crimes involving vulnerable victims need a greater level of specialist support. The force has introduced the force safeguarding and investigation unit (FSI) in response to the increase in demand resulting from rape and serious sexual offences and child abuse cases. This is ensuring that most investigations involving vulnerable victims are allocated to specialist investigators, but the standard of investigation of offences involving vulnerable victims has declined in the south of the force's policing area so the overall quality is inconsistent.

The force has planned a training programme to ensure that all investigators and supervisors in the FSI will receive specialist child abuse development programme (SCAIDP)[22] training and become accredited to conduct or supervise investigations where the victims are vulnerable. In the meantime, FSI officers and staff without the

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[22] SCAIDP is a national training programme for officers working in the specialist area of child abuse investigation.

requisite skills who are allocated such investigations are being advised and supported by trained officers.

The force is currently not ensuring the workload of its specialist investigators is manageable at all times. HMIC found high caseloads for FSI officers investigating child protection and rape and serious sexual offences (RASSO) cases, particularly in the south of the force area. The force's senior leaders recognise that the FSI is not fully accepted or understood by everyone and resilience will increase only as more FSI investigators complete the training programme. HMIC recognises that this cannot be achieved quickly. Training must be arranged and personnel need time in which to gain experience.

Supervision in the southern FSI is inconsistent and the force itself recognises that many specialist cases being investigated in the south do not have investigation plans and victim contact contracts. The force has commissioned a senior detective to conduct a review of the FSI, and terms of reference are being finalised.

The force has seen an increase in its use of Domestic Violence Protection Notices (DVPNs) and Domestic Violence Orders (DVPOs).[23] Some 55 DVPOs were granted by a court in 2015; this increased to 313 in 2016. The number of DVPNs authorised by a superintendent increased from 63 to 370 over the same period. Referrals to the National Centre for Domestic Violence have also increased. The force has encouraging plans to provide additional support for victims by using cutting-edge technology to monitor compliance with some of these notices and orders.

The force works effectively with partner organisations to ensure appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place for vulnerable people. We found evidence of strong partnerships at a local level with a focus on repeat victims and vulnerable people.

Staffordshire Police has invested in the creation of vulnerability hubs in local policing areas. In 2015, HMIC advised the force to improve how these hubs work consistently with partners to share information and safeguard vulnerable people. The force has responded well, and when we revisited in 2016 HMIC observed a workshop attended by members of all the force's vulnerability hubs to compare practices and discuss how consistency can be achieved. The force has since established consistent working practices for how its vulnerability hubs support safeguarding in domestic abuse cases.

The Staffordshire multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) brings together safeguarding professionals, including the police and social services, and enables

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[23] DVPNs (domestic violence prevention notices) may be issued by an authorised police officer to prevent a suspected perpetrator from returning to a victim's home and/or contacting the victim. Following the issue of the DVPN the police must apply to the magistrates for a domestic violence prevention order (DVPO). The DVPO will be granted for a period of up to 28 days.

safeguarding information to be shared across multiple agencies. The MASH is a partnership between seven public-sector organisations, covering the county of Staffordshire and the city of Stoke-on-Trent. Partners in the MASH work together to improve safeguarding outcomes for children, vulnerable adults and people involved in domestic abuse. Staffordshire's MASH is well established and is functioning well, with no backlogs to deal with DIAL risk-assessments and other referrals. Using funding from the Police Innovation Fund, the MASH is developing a search tool capable of gathering relevant information from all partners' databases.

The force actively seeks opportunities to improve its joint safeguarding activities. It has commenced a three-year research project with Dundee University on the co-ordination, mobilisation and success in managing missing people investigations. The force is also evaluating a pilot project in Stafford which engages local care home managers in a consistent approach to risk assessment and incident reporting. The force estimates this pilot has seen a 50 percent reduction in the number of missing and absent reports in Stafford as well as a reduction in the average time for those reported missing from 45 hours to 17 hours.

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.[24]

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).

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[24] 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.

Figure 8: Rate of outcomes recorded in 12 months to 30 June 2016 for domestic-related offences in Staffordshire Police[25]

Outcome type / group	Staffordshire Police	England and Wales
Charged / Summonsed	18.5	23.2
Caution – adults	2.8	5.6
Caution – youths	0.1	0.3
Community resolution	0.9	1.4
Evidential difficulties prevent further action; victim supports police action	30.1	24.1
Evidential difficulties prevent further action; victim does not support police action	37.7	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, Staffordshire Police's use of outcomes for domestic abuse flagged offences was in line with those in England and Wales as a whole. 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 responds well to victims of domestic abuse, including cases assessed as medium and standard risk. The change in policy, and improved attitude towards victims, is resulting in the force identifying a greater number of high-risk domestic abuse victims than before. In the 12 months to 31 March 2016, the rate of MARAC cases per 10,000 adults in Staffordshire increased by 35 percent when compared to the same period last year. This is one of the highest increases in England and Wales. Some 67 percent of MARAC referrals are police referrals, or a ratio of 2.1 to 1. This is slightly above the 1.8 to 1 England and Wales ratio.

The additional workload has created a considerable difficulty for Staffordshire Police and its partners in the MARAC process. The force is now holding additional MARAC meetings across the force area and a more dynamic approach is evolving. The force is working with the office of the police and crime commissioner (OPCC) and partners to respond to a county-wide domestic abuse 'joint needs assessment'.
A multi-agency domestic abuse strategy and joint commissioning arrangements are planned to be introduced from June 2017. In the interim, the OPCC and local authorities have jointly committed funding to extend IDVA service provision.

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[25] 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.

Partners are positive about working relationships with Staffordshire Police, in particular the increasingly important role of the vulnerability hubs providing support for staff who are responding to vulnerability. For example, the hubs and local policing teams are providing effective support for domestic abuse victims who are assessed as medium and standard risk and therefore do not meet the MARAC threshold.

The improved approach to risk-assessment at initial response together with tailored safeguarding actions is improving the service to vulnerable victims. However both the arrest rate and charge rate for domestic abuse are below the rates for England and Wales. The arrest rate was 40.9 percent compared to 51.4 percent in England and Wales. The charge rate was 18.5 percent compared to 23.3 percent.

The force monitors a series of performance measures to ensure that it maintains a focus on domestic abuse. This includes arrest rates and other measures to assess quality of investigations. The force vulnerability group and the tactical domestic abuse steering group are aware of the arrest and outcome data and have commissioned work to understand the reasons, including regular review and dip-sampling of cases where arrests are not made. The force acknowledges that this should be extended to include cases where evidential difficulties are encountered.

The force believes that measures to improve awareness of vulnerability and an increased focus on domestic abuse are resulting in increased conversion rate from incident to recorded crime. In the 12 months to the 30 June 2016, Staffordshire had 11.5 domestic abuse flagged crimes per 1,000 population. This is above the 7.4 for England and Wales as a whole.

The force recognises that it must maintain its focus on domestic abuse and has commissioned a peer review to be conducted by another force. Staffordshire Police should continue to monitor its lower arrest and charge rates and higher rates for cases where evidential difficulty prevents further action to ensure that victims can be confident the force is continuing to make the required improvements in its service provision.

Summary of findings

Requires improvement

Staffordshire Police still requires improvement in protecting those who are vulnerable and supporting victims, though it has improved on the 2015 judgment of inadequate.

The force understands adequately the nature and scale of vulnerability. It has invested in mandatory vulnerability training for all frontline officers and introduced improved policies for domestic abuse and missing persons. Officers across the whole force are now consistently treating vulnerable victims in a better way. The vast

majority of missing person calls are assessed appropriately at the initial point of contact. However, officers are not consistently using trigger plans effectively to conduct necessary immediate safeguarding actions and the rationale for decisions is not always recorded in sufficient detail.

Under force policy risk-assessments are required at all domestic abuse incidents. Marked improvement in the quality and quantity of these has been sustained throughout 2016. This helps the force to conduct immediate and tailored safeguarding activity in domestic abuse cases.

A revised force crime allocation policy ensures that most investigations involving vulnerable victims are allocated to specialist investigators, but the standard of investigation of offences involving vulnerable victims has declined in the southern FSI, where we found high caseloads, inconsistent supervision, and cases without investigation plans and victim contact contracts.

The force works effectively with partner organisations to ensure appropriate safeguarding arrangements for vulnerable people. Partner organisations report that working relationships with the force are good. Changes in policy and the improved culture towards victims are resulting in the force identifying a greater number of high-risk domestic abuse victims, the highest increase in the whole of England and Wales. It is working with the office of the police and crime commissioner and partners in the multi-agency risk-assessment conferences to meet this challenge.

Areas for improvement

- The force should improve its response to missing and absent children by:

  - recording in sufficient detail the rationale for decision-making when assessing the risks for missing and absent children;

  - acting promptly and effectively on any information which may assist with locating a missing child which is available from previous missing episodes, such as information contained in trigger plans; and

  - ensuring that the initial stages of an investigation include effective supervision to provide appropriate and timely inquiries and safeguarding action.

- The force should improve the quality of investigations involving vulnerable people, ensuring that the workloads of specialist investigators are manageable at all times and that such investigations are subject to regular and active supervision.

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

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

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

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

As at 1 July 2016, Staffordshire Police was actively disrupting, investigating or monitoring 23 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.

Although the force has conducted work to assess the threat from serious and organised crime, this has not provided it with a complete understanding. The force's use of MoRiLE and other analytical products developed with partners, has identified emerging as well as traditional serious and organised crime threats. However the force has not yet completed a force-wide serious and organised crime local profile in line with national guidance. A force-wide SOC profile, used in conjunction with the force's other assessments, would help it to develop a complete understanding of the risks. The force's overall understanding would also be enhanced with more consistent use of the organised crime group mapping process.

In 2015 HMIC assessed that Staffordshire Police was still developing its understanding of the threat posed to the public by those engaged in serious and organised crime. At that point the force had completed a serious and organised crime local profile for the Cannock policing area only. HMIC advised that the force could enhance its understanding of the organised crime threat by developing local profiles for all areas of the county.

In 2016 we found that the force had not made sufficient progress in addressing this area for improvement. The force has completed only one further local serious and organised crime local profile, for Burton on Trent. Both profiles use data from partner organisations to supplement police intelligence and have been shared with senior managers in community safety partnerships. The profiles contain good analysis of drugs, firearms, modern-day slavery, and organised child sexual exploitation.

National guidance provides that serious and organised crime local profiles should help the force and its partner organisations to generate multi-agency action plans, aligned with the 4Ps.[26] The force recognises the importance of developing such action plans and they are now being incorporated into local profiles. However the force's local profiles would benefit from containing more analysis of the wider threats identified in the force's MoRiLE assessment, such as organised immigration crime and cyber-enabled fraud. The force is still working with local authorities and other partners to bring relevant data together for the rest of its local policing areas. At the time of inspection the remaining force-wide serious and organised crime local profiles were being prepared. HMIC is surprised that the force has not prioritised a profile for the Stoke-on-Trent local policing areas as this is likely to be its highest-risk area.

Until the force completes comprehensive local serious and organised crime profiles for each of its local policing areas, including recommendations for multi-agency action, it cannot demonstrate that it has a complete understanding of the threat. This will also enable targeted and proportionate use of resources by the force and its partners. This remains an area for improvement, which the force needs to progress with increased vigour.

As well as collecting and analysing local partnership data, the force consistently uses a wide range of intelligence sources to aid its understanding of serious and organised crime. The force works closely with national agencies such as Immigration Enforcement,[27] the prison service and the national ballistic intelligence service. The force is increasingly aware of the potential for modern-day slavery and has the highest rate in England and Wales for referral to the NCA for human trafficking. Intelligence from covert human intelligence sources, open source research and Crimestoppers also contribute to the force's understanding.

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[26] These are the four components of the government's serious and organised crime strategy. The 4Ps provides a national framework for tackling serious and organised crime. Developed for national counter-terrorist work, it has four thematic pillars, often referred to as the 4Ps, which can be adapted for other areas: Pursue - prosecuting and disrupting people engaged in serious and organised crime; Prevent – preventing people from engaging in serious and organised crime; Protect – increasing protection against serious and organised crime; Prepare – reducing the impact of this criminality where it takes place.

[27] Immigration Enforcement is a branch of the Home Office responsible for preventing abuse, tracking immigration offenders and increasing compliance with immigration law.

In 2015 HMIC identified that Staffordshire Police could enhance its understanding of the threat from serious and organised crime by increasing the involvement of local policing teams. The force has responded effectively and now makes greater use of neighbourhood officers and PCSOs to gather intelligence on organised criminals. The force consistently provides serious and organised crime briefings to neighbourhood teams, and local officers have a good level of knowledge of organised crime groups (OCGs) in their area. They also demonstrate a good understanding of the signs to look for to help them to identify emerging OCGs.

When a force identifies an OCG, it should go through a nationally standardised 'mapping' procedure to assess the group's criminal intent and capability. This procedure enables an accurate, detailed picture of serious and organised crime to be developed. Staffordshire Police does not map all of its OCGs in accordance with national guidance and therefore is not comprehensively completing the national OCG tracker. The force does not use the national assessment tool consistently to map and score all identified OGCs appropriately and for all types of crime. It does not effectively map all groups engaged in some of the more recently-understood crimes, and as a result the vast majority of the force's proactive operations are targeted against drug dealing. The force must ensure that it maps all identified OCGs promptly to ensure that it understands the threat they pose so that it can make informed decisions about which groups to prioritise for intervention.

Figure 9: Organised crime groups per one million population, by force, as at 1 July 2016[28]
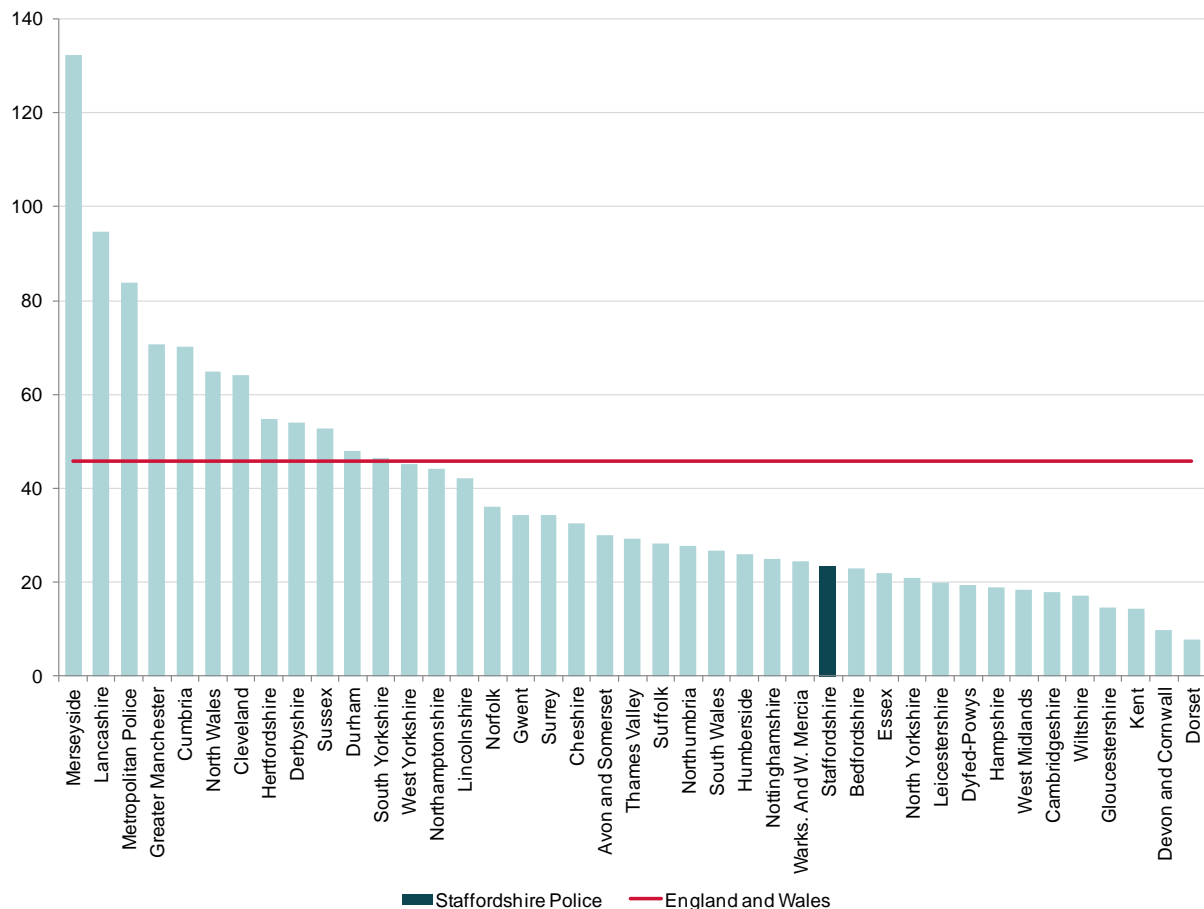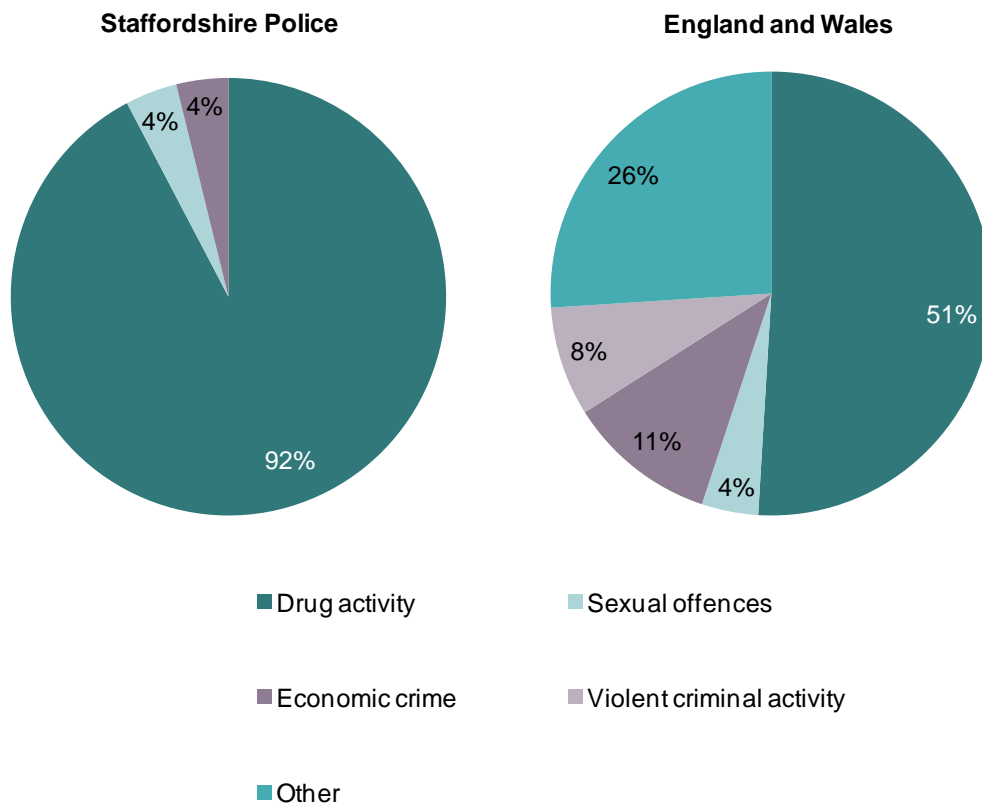

Source: HMIC data return
For further information about these data, please see annex A

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

As can be seen above, the number of identified OCGs per one million of population is lower than many other forces. HMIC has found that the force's approach to OCG mapping is affecting both the number and type of OCGs being identified and mapped. However, the ability of the force to identify organised crime groups may improve with the increasing use of neighbourhood teams and enhanced levels of awareness across the force.

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[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.

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

Staffordshire Police

England and Wales

- Drug activity
- Sexual offences
- Economic crime
- Violent criminal activity
- Other

Source: HMIC data return
Note: Figures may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding. For further information about these data, please see annex A.

Staffordshire OCGs identified as posing a threat from crimes such as child sexual exploitation, modern-day slavery, foreign national offenders (FNOs) and cyber-crime rather than more traditional threats such as drug dealing form a much lower proportion of the whole than in other forces. The force attributes this in part to the fact that although drug dealing is the predominant crime type of most of its OCGs, some of them are also involved in other crimes.

The force recognises the threat posed to the public from crimes such as child sexual exploitation and human trafficking and it gathers intelligence in respect of these newer threats. It regularly conducts operations to target this newer type of organised criminality but does not consistently use the recommended OCG mapping methodology for it. For some groups, rather than mapping and re-scoring, the force uses the MoRiLE process to determine the level of threat.

The force supplies quarterly updates from its OCG mapping to the West Midlands regional organised crime unit (ROCU) and this is designed to inform the regional and national understanding of the threat from organised crime. A consequence of the force's approach to OCG mapping is that this information is not complete.

The force should ensure that all organised crime groups are mapped correctly once they have been identified. This will help ensure that the force and its partners have the fullest possible understanding or organised criminals operating in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent and enable informed decisions about operational activity. This is an area for improvement for the force.

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.

Staffordshire Police requires improvement in how it manages its overall response to organised crime.

The force's response to organised crime is overseen by two meetings, each held monthly. The force priorities meeting, chaired at chief officer level, maintains a force-wide strategic overview. A force-level OGC meeting, chaired by the head of organised crime, operates at the more tactical level. In these monthly meetings, the force prioritises activities aimed at tackling a range of threats including serious and organised crime. The force takes into account factors such as the threat of community harm or apparent vulnerabilities of those involved. HMIC found the force is effective at making re-prioritisation decisions, for instance in response to new intelligence which raises the threat of risk or harm. The OCG mapping process, when it is applied effectively, assigns tiers of operational response to OCGs. More consistent use of OCG mapping and re-scoring would better inform and support the force's decisions on prioritisation.

The force-level OCG meeting appoints a capable lead responsible officer (LRO) for each mapped OCG and requires these LROs to formulate a disruption plan based on the '4Ps' for each. To help LROs to devise these plans and to make full use of the available tactics contained in national guidance, the force allocates a detective sergeant to each LRO to act as a tactical advisor. In addition the force has recently introduced an LRO forum, which brings LROs together to share good practice. HMIC views the force's effort to develop the LRO role in this way as a promising project.

Although the force is primarily focused on the 'pursuit' element of the 4Ps approach, HMIC found that it is increasingly seeking to disrupt and dismantle OCGs using the other three elements of prevent, protect and prepare. The force recognises the need to have a structured approach which encompasses all elements of the 4Ps, but we

found this is not yet consistent practice. This is an area for improvement for the force.

Each local policing area has its own community safety partnership (CSP). These multi-agency groups provide a force-wide serious and organised crime partnership board structure, to oversee the response to organised crime. Each CSP meets monthly and serious and organised crime disruption is a standing agenda item.

The force regularly disrupts and investigates serious and organised crime in collaboration with a wide range of partner organisations. This includes joint work to offer protection to victims and witnesses. We heard good examples of work undertaken to combat serious and organised crime with housing associations, the probation and youth offending services and trading standards. In cases involving vulnerability, the force shares safeguarding information with partners, for instance with schools and partners in the MASH to protect girls who are at risk of sexual exploitation. We also heard of work being undertaken to educate young people using a charitable organisation of ex-offenders called Base58 (Brighter Futures).

Through the West Midlands ROCU the force has access to the Government Agency Intelligence Network (GAIN), which helps the sharing of information between several law enforcement agencies. However, the force acknowledges that its use of this intelligence function could be increased as it is below many other forces in its use of GAIN.

The force benefits from and contributes to arrangements with other forces in the region to share operational resources to tackle serious and organised crime. Such arrangements include the central motorway patrol group and access to armed surveillance teams. We also heard of several operations where the force has accessed specialist capabilities from the West Midlands ROCU and from the NCA.

The force is increasingly managing threats from urban street gangs particularly in Stoke-on-Trent and Burton on Trent. Because of its geographical location and position in relation to main roads and motorways the force is also threatened by OCGs from other force areas. These problems are addressed effectively through the established ROCU structures as well as direct engagement with respective forces.

The force is about to transfer most of its proactive serious and organised crime investigation resources to the ROCU but intends to retain some capability in force. Senior leaders are conscious of the need to avoid duplication of specialist capabilities, but the force is keen to retain sufficient capacity to address any local serious and organised crime problems which fall below the threshold for regional intervention.

The force's inconsistent approach to OCG mapping means that for some groups the force's response is not structured in the way that national guidance requires. For those groups which pose the more recently understood threats and which are not

mapped the force allocates senior investigating officers and monitors progress of their investigations via the force priority meeting. However these groups are not subject to lifetime management by an LRO. In addition, although partners are involved in supporting the force to provide interventions in such cases, the local serious and organised crime partnership board is not overseeing a multi-agency structured 4P plan. The force cannot be confident that the approach it is adopting to tackle these groups is as effective as the structured OCG mapping approach contained in national guidance. This is an area for improvement.

In 2015 HMIC inspected all of the regional organised crime units. A recommendation made in that inspection[29] (Recommendation 3) was that by 30 June 2016, every police force in England and Wales should publish an action plan that sets out in detail what steps it will take to make maximum use of the ROCU capabilities, minimise duplication at force level, and ensure that the use of shared ROCU resources are prioritised between regional forces. This action plan should be developed:

- in consultation with police and crime commissioners, ROCUs and the ROCU executive board;

- with regard to both local force priorities (in particular as specified in the relevant police and crime plan) and NCA priorities; and

- with regard to the other recommendations in the ROCU report.

The West Midlands ROCU has published one action plan for the region but this does not provide all the recommended detail. In particular there is a lack of detail as to how each force will maximise ROCU capabilities, minimise duplication and ensure regional prioritisation. There is also no reference to the individual forces' local priorities, NCA priorities or evidence of consultation with individual police and crime commissioners or the NCA executive board.

Staffordshire Police should ensure that a force action plan is developed as soon as practicable to address all the matters contained in Recommendation 3 of HMIC's 2015 report.

In 2015 HMIC found the force needed to improve the awareness of organised crime groups among neighbourhood teams to ensure they could reliably identify these groups, collect intelligence and disrupt their activity.

The force has since made a major effort to change the way that it uses its local policing teams to tackle organised crime effectively. Increasing awareness of local serious and organised crime activity as a result of enhanced briefings is supporting a

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[29] *Regional Organised Crime Units – A review of capability and effectiveness*, HMIC, 2015. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/regional-organised-crime-units/

co-ordinated all-force effort. The LROs appointed to manage the force's mapped OCGs are all area commanders. This means that neighbourhood policing leaders have a major long-term role in tackling the serious and organised crime threat. We found that many officers now have a greatly improved understanding of the threat and that valuable contributions are being made by neighbourhood officers, PCSOs and response teams.

The force also uses specialist capabilities available across the force to tackle organised crime. In order to reduce the risk of child sexual exploitation, the digital intelligence team makes use of technology to monitor compliance with civil orders. We also heard from LROs of joint projects in force with IOM gang teams, specialist investigators and the force intelligence bureau.

The force is piloting a promising project in Stoke-on-Trent. Mobile digital devices, issued to all frontline officers and PCSOs, are being loaded with OCG information, including photographs, disruption plans, location maps and intelligence requirements. Although this pilot is not yet evaluated, this innovative use of the mobile devices presents an opportunity to enhance further the involvement of local policing teams.

In 2015 HMIC found the force needed to develop a better understanding of the impact of its activity on serious and organised crime and ensure that it learnt from experience to maximise its disruptive effect. In July 2016, the force adopted the Major - Moderate - Minor - None - Negative scoring process in line with national guidance. This is now improving how the force assesses the impact its activity is having on OGCs. However, as a result of the force's approach to OCG mapping, this scoring process is not consistently being applied to all groups engaged in organised crime.

How effectively does the force prevent serious and organised crime?

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

Staffordshire Police has a variety of effective, tailored, projects in place across the force area to deter people from becoming involved in serious and organised crime. The force is part of the national 'ending gang and youth violence' programme, and incorporates the best ways of doing this work from the programme into its campaigns against knife crime. This includes inputs to schools from ex-gang members and from

parents of knife crime victims. The dedicated IOM gang and youth violence team identify, monitor and manage people who are linked to urban street gangs in Stoke-on-Trent and Burton on Trent. Young people are referred to the youth offending service (YOS) for assessment and intervention with the aim of diverting them from the urban street gang culture and a move into organised crime. Diversionary work with the Department of Work and Pensions has seen positive results in getting people who are at risk into employment or further education.

In addition to known gang members, the force is increasingly targeting diversionary methods to deter those, such as younger siblings of gang members, who are at risk of becoming involved in gang-related crime. We heard examples of sharing information with schools about younger siblings who are on the periphery of gangs, and classes being offered to parents as a preventive measure.

Although the vast majority of this type of work is conducted against gangs, the force is also planning to expand this approach to target OCGs. Likewise, the force and its partners recognise the potential to incorporate serious and organised crime problems in to the Troubled Families[30] programme and is actively seeking opportunities to do so. Targeted intervention instigated by the force in conjunction with a registered charity, the Burton Albion Community Trust, is diverting the brother of an OCG member from involvement in criminal activity. However, this is an isolated example of such diversionary activity being used specifically to target a mapped OCG. The force could make more use of its partnership arrangements to focus diversionary and intervention work on OCG members as well as those on the periphery of organised crime.

The force manages existing offenders to help prevent serious and organised crime. It makes effective use of ancillary orders such as Serious Crime Prevention Orders, and in Operation Aster, which is a child sexual exploitation case, a Slavery and Trafficking Order. The force has five Serious Crime Prevention Orders which have been in place for some time. The force intends to increase its use of such orders to manage serious and organised criminals. It has consulted specifically with the Crown Prosecution Service to ensure that the application process for such orders is effective. At the time of inspection, three new orders were being progressed and were due for hearing in January 2017.

The force tracks organised criminals into, through, and beyond the prison system as part of a 'lifetime' approach to offender management. It works proactively with the prison service to maintain a strong focus on members of organised crime gangs when they are imprisoned. We heard examples of this collaborative approach

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[30] The Troubled Families programme is a Government scheme with the stated aim of helping troubled families turn their lives around. The programme aims to change the repeating generational patterns of poor parenting, abuse, violence, drug use, anti-social behaviour and crime in the most troubled families in the UK.

leading to serious and organised criminals being prosecuted for continuing their criminal activities while in prison. The force uses intelligence assets including covert human intelligence sources (CHISs) and the digital intelligence team to monitor activities of OCG members after they have been released from prison.

The force communicates regularly, and in some cases innovatively, with the public about serious and organised crime. As well as making effective use of media to publicise arrests and successful court outcomes, the force uses live Twitter feeds and allows the media to accompany officers on overt serious and organised crime enforcement operations. After enforcement action PCSOs carry out house-to-house mail drops with 'Rat on a rat' leaflets to encourage residents to report potential organised criminal activity. This level of engagement generates increased levels of interest and therefore public awareness of the force's response.

The force provides its communities and at-risk groups with protective advice about different kinds of serious and organised crime, and we heard an example of an effective communication campaign about organised phone scamming. The force website provides the public with relevant information about organised crime such as modern-day slavery and trafficking. The website also outlines a recently launched campaign to raise public awareness about cyber-crime and provides advice on how to avoid becoming a victim of such crime.

Safer schools officers work with partners to engage directly with young people. Their work includes campaigns to raise awareness of the risk and consequences of gangs and youth violence, child sexual exploitation and radicalisation. The force has plans further to enhance this type of engagement, and work is underway with the OPCC and partner organisations to formalise a continued programme of community safety campaigns targeting young people through the education system.

Summary of findings

Requires improvement

The force requires improvement at tackling serious and organised crime. This is a lower grade than 2015 when we judged the force as good.

There are a number of positive features of the way in which Staffordshire Police tackles serious and organised crime. The force appoints a lead responsible officer supported by a specialist tactical advisor for each mapped OCG, and these formulate a disruption plan. Community safety partnerships in each local area ensure that the force and its partners work effectively together to tackle organised crime problems.

The force and its partners use tailored projects to deter people, such as gang members and their younger siblings, from being drawn into organised-crime.

The force could make greater use of these partnership arrangements to target such diversionary activity on identified OCGs. The force is working well with the prison service to ensure a sustained focus on members of organised crime groups while they are in prison and after their release. It uses a range of innovative methods to engage with its communities to raise awareness about the threat from organised crime and to reassure them about the force's response.

However, the force's approach to tackling serious and organised crime requires improvement in some areas. The force would have been assessed as good in this area were it not for three specific shortcomings which, taken together, limit the force's ability to tackle serious and organised crime.

Firstly, the force's strategic understanding of the threat posed by organised crime groups operating in the force area requires improvement. Although the force has taken steps to assess a range of strategic serious and organised crime (SOC) threats it has yet to develop a force-wide SOC profile which will give it a comprehensive overview of organised criminal activity.

Secondly, although in some cases the force identifies and maps organised crime groups it is not consistently mapping all OCGs engaged in the newer organised crimes. This means that that for some groups the force's response is not structured, as set out in national guidance.

Thirdly, although the force is making much greater use of its local policing teams in a co-ordinated all-force effort, the use of all elements of the structured 4Ps approach is not yet consistent.

Areas for improvement

- The force should further develop its serious and organised crime local profiles in conjunction with partner organisations to enhance its understanding of the threat posed by serious and organised crime and inform joint activity aimed at reducing this threat.

- The force should ensure that it maps all organised crime groups promptly following identification and re-assesses them at regular intervals in line with national standards.

- The force should ensure that lead responsible officers adopt a 4Ps structure for OCG management plans as part of a long-term, multi-agency approach to dismantling OCGs.

- The force should continue to improve its understanding of the impact of its work on serious and organised crime across the 4Ps, and ensure that it learns from experience to maximise the force's disruptive effect on this criminal activity.

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)[31] 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.

Staffordshire Police has effective arrangements in place to ensure that it can fulfil its national policing responsibilities. The assistant chief constable responsible for this area of activity works with representatives from local public services across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent in the local resilience forum (LRF). The force undertakes regular exercises and deployments with other emergency services and partner organisations within the LRF. This ensures that it is ready to deal with major emergencies. For example, the force has jointly exercised with partner organisations in crowded places such as a local theme parks and a major racecourse.

The force formally assesses all of the SPR threats and the police and crime commissioner (PCC) regularly holds chief officers to account for its level of preparedness. As a result of this activity the force recently identified a gap in its public order capabilities and has put a plan in place to ensure that a full response is in place by the end of the calendar year. This includes internal and external recruitment to increase its public order commander capacity.

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[31] 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

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.

Staffordshire Police is well prepared to deal with an attack requiring an armed response. The force has assessed thoroughly the threat of such an attack. It has effective arrangements in place to review and where necessary increase its firearms capability.

The force completes an annual armed policing strategic threat and risk-assessment (APSTRA) to assess the threat of an attack requiring an armed response. The force reviewed its APSTRA early in 2016, including an assessment of its readiness to respond to a Paris-style marauding terrorist firearms attack. The assessment is in line with the national guidance and codes of practice. The force's APSTRA is supported by intelligence and provides the force with a thorough understanding of the threat.

Although the force is not part of the national armed policing uplift programme, its APSTRA has identified the need to increase capability and capacity to respond to locally identified firearms threats and national requirements. As a result, chief officers have approved the recruitment of additional staff. These measures were expected to be in place by the end of 2016. In the meantime, to extend immediately the force's current capacity and to reduce response times, particularly in the east of the force area, the force has altered the shift times for its armed officers and the locations where they are based. The force has conducted exercises with partner organisations to test its preparedness to respond with them jointly to incidents which require an armed response. Further joint exercises are being planned. HMIC found that officers in contact services have a sound understanding of relevant force procedures in the event of a marauding terrorist firearms attack.

Summary of findings

Ungraded

Staffordshire Police has arrangements in place to respond to the threats set out in the *Strategic Policing Requirement* (SPR). The force regularly exercises with partner organisations and other emergency services to test its preparedness. The assistant chief constable responsible for this area of activity works with representatives from local public services across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent in the local resilience forum (LRF). The force undertakes regular exercises and deployments with other emergency services and partner organisations in the LRF. It formally assesses all the SPR threats, and the police and crime commissioner regularly holds chief officers to account for the force's level of preparedness.

Staffordshire Police is well prepared to respond to an attack requiring an armed response. It has recently reviewed its assessment of the threat from such an attack. This assessment is supported by intelligence and provides the force with a thorough understanding of the threat. As a result, although not part of the national uplift programme, the force is making immediate changes to increase its current firearms capacity. It is conducting recruitment and training to extend further its firearms capabilities. The force has conducted exercises with partners to test its preparedness to respond jointly to incidents which require an armed response, and more such exercises are planned.

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.