



Promoting improvements
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everyone safer

PEEL: Police legitimacy 2016

An inspection of Cheshire Constabulary



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Introduction

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

Police legitimacy – a concept that is well established in the UK as 'policing by consent' – is crucial in a democratic society. The police have powers to act in ways that would be considered illegal by any other member of the public (for example, by using force or depriving people of their liberty). It is therefore vital that they use these powers fairly, and that they treat people with respect in the course of their duties.

Police legitimacy is also required for the police to be effective and efficient: as well as motivating the public to co-operate with the police and respect the law, it encourages them to become more socially responsible. The more the public supports the police by providing information or becoming more involved in policing activities (such as via Neighbourhood Watch or other voluntary activity), the greater the reduction in demand on police forces.

To achieve this support – or 'consent' – the public needs to believe that the police will treat them with respect and make fair decisions (while taking the time to explain those decisions), as well as being friendly and approachable.¹ This is often referred to as 'procedural justice'. Police actions that are perceived to be unfair or disrespectful can have extremely negative results for police legitimacy in the eyes of the public.

Police officers and staff are more likely to treat the public with fairness and respect if they feel that they themselves are being treated fairly and respectfully, particularly by their own police force. It is therefore important that the decisions made by their force about the things that affect them are perceived to be fair.² This principle is described as 'organisational justice', and HMIC considers that, alongside the principle of procedural justice, it makes up a vital aspect of any assessment of police legitimacy.

¹ *It's a fair cop? Police legitimacy, public cooperation, and crime reduction*, National Policing Improvement Agency, September 2011. Available at:
http://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/Fair_cop_Full_Report.pdf

² *Fair cop 2: Organisational justice, behaviour and ethical policing*, College of Policing, 2015. Available at:
http://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/150317_Fair_cop%20FINAL_REPORT.pdf

One of the most important areas in which internal organisational justice and external procedural justice principles come together is the way in which police forces tackle corruption. How this is done needs to be seen to be fair and legitimate in the eyes of both the police workforce and the general public.

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

Reports on Cheshire Constabulary's efficiency and leadership inspections are available on the HMIC website (www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/peel-assessments/peel-2016/cheshire/). Our reports on police effectiveness will be published in early 2017.

Force in numbers



Workforce

Total workforce as of 31 March 2016

3,460

Total workforce breakdown as of 31 March 2016

officers

2,011

staff

1,252

PCSOs

198



Ethnic diversity

Percentage of BAME in workforce 31 March 2016

overall workforce

0.9%

officers

0.8%

staff

1.0%

PCSOs

2.0%

Percentage of BAME in local population, 2011 Census

3.1%



Gender diversity

Percentage of females in overall workforce 31 March 2016

42%

Cheshire Constabulary

England and Wales population, 2011 Census

51%

Percentage of females by role 31 March 2016

30%

officers

62%

staff

45%

PCSOs



Public complaints

Number of public complaints per 1,000 workforce 12 months to 31 March 2016

Officers

Cheshire Constabulary

246

England and Wales force average

268

Staff (including PCSOs)

42

61



Grievances

Number of grievances per 1,000 workforce raised and finalised 12 months to 31 March 2016

Officers

Cheshire Constabulary

6.5

England and Wales force average

4.8

Staff (including PCSOs)

11.0

6.8



Victim satisfaction

Victim satisfaction with their overall treatment by the police 12 months to 31 March 2016

Cheshire Constabulary

94.9 %

England and Wales force average

93.4%

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

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

Overall judgment³



Good

Cheshire Constabulary has been assessed as good in respect of the legitimacy with which it keeps people safe and reduces crime. Cheshire Constabulary is good in how it treats the people it serves with fairness and respect, its ethical and lawful behaviour, and the way it treats officers and staff internally with fairness and respect. The culture of the organisation reflects this through its fair and respectful treatment of people, and ethical, lawful approaches to integrity. The organisation's fair and respectful treatment of its workforce and concern for its welfare and wellbeing also demonstrate this. Senior leaders actively promote the constabulary's values, and staff are positive about the constabulary's culture. However, it needs to improve some areas of vetting and its approach to managing the risk of abuse of authority for sexual gain by officers and staff. Our findings this year are consistent with last year's findings, in which we also judged the constabulary to be good in respect of legitimacy.

Overall summary

Cheshire Constabulary has a clear vision and clear values which are consistent with the Code of Ethics⁴. These have been well communicated and are understood throughout the organisation. The constabulary frequently seeks feedback and challenge, using a range of techniques including focus groups, challenge panels and surveys, and has carried out targeted work with communities which historically have had less trust and confidence in the police. The constabulary could do more to demonstrate to the public how it has responded to problems it has identified.

The constabulary understands the importance of vetting potential applicants and contract staff and has a vetting policy for recruits, including volunteers and other non-police staff, which is derived from and is in line with national guidance. The constabulary recognises that further work is needed on managing cases after the initial national security vetting to ensure it complies with national standards. Although

³ HMIC judgments are: outstanding, good, requires improvement and inadequate.

⁴ *Code of Ethics – A Code of Practice for the Principles and Standards of Professional Behaviour for the Policing Profession of England and Wales*, College of Policing, London, July 2014. Available at: www.college.police.uk/What-we-do/Ethics/Documents/Code_of_Ethics.pdf

there is awareness around the abuse of authority by officers and staff for sexual gain, the constabulary needs to provide further training for officers and staff in this area. It also needs to seek intelligence proactively on potential abuse of authority from a variety of sources, such as sex worker support organisations and victims of domestic abuse, through working with third sector and voluntary organisations such as Women's Aid.

Staff and officers have a limited understanding of the action the constabulary has taken in response to recent surveys, and there is a perception that there is a lack of communication about the actions taken by the constabulary to improve the issues highlighted by such surveys. The constabulary is developing a comprehensive approach to understanding staff wellbeing; it sees maintaining wellbeing as essential to having a productive, well-engaged workforce. The commitment to wellbeing is demonstrated through the creation of a health and wellbeing centre, a health and wellbeing zone on the intranet, health and wellbeing conferences and road shows, and a newly launched employee assist programme.

The constabulary has recently introduced a new system for performance development review (PDR) following feedback from staff that the previous system was ineffective. While acknowledging that the new system is only three months old, we found much confusion among staff as to what was required. This is having a negative impact on the PDR completion rate, with no systems in place to ensure fair application of the process to assess personal performance across the workforce.

Recommendations

HMIC has not identified any causes of concern and has therefore made no specific recommendations.

Areas for improvement

- The force should improve how it clarifies and reinforces standards of behaviour to its workforce, in particular when dealing with vulnerable people, including victims of domestic abuse.
- The force should ensure it complies with all aspects of the current national guidelines for vetting.
- The force should improve how it manages individual performance.

To what extent does the force treat all of the people it serves with fairness and respect?

College of Policing research suggests that, in the eyes of the public, police legitimacy stems primarily from the concept of ‘procedural justice’: the expectation that officers will treat the public respectfully and make fair decisions (explaining them openly and clearly), while being consistently friendly and approachable.⁵

While HMIC recognises that police legitimacy stems from much broader experiences of the police than direct contact alone, our 2016 inspection focused specifically on public perceptions of fair treatment. Our inspection aims to assess how far the force can demonstrate the importance it places on maintaining procedural justice; and the extent to which it is seeking feedback to enable it to prioritise and act on those areas that have the greatest negative impact on public perceptions of fair and respectful treatment

(e.g. stop and search, surveillance powers or use of force). This should include how the force is approaching those groups that have the least trust and confidence in the police.

To what extent does the force understand the importance of treating the people it serves with fairness and respect?

It is important for the police to understand that it is procedural justice – making fair decisions and treating people with respect – that drives police legitimacy in the eyes of the public, over and above police effectiveness at preventing and detecting crime.⁶ HMIC assessed the extent to which the importance of procedural justice was reflected in the force’s vision and values, and the extent to which it was understood by the workforce.

Organisational values

Cheshire Constabulary has articulated clearly to the public and its own staff its mission, vision and stated values through a set of ‘We’re here...’ commitments:

- We’re here where you need us, when you need us.
- We’re here for victims.
- We’re here for justice.

⁵ *It’s a fair cop? Police legitimacy, public cooperation, and crime reduction*, National Policing Improvement Agency, September 2011. Available at: http://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/Fair_cop_Full_Report.pdf

⁶ *Op. cit.*

- We're here for communities.

These commitments are underpinned by the Code of Ethics, and are firmly fixed in constabulary policy, procedure and training. They have been well communicated and are understood throughout the organisation at both tactical and strategic levels. References to the commitments are apparent in decision-making and planning processes and are promoted through obvious and visible internal communications. Staff and officers, including volunteers, have a comprehensive understanding of the constabulary commitments and the Code of Ethics, both of which are used for establishing behavioural standards and are seen by the workforce as an important mechanism to ensure that the public is treated fairly and with respect.

The vision and values are well established within the constabulary. It has made considerable progress since last year on staff awareness and understanding, ensuring this approach has a solid basis.

How well does the force seek feedback and identify those issues and areas that have the greatest impact on people's perceptions of fair and respectful treatment?

HMIC's 2015 legitimacy inspection found a positive picture of how forces were engaging with communities. This year HMIC's assessment focused specifically on the extent to which forces are working to identify and understand the issues that have the greatest impact on people's perceptions of fair and respectful treatment, including how well they seek feedback and challenge from the people they serve.

Seeking feedback and challenge

The constabulary has a good approach to general public engagement within Cheshire, seeking feedback and challenge from many of the people it serves, using a range of communication channels. Its communication and insight team has focused on working with communities within Cheshire with less trust and confidence in the police and so harder to reach. We found some strong, developing approaches to feedback and challenges from the people it serves.

At the beginning of 2016, Cheshire Constabulary introduced a question on its public perception survey asking, 'Do you think Cheshire police treats people fairly?' To date the constabulary has one set of data from the survey; over time this will allow the constabulary to look at trends and compare responses from different demographic groups and different areas. The constabulary has also recently changed the approach of its diversity review monitoring group. It is now taking a more focused approach, with the format concentrating on specific characteristics, such as community groups and groups with protected characteristics, with a topical discussion based on areas of interest or concern to that group. Although the constabulary has had only one meeting of the diversity review monitoring group

since the change was made, it had positive feedback from the attendees. This was viewed by the constabulary as a productive and beneficial approach to working closely with people.

The constabulary uses several tailored approaches to engage with groups who traditionally have less trust and confidence in the police. This includes a monthly LGBT forum, a dedicated police officer to work with the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, work with the Youth Parliament and victims of hate crime as well as constabulary forums such as the independent advisory group (IAG).

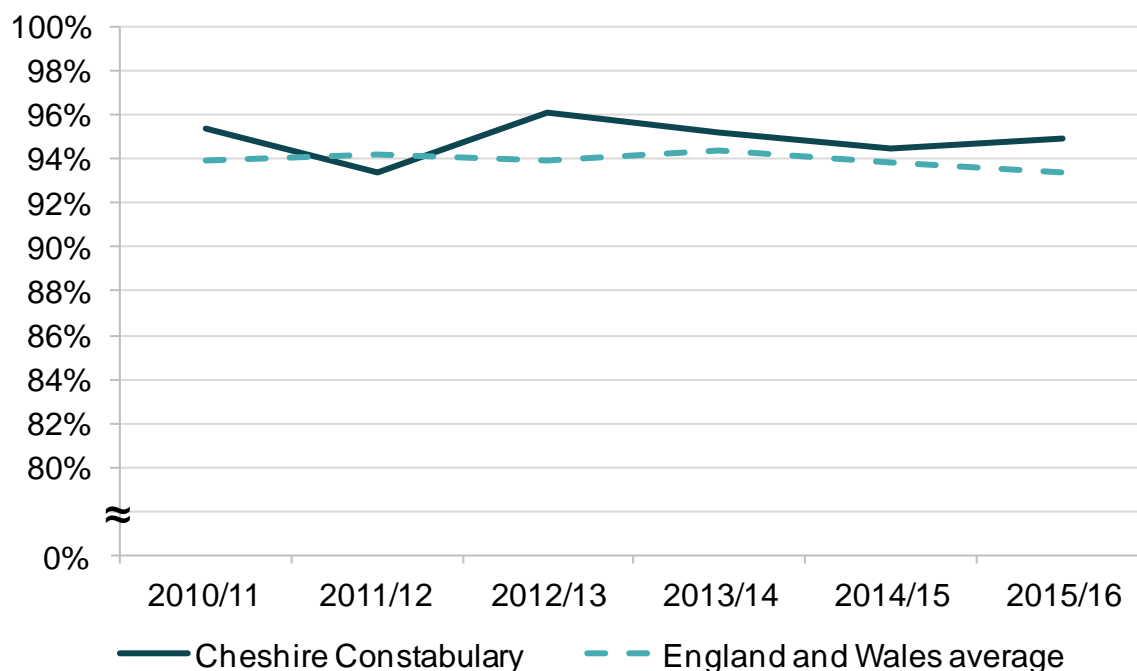
Through its website, the constabulary encourages complaints and feedback from the public. The website's homepage includes a 'one-click' facility for people to raise issues of concern, make a complaint or register a compliment. On a monthly basis, the professional standards department (PSD) uses social media through the constabulary digital platforms to explain how people can make a complaint. PSD has recently started attending public meetings to explain to the public how they can make complaints and raise issues of concern about the constabulary. The department also attends the IAG to highlight and discuss trends in types and levels of complaints.

Identifying and understanding the issues

The core approach for the communications department is to understand what the public thinks. It uses this information to inform how the constabulary communicates, and how it provides its services. The constabulary has worked closely with a range of groups to try to identify and understand the issues that have the greatest impact on public perceptions of fair and respectful treatment. Public perception surveys, which are carried out on a quarterly basis, include a thematic element such as the use of stop and search powers; this changes with each survey. The survey also has set questions in relation to the 'We're here' commitments. Recent surveys have highlighted the fact that nearly a quarter of respondents did not know whether the constabulary supported victims and witnesses. This has resulted in a change to the communication strategy, using social media and other approaches to raise awareness of victim and witness services to people within Cheshire.

All forces are required to conduct victim satisfaction surveys with specified victims of crime groups and provide data on a quarterly basis. The surveys take account of victims' experience of the service provided to them by the police and inform forces' improvements to their service provision, including examining how well victims feel they are treated.

Figure 1: Percentage of victims satisfied with overall treatment by Cheshire Constabulary compared with England and Wales, from the 12 months to 31 March 2011 to the 12 months to 31 March 2016



Source: Home Office Annual Data Requirement
For further information about the data in figure 1 please see annex A

In the 12 months to 31 March 2016, 94.9 percent of all victims of crime (excluding hate crime) who responded to the victim satisfaction survey were satisfied with the overall treatment provided by Cheshire Constabulary, which was higher than the England and Wales average of 93.4 percent; and higher than the 94.5 percent who were satisfied with the overall treatment that the constabulary provided in the 12 months to 31 March 2015, this is not a statistically significant difference.

In August 2014, following HMIC’s 2013 inspection on the effective and fair use of stop and search powers,⁷ the Home Office published guidance to police forces on how to implement the Best Use of Stop and Search (BUSS) scheme.⁸ The scheme aims to increase transparency and community involvement, and to support a more intelligence-led use of the powers leading to better outcomes. All police forces in England and Wales signed up to participate in the scheme. In 2015, HMIC’s legitimacy inspection⁹ considered the extent to which the force was complying with

⁷ *Stop and Search Powers – are the police using them effectively and fairly?* HMIC, July 2013. Available from: www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmic/publications/stop-and-search-powers-20130709/

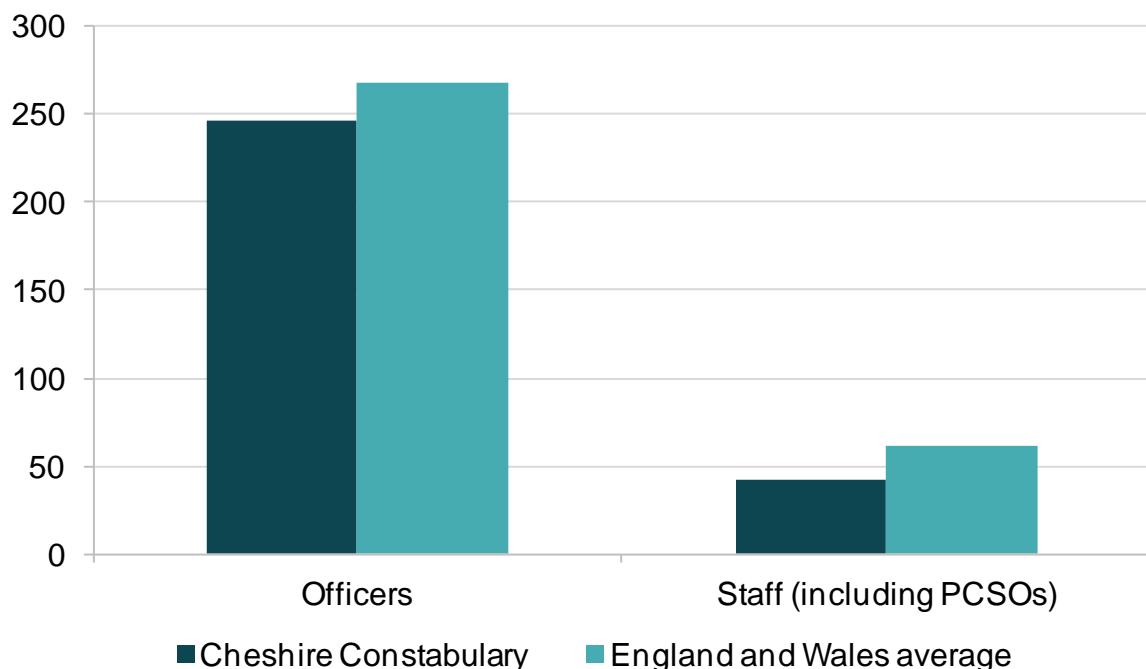
⁸ *Best Use of Stop and Search Scheme*, Home Office, August 2014. Available at: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/346922/Best_Use_of_Stop_and_Search_Scheme_v3.0_v2.pdf

⁹ *PEEL: Police legitimacy 2015 – A national overview*, HMIC, February 2016. Available at: www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmic/publications/police-legitimacy-2015/

the scheme and found that it did not comply with four of its features. Consequently, the Home Secretary suspended the force from participation in the scheme. In 2016, we revisited the force to assess its compliance with the scheme and found that it complied with all features. Details of our revisit can be found on HMIC’s website at www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmic/publications/best-use-of-stop-and-search-scheme

Each force in England and Wales is required to record the nature of complaint cases and allegations and be able to produce complaints data annually. The numbers and types of complaints are valuable sources of information for forces and can be used to help them identify areas of dissatisfaction with their service provision, and take steps to improve how they treat the public.

Figure 2: Number of public complaint cases recorded against officers (per 1,000 officers) or staff (per 1,000 staff, including police community support officers) in Cheshire Constabulary compared with England and Wales, in the 12 months to 31 March 2016



Source: HMIC Legitimacy data collection

For further information about the data in figure 2 please see annex A

In the 12 months to 31 March 2016, Cheshire Constabulary recorded 246 public complaint cases per 1,000 officers, which was broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 268 cases per 1,000 officers. During this period, the constabulary recorded 42 public complaint cases per 1,000 staff (including PCSOs), which was broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 61 cases per 1,000 staff (including PCSOs).

The most recent Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) data from forces show that, for April, May and June 2016, the types of complaint most frequently recorded by Cheshire Constabulary are ‘other neglect or failure in duty’

and ‘incivility, impoliteness and intolerance’.¹⁰ It is important to note, however, an issue identified during our 2014 inspection on police integrity and corruption;¹¹ complaint allegation categories used by different forces may overlap with each other. For instance, similar allegations might be recorded by one force as ‘other neglect or failure in duty’, and by another force as ‘other irregularity in procedure’ or ‘lack of fairness and impartiality’. This means there is no definitive way of establishing accurately the number of public complaints about certain behaviours.

The constabulary and the office of the police and crime commissioner jointly hold audit advisory committee and ethics advisory panel meetings. The ethics advisory panel considers ethical matters, including scrutiny of complaints, reports from the IPCC, and reports in relation to standards of integrity. The audit advisory committee reviews samples of constabulary forms such as stop and search to ensure appropriate professional standards and consider any emerging patterns.

How well does the force act on feedback and learning to improve the way it treats all the people it serves, and demonstrate that it is doing so?

It is important that, as well as actively seeking feedback from the public, the force also responds to that feedback. HMIC assessed the extent to which this response includes changes to the way the force operates to reduce the likelihood of similar incidents occurring in future, as well as resolving individual incidents or concerns, and how well the force communicates to the public the effectiveness of this action.

Making improvements

The constabulary uses a range of approaches to collect feedback from various communities including surveys, focus groups and challenge panels. This feedback is used strategically for priority planning and feeds into organisational change decisions. An example of this is repeated feedback from members of the public in relation to not being updated on the progress of an investigation. As a result, the constabulary has built into its crime recording procedure a check of compliance with the code of practice for victims of crime.¹²

¹⁰ Independent Police Complaints Commission data is available at: www.ipcc.gov.uk/reports/statistics/police-complaints/police-performance-data

¹¹ *Integrity matters*, HMIC, January 2015. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/integrity-matters/

¹² All police forces have a statutory duty to comply with the code of practice for victims of crime, which sets out the service victims of crime can expect from all parts of the criminal justice system.

The PSD works very closely with the communications department around public feedback, looking at the details and trends in complaint data in relation to the behaviour and conduct of police officers and staff. In the last year, the constabulary has launched a 'proud to serve' campaign, which emphasises the ethos of public service – dedication, integrity and honesty. This aims to reinforce those behaviours that reflect the best elements of policing and to support the ethical framework that underpins Cheshire Constabulary's policing model. A booklet is also being launched during the summer on the core principles of policing conduct, which will be circulated to all staff and officers.

Demonstrating effectiveness

At a local level, neighbourhood policing teams hold regular local meetings and have dedicated web pages on the constabulary website highlighting local issues, priorities and concerns. Some local inspectors for areas publish weekly newsletters through the Cheshire Police Alert,¹³ which is circulated to local companies, councillors and the general public.

In work with communities on the use of stop and search powers by Cheshire Constabulary, feedback from young people highlighted a lack of understanding around their rights. In response, the constabulary has revised the guidance on its website and has issued a booklet on stop and search rights which is being circulated to schools as part of a wider engagement programme with young people.

Summary of findings



Good

HMIC found that Cheshire Constabulary has a good approach to treating the people it serves with fairness and respect. It has a clear vision and clear values that correspond with the Code of Ethics, expressed through a set of 'We're here...' commitments. These have been well communicated and understood throughout the organisation. They are used in order to understand behavioural standards and are seen by the workforce as an important means to ensure that the public is treated fairly and with respect.

¹³ Cheshire Police Alert is the community messaging system run by Cheshire Constabulary and servicing the whole of Cheshire. This service includes news and appeals, local crime information and crime prevention advice and goes direct to individuals as an e-mail, mobile text or voice message.

The constabulary frequently seeks feedback and challenge through a range of channels, including focus groups, challenge panels and surveys. The constabulary has carried out targeted work with communities who historically have less trust and confidence in the police, such as the LGBT and the Roma, Traveller and Gypsy communities.

Through its website, the constabulary encourages complaints, and it uses a range of approaches to collect feedback from various communities. This feedback is used strategically for planning priorities and organisational changes. The constabulary could do more to demonstrate to the public how it has responded to the issues identified through consultation and feedback.

How well does the force ensure that its workforce behaves ethically and lawfully?

In 2014, HMIC inspected the extent to which the police were acting with integrity and guarding against corruption.¹⁴ Given the continued importance of this topic, we are returning in this question to those national recommendations emerging from the 2014 report of that inspection which our 2015 legitimacy inspection did not cover. Our inspection focus this year also reflects research showing that prevention is better than cure: the best way to ensure that police workforces behave ethically is for the forces to develop an ethical culture and to have systems in place to identify potential risks to the integrity of the organisations, so that forces can intervene early to reduce the likelihood of corruption.¹⁵

How well does the force develop and maintain an ethical culture?

One of the first things forces can do to develop an ethical culture is to use effective vetting procedures to recruit applicants who are more likely to have a high standard of ethical behaviour, and to reject those who may have demonstrated questionable standards of behaviour in the past, or whose identities cannot be confirmed.¹⁶

Once recruited, one of the best ways to prevent corruption from occurring among the workforce is by establishing an ethical working environment or culture. To achieve this, forces need to clarify and continue to reinforce and exemplify acceptable and unacceptable standards of behaviour, including through the Code of Ethics.¹⁷ This year, HMIC focused on assessing progress in those areas highlighted for improvement in our 2015 legitimacy inspection and our 2014 integrity and corruption inspection.

¹⁴ *Integrity matters*, HMIC, January 2015. Available from:
www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/integrity-matters/

¹⁵ *Promoting ethical behaviour and preventing wrongdoing in organisations*, College of Policing, 2015. Available at:
http://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/150317_Integrity_REA_FINAL_REPORT.pdf

¹⁶ *College of Policing: Authorised Professional Practice on vetting*. Available at:
www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/professional-standards/vetting/

¹⁷ *Promoting ethical behaviour and preventing wrongdoing in organisations*, College of Policing, 2015. Available at:
http://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/150317_Integrity_REA_FINAL_REPORT.pdf
and *The role of leadership in promoting ethical police behaviour*, College of Policing, 2015. Available at:
http://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/150317_Ethical_leadership_FINAL_REPOR T.pdf and *Literature review – Police integrity and corruption*, HMIC, January 2015. Available at:

Initial vetting

Cheshire Constabulary has a police community vetting statement. This affirms the integral part that internal police vetting plays in ensuring that those coming into the organisation, and those already serving, present no threat to the organisation or its assets. All staff, including contractors and volunteers, are subject to vetting during any application to Cheshire Constabulary, and, unless an applicant meets the criteria set out in the national police vetting policy,¹⁸ an application will not be progressed. At the time of our inspection, Cheshire Constabulary had vetted all staff with a Police National Computer, finance, and local record check, but approximately two-thirds of the workforce had yet to go through full recruitment vetting retrospectively. The constabulary recognises further work is needed on managing cases after initial vetting to ensure national standards are complied with. Although the constabulary currently has no backlogs on recruitment vetting, there is a lack of capacity within the unit to check for changes of circumstances and then process the change in circumstances forms as they come into the vetting unit.

The constabulary vetting unit does not keep statistics on protected characteristics.¹⁹ Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME), and non-UK nationals are only identified through photographs or names, at which point further consideration will take place in the vetting process. Further work is needed for the constabulary to understand fully the vetting outcomes for people with protected characteristics to enable it to take positive action where appropriate, in cases where people with protected characteristics fail the vetting process.

The College of Policing's 'disapproved register' contains details of those officers who have been dismissed from the service or who either resigned or retired while subject to a gross misconduct investigation in which it had been determined that there would have been a case to answer. The force complies with its obligations to provide the College of Policing with details of those officers and staff who have been dismissed from the service, for inclusion on the current disapproved register.

¹⁸ ACPO / ACPOS National Vetting Policy for the Police Community, Association of Chief Police Officers, 2012. Available from: [www.northants.police.uk/files/documents/Freedom Of Information/ac^ACPO National Vetting Policy.pdf](http://www.northants.police.uk/files/documents/Freedom%20Of%20Information/ac^ACPO%20National%20Vetting%20Policy.pdf)
ACPO is now the National Police Chiefs' Council.

¹⁹ The characteristics that the Equality Act protects are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

Clarifying and reinforcing standards of behaviour

The constabulary frequently reinforces acceptable and unacceptable standards of behaviour. It has continued to promote and embed the Code of Ethics through its 'We're here' commitments. These feature in all in-house training and are being incorporated into all policies and procedures as they are subject to scheduled review. These messages are visible throughout the constabulary, through such things as posters and internal screen savers. The commitments are well understood and are reinforced throughout the workforce, including the Special Constabulary, through training on the 'We're here...' commitments and the Code of Ethics. This includes training on expected standards, emphasising on-duty and off-duty acceptable behaviour, the use of force and the National Decision Model.²⁰ Leadership conferences aimed at inspector rank and above (and police staff equivalents) all include elements on standards and behaviour. The force's promotion and recruitment processes include elements on the Code of Ethics and professional behaviour.

We found a comprehensive understanding by the workforce of constabulary policies relating to integrity, with a good level of awareness of where to find constabulary policies relating to gifts and hospitality, declaring of business interests and notifiable associations on the constabulary intranet. The constabulary regularly reviews declaration of business interests, with reminders sent out to the workforce to update their records annually. The workforce understands how to report concerns relating to integrity, demonstrating a high level of trust and confidence in being able to report a concern to a line manager or PSD. Reporting lines have been widely publicised through posters in police stations and messages on the intranet.

How well does the force identify, understand and manage risks to the integrity of the organisation?

HMIC's 2014 police integrity and corruption inspection emphasised the need for forces to make arrangements for continuous monitoring of their ethical health, through active monitoring of force systems and processes to spot risks to their integrity, including – but not limited to – declaration of business interests, gifts and hospitality, and public complaints.²¹ These findings reflect the research commissioned by the College of Policing, which highlights the importance of taking a problem-solving approach to preventing wrongdoing by scanning and analysing police data to identify particular officers or hotspots on which to target prevention activity.

²⁰ The National Decision Model is the framework by which all policing decisions should be made, examined and challenged; the Code of Ethics is a central component of the National Decision Model.

²¹ *Integrity matters*, HMIC, January 2015. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/integrity-matters/

This year HMIC was particularly interested in how well forces – from dedicated anti-corruption units to individual supervisors – are identifying and intervening early to reduce individual and organisational vulnerabilities (i.e. those individuals, groups or locations that may be susceptible to corruption). We also assessed how well forces are seeking and assessing intelligence on potential corruption, with a focus on those areas for improvement identified in our previous inspections.

Identifying and understanding risks to integrity

Cheshire Constabulary has an anti-corruption unit (ACU) which is separate from, but line managed by, the PSD. It produces an annual counter-corruption strategy, in line with the National Crime Agency's counter-corruption strategic assessment. The assessment is used to prioritise investigations within the constabulary.

The policies in relation to declaring business interests, notifiable associations²², gifts and hospitality are widely known by the workforce. The policies are owned and administered by PSD. The head of people and PSD reviews all declarations of business interests, and these are reviewed annually by the department. The overall declaration of business interest report is published online, together with the chief officer gifts and gratuities list. Notifiable association reminders are also sent out to the workforce annually. The constabulary recently reviewed its approach to third-party sellers, after complaints were received about staff and officers using aggressive selling techniques to sell products to colleagues within the force.

The constabulary has the ability to monitor and audit its digital systems. The constabulary has recently moved to a combined human resources and PSD department - 'people and PSD'. This is designed to allow a broader understanding of workforce intelligence and people issues and to identify, monitor and deal with any risk to the force's integrity more effectively.

Cheshire Constabulary has implemented all four recommendations set out in the 2014 HMIC Police Integrity and Corruption report.²³ These related to the communication to all the workforce of the requirements to comply with policies relating to notifiable associations, secondary employment, declaration of business interests and gifts and hospitality, and to developing a proactive capability to gather, respond and act on information which identifies patterns of unprofessional behaviour and corruption effectively.

²² A notifiable association policy is designed to identify those individuals who could pose a risk to the integrity of an individual employee or the force itself. It requires the officer or staff member to report such associations, which then allows a full evaluation of the risk posed to both the individual and the force to be undertaken.

²³ *Police Integrity and Corruption – Cheshire Constabulary*, HMIC, November 2014. Available at: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/police-integrity-corruption-force/

Alongside public complaints, analysis of internal misconduct numbers and allegations are another valuable source of information for forces. Identifying patterns and trends of police misconduct provides insight to support implementation of effective preventative activity at individual and organisational levels.

Intervening early to manage risks to integrity

The ACU within the constabulary has good intelligence and analytical functions to identify, monitor and investigate cases of corruption. The department has access to specialist intelligence gathering systems and wider support if required. During our inspection, several examples were cited of corruption investigations resulting in positive outcomes, such as arrest and conviction.

PSD provides input and training for all officers and staff within the constabulary around the Code of Ethics, corruption, declaration of business interests and notifiable associations. This training is provided to new recruits, on leadership courses and on sergeant development courses.

The merging of human resources with PSD into one department has allowed the constabulary to learn from PSD issues and from lessons learned in relation to complaints and IPCC investigations. Following a recent death in custody within the constabulary, the constabulary reviewed the IPCC investigation for lessons learned. As a consequence, it changed its training on positional asphyxia and changed constabulary policy to prevent anyone who had not completed the training from transporting prisoners. IPCC lessons learned are delegated by the head of people and PSD to the relevant lead within the constabulary, and this requires an update on action taken. The constabulary intranet has an organisation learning section for managers to access and consider.

The monthly force integrity meeting chaired by the deputy chief constable reviews data and intelligence in relation to officer and staff integrity issues. Combining the PSD and human resources departments has allowed the constabulary to understand risks better and intervene or manage risks early. Human resources managers are now vetted to a higher level, to allow them to make a full review of people intelligence and manage risk early. An example of this is where a member of staff was successfully prevented from moving to a new role within the constabulary due to a performance issue and all postings are now reviewed very early on.

Looking for, reporting and assessing intelligence on potential corruption

The constabulary uses the National Intelligence Model and an intelligence database called i-Base to track, record and evaluate intelligence. The National Intelligence Model is a process used by police forces and other law enforcement bodies to provide focus to operational policing and to ensure resources are used to best effect.

The Model is set out in a Code of Practice.²⁴ All ACU cases are managed within the database, which allows the constabulary to research, record and retrieve intelligence and information from all investigations with the ACU.

The constabulary has a good process in place and uses a number of avenues to receive and assess intelligence. The constabulary has both internal IT and telephone reporting lines provided by an independent reporting organisation, Crimestoppers.²⁵ The constabulary uses intelligence monitoring to support these functions, as well as direct contact with national agencies and other forces. The ACU also has access to specialist support, both within the constabulary and at a regional and national level.

The constabulary has a policy of random and 'intelligence-led' drug testing for officers and staff. The constabulary has carried out several intelligence-led drug tests on officers and staff, as well as implementing the randomised testing approach.

The workforce understands and is confident to report inappropriate and corrupt behaviour, either directly to PSD or to line managers and is aware of the independent reporting line provided by Crimestoppers.

How well is the force tackling the problem of officers and staff abusing their authority for sexual gain?

In 2012 the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) and the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) published *The abuse of police powers to perpetrate sexual violence*.²⁶ This report states that "the abuse of police powers for purposes of sexual exploitation, or even violence, is something that fundamentally betrays the trust that communities and individuals place in the police. It therefore has a serious impact on the public's confidence in individual officers and the service in general." The report identified this behaviour as a form of serious corruption that forces should refer to the IPCC for consideration of how it should be investigated.

²⁴ *Code of Practice: National Intelligence Model*, Home Office, National Centre for Policing Excellence and Centrex, 2005, paragraph 3.1.1, page 6. Available at: <http://library.college.police.uk/docs/npia/NIM-Code-of-Practice.pdf>

²⁵ Crimestoppers is an independent charity helping law enforcement to locate criminals and help solve crimes. They have an anonymous 24/7 phone number, 0800 555 111, that people can call to pass on information about crime; alternatively people can send information anonymously via the Crimestoppers website.

²⁶ *The abuse of police powers to perpetrate sexual violence*, jointly published by IPCC and ACPO (now the National Police Chiefs' Council), September 2012. Available at: www.ipcc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Documents/research_stats/abuse_of_police_powers_to_perpetrate_sexual_violence.PDF

The *Code of Ethics*²⁷ – which sets out the standards of professional behaviour expected of all policing professionals – explicitly states that they must “not establish or pursue an improper sexual or emotional relationship with a person with whom [they] come into contact in the course of [their] work who may be vulnerable to an abuse of trust or power”.

The most recent national counter-corruption assessment, in 2013, highlighted corruption for the purposes of sexual gratification as a major threat to law enforcement.²⁸ HMIC’s 2015 report *Integrity matters*²⁹ identified police sexual misconduct as an area of great concern to the public. We share the public’s disquiet and so we looked at this issue specifically as part of our 2016 inspection. Our work was given additional emphasis in May 2016 by a request from the Home Secretary that we inspect forces’ response to the issue of officers and staff developing inappropriate relationships with victims of domestic abuse and abusing their position of power to exploit victims.

Recognising abuse of authority for sexual gain as serious corruption

The constabulary takes reports of officer and staff sexual misconduct seriously. If the constabulary receives any intelligence in relation to this, it will use both overt and covert means to investigate the claim. Behavioural vulnerability, which includes the exploitation of a vulnerable victim, is one of three priorities set out in the constabulary counter-corruption control strategy 2015/16, the purpose of which is to focus the organisation on risks to the integrity of Cheshire Constabulary from corruption of all forms. The control strategy states, “the primary threat faced by the constabulary going forward is through intentional exploitation of officers and staff through inappropriate relationships, and through a lack of awareness of the boundaries of acceptable behaviour”.

²⁷ *Code of Ethics – A Code of Practice for the Principles and Standards of Professional Behaviour for the Policing Profession of England and Wales*, College of Policing, London, July 2014. Available at: www.college.police.uk/What-we-do/Ethics/Documents/Code_of_Ethics.pdf

²⁸ Every three years, the National Counter Corruption Advisory Group commissions a strategic assessment of the threat to law enforcement from corruption. The most recent assessment was completed in June 2013 by the Serious Organised Crime Agency. The assessment was based upon three years of intelligence reports on possible corruption gathered by forces in England and Wales, supplemented by information from other forces and national agencies.

²⁹ *Integrity matters*, HMIC, January 2015. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/integrity-matters/

Taking action to prevent abuse of authority for sexual gain

Although the workforce is aware of abuse of authority by officers and staff for sexual gain through the recent investigation and conviction of a Cheshire Constabulary officer for misconduct in a public office, the constabulary has further training to do on awareness of this issue. In particular, officers and staff in the public protection department should receive specific training on how to recognise signs of abuse of authority for sexual gain amongst colleagues, especially in relation to vulnerable victims.

Looking for and receiving intelligence on potential abuse of authority for sexual gain

The constabulary has a formalised process in place to react to reports of sexual abuse through abuse of authority within the force, as well as a pro-active capability to investigate and monitor processes where intelligence has been received. These are managed by the ACU and PSD leads. However, the constabulary could do more to seek intelligence on potential abuse of authority from a variety of sources. These should include sex worker support organisations and victims of domestic abuse, through working with third sector and voluntary organisations such as Women's Aid. The constabulary could also do more to seek intelligence on potential abuse of authority through the investigation of digital systems and the monitoring of internal records. This would identify officers and staff seeking to contact and exploit vulnerable victims, including victims of domestic abuse.

Building public trust

The current constabulary approach to rebuilding public trust following these types of cases is very reactive. Although the constabulary has only had one offence to date, it could do more to demonstrate to the public how it has responded to cases of officer misconduct in relation to abuse of authority for sexual gain. It could also review its approach to how it rebuilds the trust of the community after such an occurrence through use of community impact assessments and wider engagement with third sector organisations such as Women's Aid.

How well does the force engage with the public and its workforce about the outcomes of misconduct and corruption cases?

HMIC's 2014 literature review on police integrity and corruption emphasised the importance of collection and dissemination of information about misconduct to the public, on the basis that it shows police forces are taking the problem seriously and detecting and punishing wrongdoing.³⁰ This information also forms the basis for deterring misconduct and enhancing integrity within police forces themselves. This year, HMIC looked at how well forces engage with the public online and through police officer misconduct hearings in public, and also more widely following high profile incidents with the potential to undermine public perceptions of police integrity. We also looked at how aware the workforce is of these outcomes.

Working with the public

Cheshire Constabulary has a good approach to communicating the outcomes of misconduct and corruption cases to the public. All details of misconduct cases can be found on the constabulary's website and on occasion the chief constable has also tweeted results of misconduct cases. All misconduct hearings are in public, are advertised online and do not require pre-booking or vetting to attend. Details of disapproved officers are frequently provided to the College of Policing for inclusion on the national register, and details of senior officer gifts and hospitality are included on the constabulary's website which is current and up-to-date. The constabulary issues press releases on all gross misconduct outcomes and carries out community impact assessments on cases to review what communication and engagement approach is necessary.

Working with the workforce

The constabulary publicises all misconduct hearings internally throughout the organisation in 'weekly orders'. The constabulary could consider including lessons learned in communications with the workforce, to demonstrate and emphasise expected standards and the consequences of not adhering to them.

³⁰ *Literature review – Police integrity and corruption*, HMIC, January 2015. Available at: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/integrity-matters/

Summary of findings



Good

HMIC judges Cheshire Constabulary good in its approach to ensuring its workforce behaves ethically and lawfully. The constabulary understands the importance of vetting potential applicants and contract staff and has a vetting policy for recruits, including volunteers and other non-police staff, which is in line with national guidance. The constabulary recognises that further work is need on its management of cases after initial vetting to ensure it complies with national security vetting standards. The constabulary has continued to promote and embed the Code of Ethics through its 'We're here...' commitments. Although the workforce is aware of the abuse of authority by officers and staff for sexual gain through the recent investigation and conviction of a Cheshire officer for misconduct in a public office, the constabulary has further training to do. It also needs to seek intelligence on potential abuse of authority from a variety of sources, such as sex worker support organisations and victims of domestic abuse, through working with third sector and voluntary organisations. The constabulary publicises all misconduct hearings internally and externally. The constabulary could consider including lessons learned in its communications with the workforce, to demonstrate and emphasise expected standards and the consequences of not adhering to them.

Areas for improvement

- The force should improve how it clarifies and reinforces standards of behaviour to its workforce, in particular when dealing with vulnerable people, including victims of domestic abuse.
- The force should ensure it complies with all aspects of the current national guidelines for vetting.

To what extent does the force treat its workforce with fairness and respect?

A workforce that feels it is treated fairly and with respect by its employers is more likely to identify with the organisation, and treat the public in a similarly fair and respectful way. Conversely, perceived unfairness within police organisations can have a detrimental effect on officer and staff attitudes and behaviours.³¹ As such, this concept of ‘organisational justice’, and its potential impact on ‘procedural justice’, forms an important part of HMIC’s assessment of police legitimacy. As there is no comparative data on how fairly officers and staff perceive forces to have treated them, we focused our assessment on how well forces identify these perceptions within their workforces and act on these findings. In particular, we looked at the extent to which organisational ‘fairness’ is reflected through the way individual performance is managed, and how ‘organisational respect’ is reflected through how forces provide for the wellbeing of their workforces, particularly through preventative and early action.

How well does the force identify and act to improve the workforce’s perceptions of fair and respectful treatment?

Research suggests that forces that involve officers and staff in decision-making processes, listen to their concerns, act on them, and are open about how and why decisions were reached, may improve workforce perceptions of fair and respectful treatment.³² On this basis, HMIC assessed how well the force works with its staff to identify and understand the issues that affect them, and how well it acts on these issues and demonstrates that it has done so.

Identifying and understanding the issues

The constabulary uses a wide range of methods to identify the areas that have the greatest impact on the workforce’s perceptions of fair and respectful treatment. They include a two-yearly staff survey, with a ‘pulse’ survey in the year in between; ‘back to the floor’ days every six months and some use of focus groups and exit interviews. On the ‘back to the floor’ days, all senior managers spend a day in a different

³¹ *Fair cop 2: Organisational justice, behaviour and ethical policing*, College of Policing, 2015.

Available at:

http://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/150317_Fair_cop%202_FINAL_REPORT.pdf
f Organisational justice: Implications for police and emergency service leadership, C Herrington and K Roberts, AIPM Research Focus, Issue 2, 2013. Available at: www.aipm.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Org-Justice-Final.pdf

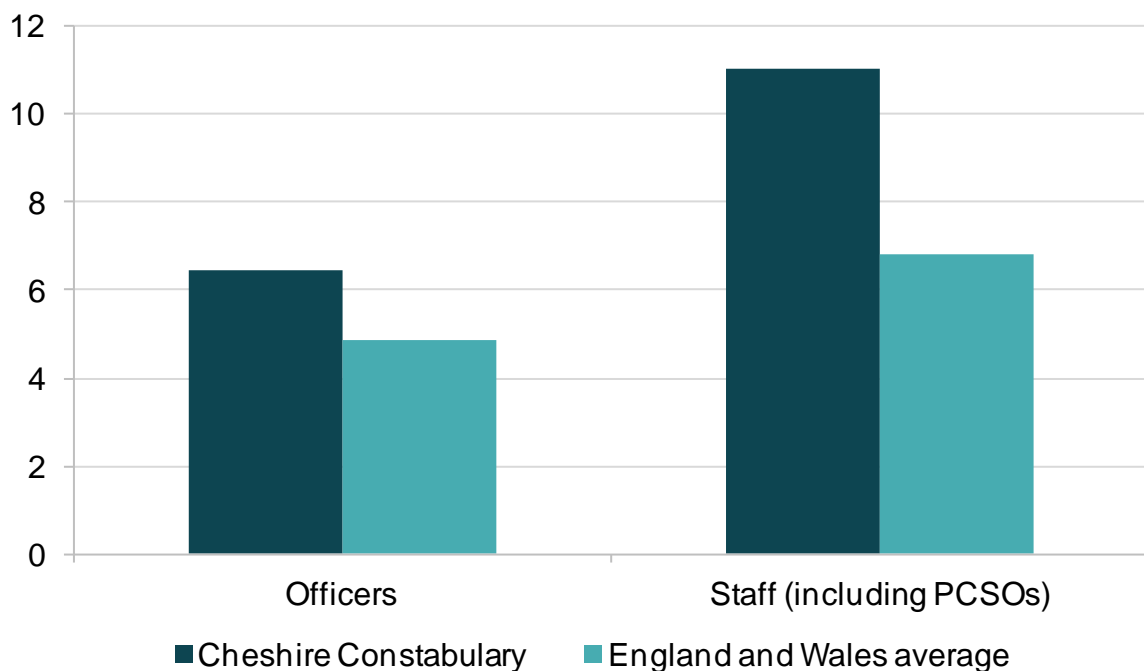
³² *Fair cop 2: Organisational justice, behaviour and ethical policing*, College of Policing, 2015, page 11. Available at:

http://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/150317_Fair_cop%202_FINAL_REPORT.pdf
f

department to ascertain staff views and identify areas for improvement either to staff welfare or services. There is a 'your questions' section on the intranet, where staff are encouraged to raise concerns and issues. The joint negotiating consultative committee, the formal committee for union and staff associations within Cheshire Constabulary, is chaired by the chief constable and is viewed as an open forum where opinions and views are welcomed and listened to. The force's people board reviews results and data from staff surveys, exit interviews and other areas to consider its approach to the force's people strategy and other associated plans. The workforce has a good awareness of the constabulary grievance procedure and where to access further support and information if needed.

Grievances are concerns, problems or complaints raised formally to employers by officers or staff. Data on numbers and types of grievances provide forces with a useful source of information about the sorts of issues that staff and officers are concerned about.

Figure 3: Number of grievances raised by officers (per 1,000 officers) or staff (per 1,000 staff, including police community support officers) that Cheshire Constabulary finalised compared with England and Wales, in the 12 months to 31 March 2016



Source: HMIC Legitimacy data collection

For further information about the data in figure 3 please see annex A

In the 12 months to 31 March 2016, Cheshire Constabulary finalised 6.5 formal grievances raised by officers per 1,000 officers, which was broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 4.8 per 1,000 officers. During this period, the constabulary finalised 11.0 formal grievances raised by staff per 1,000 staff (including PCSOs), which was higher than the England and Wales average of 6.8 per 1,000 staff (including PCSOs).

Making improvements and demonstrating effectiveness

The constabulary informed us that the last staff survey had a response rate of 36 percent. The workforce has a limited understanding of the action the constabulary has taken in response to recent surveys, with the perception that there was a lack of communication on follow up after their conclusion. The constabulary is currently reviewing its approach to staff surveys and is moving to a national model for measuring and assessing workforce views and opinions. This will allow the constabulary to benchmark itself against other similar organisations and focus on particular areas essential to a productive workforce, such as a balanced workload, job conditions and work relationships.

We found several examples of the constabulary changing its approach to an issue in response to staff feedback. One example is the new resilience training being given to staff in response to issues highlighted on the staff survey, and another is a new approach to recruitment and promotion processes to include an independent panel member to improve transparency around the process. More could be done to feed back positive examples such as these to the workforce to demonstrate that the constabulary has listened and responded.

How well does the force support the wellbeing of its workforce?

Police forces need to understand the benefits of having a healthier workforce – a happy and healthy workforce is likely to be a more productive one, as a result of people taking fewer sick days and being more invested in what they do. Last year our inspection was concerned with what efforts forces were making to consider, and provide for, the wellbeing needs of their workforce. This year we looked at the progress the force had made since the last inspection, with a particular focus on preventative activity to encourage wellbeing.

Understanding and valuing the benefits

The constabulary is developing a comprehensive approach to understanding staff wellbeing; it sees maintaining wellbeing as essential to having a productive, well-engaged workforce. The commitment to wellbeing is demonstrated through the creation of a health and wellbeing centre, a health and wellbeing zone on the intranet, health and wellbeing conferences and road shows, and the newly launched employee assist programme.

At the beginning of 2016, Cheshire Constabulary was assessed by Investors in People. This includes assessment of the approach to wellbeing in terms of planning, supportive management, evaluation, work–life balance and a supportive culture. The constabulary was accredited in February 2016 with silver status, with the report highlighting, “it is clear that the approaches that are being taken are starting to have an impact within the force. There are effective communication conduits in place to

strategically position the relevant messages and highlight the resources now available and accessible to the workforce”. Consideration has been given to mental wellbeing within the constabulary; this includes the roll out of MIND (the mental health charity)’s blue-light³³ training to supervisors, which covers awareness of mental health and triggers of stress within the workplace. The constabulary has also recently introduced mindfulness training for staff and officers.

Identifying and understanding the workforce’s wellbeing needs

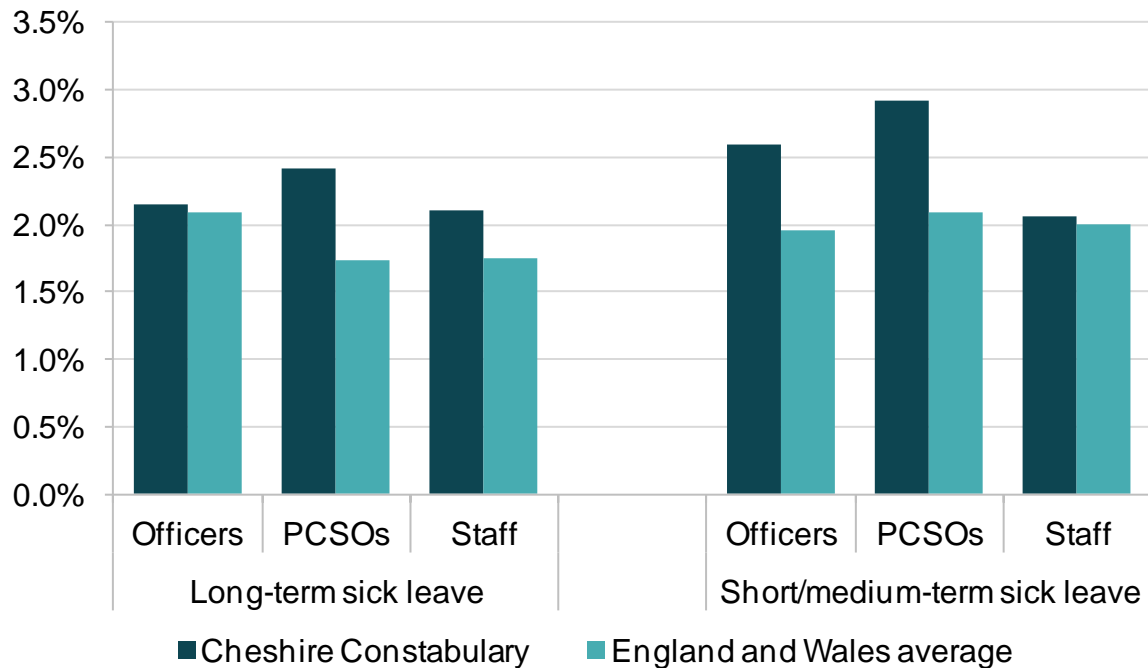
A variety of tools are used to understand and gain feedback on the workforce’s wellbeing needs. These tools include surveys, focus groups and the ‘back to the floor’ days. The ‘back to the floor’ days are viewed positively by officers and staff as good examples of senior leadership improving their visibility and a way to work with staff on how things are working, morale and wellbeing.

However, in speaking with frontline staff, we found differing views on wellbeing. Some staff felt the onus was on supervisors to manage issues themselves, a high number of rest days are cancelled, and there is a view that the new operating model for the force, which went live last year, had led to a substantial increase in workload. Some staff felt that all of this was having a negative impact on health and wellbeing.

Sickness data can provide a useful point of comparison for assessing the wellbeing of police workforces. Analysis of this data can also help forces to identify and understand the nature and causes of sickness at individual and organisational levels, and inform targeted activity to prevent and manage sickness.

³³ *Blue Light Programme – support for emergency services*, MIND. Available at: www.mind.org.uk/news-campaigns/campaigns/bluelight/

Figure 4: Percentage of officers, police community support officers and staff on long-term and short/medium-term sick leave in Cheshire Constabulary compared with England and Wales, as at 31 March 2016



Source: Home Office Annual Data Requirement

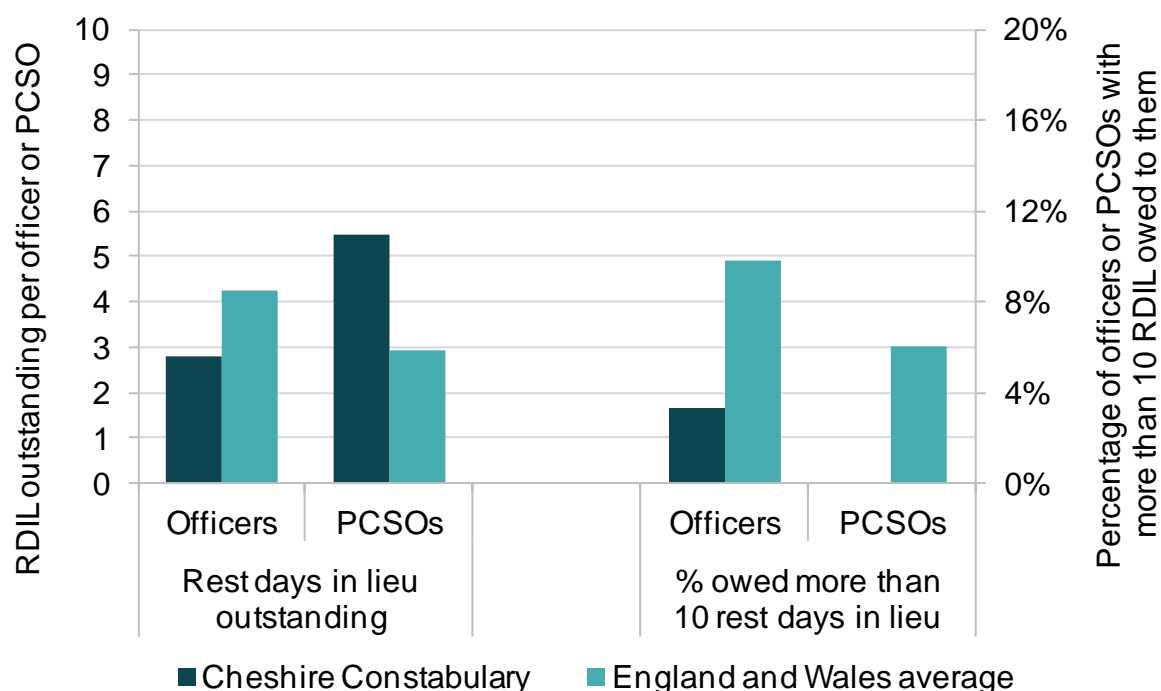
Note: Long-term sickness is defined as an absence due to sickness that has lasted for more than 28 days as at 31 March 2016. For further information about the data in figure 4 please see annex A

Figure 4 provides data on the proportion of officers, PCSOs and staff who were absent due to sickness on 31 March 2016.

- 2.1 percent of officers were on long-term sick leave, which is in line with the England and Wales average of 2.1 percent.
- 2.6 percent of officers were on short or medium-term sick leave, which is higher than the England and Wales average of 2.0 percent.
- 2.4 percent of PCSOs were on long-term sick leave, which is broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 1.7 percent.
- 2.9 percent of PCSOs were on short or medium-term sick leave, which is higher than the England and Wales average of 2.1 percent.
- 2.1 percent of staff were on long-term sick leave, which is broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 1.7 percent.
- 2.1 percent of staff were on short or medium-term sick leave, which is broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 2.0 percent.

Rest days in lieu (RDIL) are leave days owed to officers or PCSOs when they have been required to work on their scheduled rest day for operational reasons. Long working hours can have a detrimental impact on the health and wellbeing of the workforce, so it serves as a useful point of comparison for assessing the extent to which the force is managing the wellbeing of its workforce. Analysis of the numbers of RDIL accrued, but not yet taken, can be a useful tool for forces to identify and understand potential wellbeing concerns for individuals and teams.

Figure 5: Number of rest days in lieu outstanding per officer or police community support officer (PCSO) and the percentage of officers or PCSOs with more than 10 rest days in lieu owed to them in Cheshire Constabulary compared with England and Wales, as at 31 March 2016



Source: HMIC Legitimacy data collection

Note: For some police forces data about the number of rest days in lieu outstanding are estimated from data on hours owed. For further information about the data in figure 5 please see annex A

As at 31 March 2016, there were 2.8 rest days in lieu outstanding per officer in Cheshire Constabulary, which was broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 4.2 days per officer. On the same date, there were 5.5 rest days in lieu outstanding per PCSO in the constabulary, which was higher than the England and Wales average of 2.9 days per PCSO. As at 31 March 2016, 3.3 percent of officers in Cheshire Constabulary had more than 10 rest days in lieu owed to them, which was broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 9.8 percent. Cheshire Constabulary could not provide data for the percentage of PCSOs owed more than 10 rest days in lieu as at 31 March 2016. The England and Wales average was 6.0 percent of PCSOs.

Taking preventative and early action to improve workforce wellbeing

The constabulary has recently invested in an employee assist programme which gives all employees confidential access to advice, counselling and support services. This is advertised in the constabulary wellbeing zone. Senior leaders place an emphasis on the role of first line supervisors in the identification of staff wellbeing issues and their role in supporting staff, including telling them where to get additional help and support if they need it. Urgent occupational health referrals are seen within a week, with an option to access specialist support within 24 hours if required. The occupational health provision in Cheshire Constabulary has recently been reviewed and now includes a doctor and nurse-led service with an on-site facility, including physiotherapy and counselling services.

Mental health awareness training has been given to supervisors; psychological screenings are given to staff in roles which have exposure to potentially disturbing incidents, such as where officers deal with child pornography or child sexual exploitation. On a monthly basis, the constabulary promotes health awareness initiatives; recent examples include prostate awareness, healthy eating and fitness, and good mental health.

How fairly and effectively does the force manage the individual performance of its officers and staff?

College of Policing research on organisational justice suggests that lack of promotion opportunities and not dealing with poor performance may adversely affect workforce perceptions of fairness, which in turn may lead to negative attitudes and behaviours in the workplace.³⁴ HMIC assessed how fairly and effectively the force manages the individual performance of its officers and staff, including the extent to which the process aligns with guidance produced by the College of Policing.³⁵

The performance assessment process

The constabulary has recently introduced a new system for performance development review (PDR) following feedback from staff and officers that the previous system was ineffective. The new process has been developed in line with the College of Policing guidance. While acknowledging that the new system is only three months old, HMIC found much confusion among staff and officers as to what was required.

³⁴ *Fair cop 2: Organisational justice, behaviour and ethical policing*, College of Policing, 2015. Available at:

http://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/150317_Fair_cop%20FINAL_REPORT.pdf

³⁵ College of Policing guidance on the police performance development review process is available at: www.college.police.uk/What-we-do/Support/Reviewing-performance/Pages/PDR.aspx

The previous system used in 2015/16 was well understood by the workforce and routinely completed, although quality was variable, with the view by some officers that it was only relevant for those interested in promotion opportunities. PDRs only apply to staff and officers within the constabulary and exclude members of Cheshire's Special Constabulary. Among senior managers, the view is that PDRs should not be reviewed in isolation but greater emphasis should be placed on having meaningful conversations, developing teams and embedding a culture of ongoing feedback and continuous improvement.

The results of performance assessment

The new PDR process had been further complicated by the requirement to upload it onto the constabulary online human resources system, with a lack of staff understanding about how to do so. There is a perception among some staff and officers that the guidance for the new PDR system is lengthy, overly complex and confusing on what is required. These factors are contributing to many staff and officers not having current PDRs, with no systems in place to ensure fair application of the process to assess personal performance.

Summary of findings



Cheshire Constabulary has a good approach to treating its workforce with fairness and respect. The constabulary is currently reviewing its approach to staff surveys and is moving to a national model for measuring and assessing workforce views and opinions. This will allow the constabulary to benchmark itself against other similar organisations and focus on areas essential to a productive workforce. There are several examples where the constabulary has changed its approach to an issue in response to staff feedback. More could be done to feed back to the workforce to demonstrate that the constabulary has listened and responded. The constabulary is developing a comprehensive approach to understanding staff wellbeing, demonstrated through several new initiatives. The constabulary has recently introduced a new system for PDR following feedback from staff that the previous system was ineffective. The new process has been developed in line with the College of Policing guidance. While acknowledging that the new system is only three months old, we found much confusion among staff as to what was required. This is having a negative impact on the PDR completion rate, with no systems in place to ensure fair application of the process to assess personal performance across the workforce.

Area for improvement

- The force should improve how it manages individual performance.

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, legitimacy and also leadership. 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 legitimacy inspection will be used to direct the design of the next cycle of PEEL legitimacy assessments. The specific areas for assessment are yet to be confirmed, based on further consultation, but we will continue to assess procedural and organisational justice aspects of police legitimacy to ensure our findings are comparable year on year.

Annex A – About the data

Please note the following for the data presented throughout the report.

The source of the data is presented with each figure in the report, and is listed in more detail in this annex. For the source of force in numbers data, please see the relevant section below.

Methodology

Please note the following for the methodology applied to the data.

Comparisons with England and Wales average figures

For some data sets, the report states whether the force's value is 'lower', 'higher' or 'broadly in line with' the England and Wales average. To calculate this, the difference to the mean average, as a proportion, is calculated for all forces. After standardising this distribution, forces that are more than 0.675 standard deviations from the mean average are determined to be above or below the average, with all other forces being broadly in line.

In practice this means that approximately a quarter of forces are lower, a quarter are higher, and the remaining half are in line with the England and Wales average for each measure. For this reason, the distance from the average required to make a force's value above or below the average is different for each measure so may not appear to be consistent.

Statistical significance

When commenting on statistical differences, a significance level of 5 percent is used.

For some forces, numbers described in the text may be identical to the England and Wales average due to decimal place rounding, but the bars in the chart will appear different as they use the full unrounded value.

Where we have referred to the England and Wales average, this is the rate or proportion calculated from the England and Wales totals.

Population

For all uses of population as a denominator, unless otherwise noted, we use the ONS mid-2015 population estimates.

Force in numbers

Workforce figures (based on full-time equivalents) for 31 March 2016

These data are obtained from the Home Office annual data return 502. The data are available from the Home Office's published Police workforce England and Wales statistics, www.gov.uk/government/collections/police-workforce-england-and-wales, or the Home Office police workforce open data tables, www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-open-data-tables. Figures may have been updated since the publication.

Projections for March 2020 are budget-based projections and therefore are likely to take into account a vacancy rate depending on a force's planning strategy. In some instances an increase in budgeted posts may not actually indicate the force is planning to increase its workforce. In other cases, forces may be planning to reduce their workforce but have a current high vacancy rate which masks this change.

Police staff includes section 38 designated officers (investigation, detention and escort).

Data from the Office for National Statistics 2011 Census were used for the number and proportion of black, Asian and minority ethnic people within each force area. While the numbers may have since changed, more recent figures are based only on estimates from surveys or projections.

Figures throughout the report

Figure 1: Percentage of victims satisfied with overall treatment compared with England and Wales, from the 12 months to 31 March 2011 to the 12 months to 31 March 2016

Forces are required by the Home Office to conduct satisfaction surveys with specific victim groups. Victim satisfaction surveys are structured around core questions exploring satisfaction with police responses across four stages of interactions: initial contact, actions, follow up, treatment plus the whole experience. The data in figure 1 use the results to the question on treatment, which specifically asks "Are you satisfied, dissatisfied or neither, with the way you were treated by the police officer and staff who dealt with you?"

When comparing with the England and Wales average, the standard methodology described above has been used. When testing whether the change in percentage of respondents who were satisfied between the 12 months to 31 March 2015 and the 12 months to 31 March 2016 is statistically significant, a chi square hypothesis test for independence has been applied.

Figure 2: Number of public complaint cases recorded against officers (per 1,000 officers) or staff (per 1,000 staff, including police community support officers) compared with England and Wales, in the 12 months to 31 March 2016

The Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) defines a complaint for the purposes of recording as “an expression of dissatisfaction by a member of the public with the service they have received from a police force. It may be about the conduct of one or more persons serving with the police and/or about the direction and control of a police force”. A police complaint can be about more than one officer or member of staff and can refer to one or more allegations.³⁶

Data used in figure 2 are data extracted from the Centurion case recording and management system for Police Professional Standards data. We were able to collect the majority of this data through an automated database query, written for us by the creators of the software, Centurion (FIS Ltd). Forces ran this query on their systems and returned the outputs to us. This system is used in 41 of the 43 forces inspected. In order to collect the appropriate data from the two forces not using Centurion (Greater Manchester Police and Lancashire Constabulary), they were provided with a bespoke data collection template designed to correspond to information extracted from the Centurion database.

Although the IPCC categories used to record the type of public complaint and the accompanying guidance are the same in all police forces, differences in the way they are used still may occur. For example, one force may classify a case in one category while another force would classify the same case in a different category. This means that data on the types of public complaint should be treated with caution.

Figure 3: Number of grievances raised by officers (per 1,000 officers) or staff (per 1,000 staff, including police community support officers) finalised compared with England and Wales, in the 12 months to 31 March 2016

The data refer to those grievances that were subject to a formal process (not including issues informally resolved with a line manager). Some of the grievances finalised in this period may have been raised in a previous year. Finalised refers to grievances where a resolution has been reached, after any appeals have been completed. Differences between forces in the number of finalised grievances may be due to different handling and recording policies. Data used in figure 3 were provided to HMIC by individual forces via a bespoke data collection in April 2016 prior to inspection.

³⁶ *Guidance on the recording of complaints under the Police Reform Act 2002*, Independent Police Complaints Commission. Available at: www.ipcc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Documents/statutoryguidance/guidance_on_recording_of_complaints_under_PRA_2002.pdf

Figure 4: Percentage of officers, police community support officers and staff on long-term and short/medium-term sick leave compared with England and Wales, as at 31 March 2016

Long-term sickness is defined as an absence due to sickness that has lasted for more than 28 days as at 31 March 2016. Data used in figure 4 were obtained from Home Office annual data returns 501 and 551. Data on long-term absences can be found in the Home Office police workforce open data tables:

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

Figure 5: Number of rest days in lieu outstanding per officer or police community support officer (PCSO) and the percentage of officers or PCSOs with more than 10 rest days in lieu owed to them compared with England and Wales, as at 31 March 2016

Rest days in lieu are leave days owed to officers or police community support officers when they have been required to work on their scheduled rest day due to operational reasons. Data used in figure 5 were provided to HMIC by individual forces via a bespoke data collection in April 2016 prior to inspection.