



Promoting improvements
in policing to make
everyone safer

PEEL: Police legitimacy 2016

An inspection of Staffordshire Police



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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 Staffordshire Police.

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

Force in numbers



Workforce

Total workforce as of 31 March 2016

3,039

Total workforce breakdown as of 31 March 2016



Ethnic diversity

Percentage of BAME in workforce 31 March 2016

overall workforce

2.1%



Percentage of BAME in local population, 2011 Census

5.9%



Gender diversity

Percentage of females in overall workforce 31 March 2016

43%

England and Wales population, 2011 Census

51%

Percentage of females by role 31 March 2016

27%

Staffordshire Police

65%

51%



Public complaints

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

	Staffordshire Police	England and Wales force average
Officers	228	268
Staff (including PCSOs)	43	61



Grievances

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

	Staffordshire Police	England and Wales force average
Officers	4.8	4.8
Staff (including PCSOs)	5.1	6.8



Victim satisfaction

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

	Staffordshire Police	England and Wales force average
	92.7%	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

Staffordshire Police has been assessed as good in respect of the legitimacy with which it keeps people safe and reduces crime. Our findings this year are consistent with last year's findings, in which we judged the force to be good in this respect.

The communities of Staffordshire are treated with fairness and respect, and the force acts on public feedback to improve how it treats people. Good structures and processes are in place to make sure that the workforce behaves lawfully and ethically, but more needs to be done to improve post-employment vetting arrangements. There is a strong focus on workforce wellbeing and the force responds effectively to issues and concerns raised. Improvements are needed to its performance review processes.

Overall summary

Staffordshire Police treats the people it serves with fairness and respect. The force is responsive to the make-up of its community and adjusts its approach to engage with and seek feedback from groups who are difficult to reach.

The force would benefit from a more structured approach to analysing feedback. This would enable it to prioritise those issues that have the greatest impact on public perceptions, and to understand whether its efforts to improve the way it treats people are making a difference.

The force ensures that its workforce behaves lawfully and ethically. It is effective at identifying threats to integrity and has the necessary processes in place to intervene early. The force should develop a robust process for post-employment vetting arrangements. The force frequently uses a range of effective methods to identify the areas which affect its workforce's perceptions of fair and respectful treatment. The force undertakes effective and timely action in response to issues raised, such as the need for increased transparency of promotion processes.

Staffordshire Police has a clear and authentic focus on wellbeing and was the first force in England and Wales to achieve Workforce Wellbeing Charter accreditation.

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

A substantial number of the workforce have not completed a performance review and the force needs to develop its governance and scrutiny arrangements to ensure the performance review process is consistently and fairly applied⁴.

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 seeks feedback from the people it serves about their experiences (or perceptions) of how the police have treated them.
- 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.

⁴ The force estimates that only half of the workforce have completed a performance review.

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

The force’s policing plan 2015-2020 sets out clearly its vision of working closely with partners to provide excellent policing services, striving to keep communities safe, preventing people from becoming victims and reducing fear of crime and anti-social behaviour. The force’s core values of fairness and respect underpin this vision and the principles of policing by consent are well reflected in force policies.

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 *Ibid.*

The force has provided comprehensive training on the code of ethics and this is reinforced using a range of methods such as video blogs, computer pop-up messages and ‘what if dilemmas’ covering each part of the code. This continuing communication with the workforce to reinforce standards of behaviour has ensured widespread understanding of the code. The entire workforce is therefore equipped with the knowledge required to treat communities in Staffordshire with fairness and respect.

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

Staffordshire Police is involved in a broad range of engagement activity using a variety of methods and often this is intended specifically to seek feedback and challenge about the extent to which the force treats people with fairness and respect. An ethics, transparency and audit panel (ETAP), formed by the police and crime commissioner (PCC) to improve transparency, reviews force-wide police practices such as the use of Tasers and custody reports. The ETAP’s reports are published on the PCC’s website. Safer neighbourhood panels in each local policing area carry out a similar role, working on behalf of local communities to scrutinise the work of the police and publishing feedback. This includes reviewing recordings of stop and search encounters from body-worn video cameras.

The force uses independent advisory groups (IAGs), also co-ordinated via the office of the police and crime commissioner, to review and challenge practices in high-profile policing operations. Stoke-on-Trent local policing team is in the process of setting up a scrutiny panel from the YMCA to represent the views of young people, and independent custody visitors provide feedback to the force on how it treats people who have been detained.

The force is proactive in its use of social media and publishes commentary about contentious policing issues such as firearms response and policing of sporting events in order to generate on-line public debate. The force’s new website invites public feedback and encourages ‘complaints and compliments’.

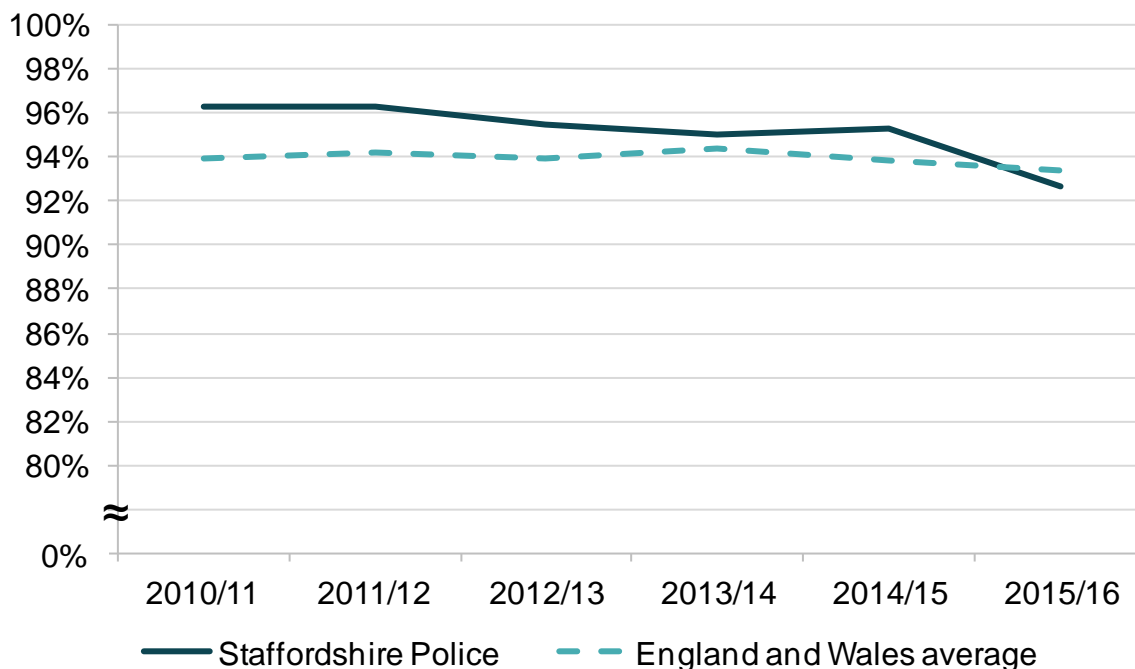
The force understands that a high proportion of its population prefer to access services on-line, but it also recognises the diversity of the communities in Staffordshire and adjusts its engagement approach for groups who are otherwise difficult to reach. The force works with charity Nash Dom to provide 'drop-in sessions' in Stoke for members of Eastern European Communities. The force has set up a hate crime forum for the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community and has a 'my place, my say' initiative to engage with rural communities. The force's new website was designed in consultation with a group of volunteers from diverse backgrounds and the force engages with parents and young people via different forms of social media.

This broad and innovative range of engagement demonstrates clearly how responsive Staffordshire Police is to the make-up of its community. However, many of the force's engagement activities are focused on operational policing issues, such as providing community safety information to the public, rather than proactively seeking feedback and challenge about the way it treats people. The force could make more effective use of its engagement to identify the issues that have the greatest impact on public perceptions. This would be achieved by a more consistent approach to seeking feedback and challenge from the people it serves, specifically about the extent to which the force treats them with fairness and respect.

Identifying and understanding the issues

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 Staffordshire Police 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, 92.7 percent of all victims of crime (excluding hate crime) who responded to the victim satisfaction survey were satisfied with the overall treatment provided by Staffordshire Police, which was broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 93.4 percent; and lower than the 95.3 percent who were satisfied with the overall treatment that the force provided in the 12 months to 31 March 2015, this is a statistically significant difference.

The force obtains a good range of information from its various engagement activities and considers it alongside data from ‘feel the difference’ surveys and victim satisfaction surveys. Overlaying these survey results with other data, including public complaints, enables local commanders to understand geographic and demographic differences in experience and perception. However, we found some of the feedback received across the force is not being analysed systematically.

The force has recently set up a community engagement board, chaired at chief officer level, to co-ordinate its activities. The force would benefit from recording and analysing feedback from all of its numerous engagement activities in a more structured manner. This would enable the force to identify, understand and prioritise those issues that have the greatest impact on public perceptions of fair and respectful treatment.

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

We found several examples of the force acting on feedback to improve the way it treats people. Feedback from the ethics, transparency and audit panel has influenced policy and practice in areas such as stop and search, use of Tasers and mental health interventions. Community feedback has resulted in changes to how hate crime victims are contacted for satisfaction surveys. Challenge from an independent advisory group (IAG) resulted in changes to the way the force uses the media to communicate information about demonstrations and marches. This led to improved earlier media releases via free local newspapers to keep the community better informed.

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 the scheme and found that it did not comply with three features of the scheme. 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 still did not comply with one feature: recording and publishing outcomes. However, we are satisfied that the force has, since our revisit, achieved compliance with all features of the scheme. Details of our revisit can be found on

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

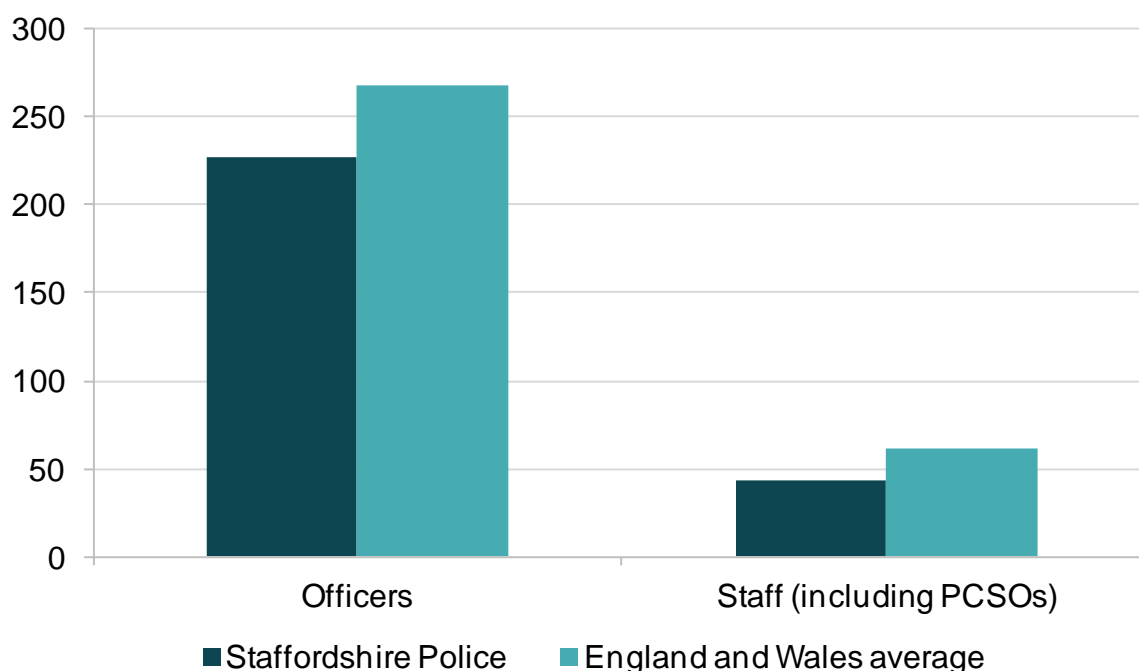
⁸ Best Use of Stop and Search Scheme, Home Office, August 2014 www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/346922/Best_Use_of_Stop_and_Search_Scheme_v3.0_v2.pdf

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

HMIC's website at www.justiceinspectrates.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 Staffordshire Police 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, Staffordshire Police recorded 228 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 force recorded 43 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 Staffordshire Police are 'other neglect or failure in duty', 'other assault' and 'other irregularity in procedure'.¹⁰ It is important to note, however, an

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

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 force analyses trends in complaints and highlights any concerns to senior leadership teams. The force treats complaints data as feedback and analysis of public complaints about use of force has resulted in changes to officer safety training. Feedback received by the force resulted in it adjusting its tactics for policing football crowds. The force also publishes the lessons learnt from public complaints and reports from the Independent Police Complaints Commission to its workforce, to help them improve how they treat the people they serve.

However, we found the process of taking action in response to public feedback would benefit from being more structured and co-ordinated. The force acknowledges that the process of acting on feedback and demonstrating to all the people it serves that improvements have been made is not systematic. The force intends to bring about improvements via the community engagement board.

Demonstrating effectiveness

The force does communicate with the public about some of the actions it has taken in response to community feedback about how it treats people with fairness and respect. It uses a variety of communication methods to demonstrate to the people it serves that improvements have been made including publications of reviews by ETAP and safer neighbourhood panels, social media and community meetings. IAGs receive immediate feedback during their engagement with the force and they can also see changes being made when they perform the IAG role for subsequent police operations. Following a recent force open day a member of the public made a complaint about the parking arrangements disrupting the lives of residents near the force HQ. The force has incorporated his feedback into planning for the next open day and have invited him to become a volunteer member of the planning team.

However we also found examples where feedback could be improved. Evidence of the force assessing how well and widely its messages were being received and understood was limited to monitoring its reach on social media.

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

The force has more work to do to analyse the extent to which its efforts to improve the way it treats people are making a difference. The legitimacy of the force would be further enhanced by providing more consistent feedback about changes it makes to policy and practice, to demonstrate to the communities of Staffordshire that it takes seriously their concerns.

Summary of findings



Good

The force treats the people it serves with fairness and respect and this would be further enhanced through a more structured approach.

Fairness and respect underpin the force's vision of striving to keep communities safe. Force policies reflect the principles of policing by consent. Comprehensive Code of Ethics training has equipped the workforce with the knowledge required to treat the community with fairness and respect.

Staffordshire Police is involved in a broad range of engagement activity. The force is responsive to the make-up of its community and adjusts its approach to engage with groups who are difficult to reach. The force could make more consistent use of its engagement to seek feedback and challenge about the extent to which it treats the people it serves with fairness and respect.

The force would benefit from a more structured approach to analysing feedback received from engagement across the whole force area. This would enable it to prioritise those issues that have the greatest impact on public perceptions, and to understand better whether its efforts to improve how it treats people are making a difference.

Providing more consistent feedback about changes made would demonstrate to the communities of Staffordshire that the force is listening and responding to their concerns.

Area for improvement

- The force should improve how it seeks feedback from the people it serves about their experiences (or perceptions) of how the police have treated them.

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.¹² Given the continued importance of this topic, we are returning in this question to those national recommendations emerging from the 2014 report from that inspection, that 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.¹³

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.

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 the Code of Ethics.¹⁴ 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.

¹² *Integrity matters*, HMIC, January 2015. Available from:
www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/integrity-matters/

¹³ *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

¹⁴ *Promoting ethical behaviour and preventing wrongdoing in organisations*, College of Policing, 2015. Available at:
http://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/150317_Ethical_leadership_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_REPORT.pdf and *Literature review – Police integrity and corruption*, HMIC, January 2015. Available at:
www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/integrity-matters/

Initial vetting

The force has an established vetting strategy and has comprehensive initial vetting arrangements with the aim of only recruiting people with high ethical standards. Initial vetting is applied to new recruits, volunteers and contractors. The force's ability to understand the impact of vetting on people with protected characteristics is developing and it has recently adapted its vetting data recording and has started to analyse and understand rejection rates for black, Asian and minority ethnic candidates. The force's vetting manager takes an active role in advising the force recruitment and engagement campaigns on the practical implications of vetting. The introduction of a fast-track vetting triage process provides relevant and timely feedback to candidates who fail vetting and improves the overall efficiency and legitimacy of the recruitment 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 where it had been determined 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.

Clarifying and reinforcing standards of behaviour

When Staffordshire Police was inspected in 2014, HMIC recommended that the force should ensure that it had a policy informing staff of the gifts and hospitality that are appropriate to accept and why. We recommended that this policy should be communicated to all staff. The force has responded positively to this recommendation and the policy is now well established and is easily accessible on the force's intranet. The force frequently issues reminders of this policy and other aspects of professional standards as part of its wider programme to educate the workforce. In addition to regular performance and standards unit (PSU) newsletters, and video messages from the chief constable, professional standards officers provide input to a range of training events.

Chief officers are aware of the need to be authentic role models for the workforce. This has been reinforced with the recent introduction of members of the workforce sitting as an additional interview panel in the chief officer selection processes. This allows the workforce to contribute to the selection on the basis of their perception of the candidates as authentic leaders. The force publishes all senior officer expenses, any business interests declared by the workforce and gifts and hospitality on its website. This contributes to a culture of openness and transparency.

We found that the Code of Ethics and the required standards of behaviour were well and widely understood by the workforce.

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 – business interests, gifts and hospitality, and public complaints.¹⁵ 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 for targeting prevention activity.

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

The force has an up-to-date strategic threat assessment of corruption and vulnerability which identifies risks to the integrity of the force. The threat assessment is supported by a detailed control strategy to mitigate these risks, including a programme of engagement and awareness with the wider workforce as well as opportunities for prevention and intervention.

When Staffordshire Police was inspected in 2014, HMIC recommended the force should ensure it carried out regular audits of various records including registers of gifts and hospitality, business interests, notifiable associations, expense claims, procurement activity and other records to identify potentially corrupt activity. We found that the force has responded to this recommendation with audits taking place, with the exception of procurement activity which is still being progressed. The force currently has no formal process in place for refused business interest applications to be subject to routine monitoring for compliance. Our previous recommendation therefore remains outstanding, although it is partially completed.

The force uses software to monitor use of its digital systems but has identified some areas where monitoring capabilities need to be enhanced. The force is currently considering an alternative system to provide a more comprehensive monitoring capability.

¹⁵ *Integrity matters*, HMIC, January 2015. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/integrity-matters/

The force's use of vetting 'aftercare' (post-employment vetting) is still developing and not yet a routine part of everyday practice. Although only 54 percent of the current workforce staff have been vetted to the required standards, the force has committed to a two-year plan to ensure the prioritisation of vetting reviews for the remainder of its staff. The force is actively pursuing a risk-based approach to ensuring the integrity of those officers who have not undergone any formal vetting since recruitment, evident by a policy of PNC checks for the entire workforce. This is designed to identify any risk to integrity. Vetting 'health checks' take place for promotions or transfers to high risk roles or following a change in personal circumstances. The force conducts the required annual review of national security clearances and management vetting.

The development of a robust process for ensuring vetting 'aftercare' arrangements including those in the force who have not undergone any vetting since they were originally recruited is an area for improvement for the force.

Intervening early to manage risks to integrity

The force has the necessary processes in place to mitigate a broad range of individual and organisational threats. The force has successfully used 'intelligence-led integrity testing' to investigate and prosecute officers suspected of stealing property. Force policy enables 'with cause' (intelligence-led) drug testing of the workforce to take place and it is used appropriately. In addition, the force has a well-developed programme of random drug-testing based on a sound methodology. The anti-corruption unit (ACU) selects a random sample of officers and police staff per month for testing, a deterrent which sends out a strong preventative message, thereby reinforcing the integrity of the wider workforce.

The performance and standards group (PSG) consisting of senior professional standards officers and human resource (HR) advisors meet monthly and exchange information on specific cases which helps to identify cases for early intervention.

As a further preventative measure, professional standards officers provide input to a variety of training events ranging from new recruit training, first and second line manager training and personal safety training. This is designed to influence the workforce to meet the required standards of professional behaviour and emphasise the importance of the code of ethics. The force publishes a regular PSU newsletter and includes learning from its own cases in training courses to help the workforce understand trends and the various causes of corruption.

Looking for, reporting and assessing intelligence on potential corruption

When HMIC inspected the force in 2014 we recommended the force should ensure that it has the proactive capability to effectively gather, respond and act on information which identifies patterns of unprofessional behaviour and corruption. The ACU has some in-house proactive investigative capability and can also access

surveillance capabilities when needed. Its anti-corruption investigations are supported by three analysts, who routinely receive and analyse information from a wide variety of sources including other law enforcement agencies and partners. The analysts use open source social media and system auditing, including keystroke-monitoring software, to provide proactive investigative support and to develop the intelligence the force receives.

To support this process, the ACU has developed an early intervention matrix to assist in highlighting potential corruption risks. The force cross-references intelligence held on its corruption database with other data. This includes examining previous complaints and conduct matters, business interests and notifiable associations. 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

The force operates a confidential hotline (which is accessible via the intranet) for the workforce to report potential corruption. The hotline is widely known and regularly used. The force provides adequate support to those who report corrupt or improper practice and the College of Policing guidelines on reporting wrongdoing have been incorporated into force procedures.

When Staffordshire Police was inspected in 2014, we recommended that the force should ensure all staff understand the support mechanisms available to those individuals reporting misconduct. The force has responded positively to this recommendation. PSU newsletters include comprehensive content about the support mechanisms available and we found a good awareness among the workforce.

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 Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) published *The abuse of police powers to perpetrate sexual violence*.¹⁶ 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 its consideration of how it should be investigated.

¹⁶ *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*¹⁷ – 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.¹⁸ HMIC’s 2015 report *Integrity matters*¹⁹ 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

Staffordshire Police has dealt with a number of cases of the abuse of authority for sexual gain over the last couple of years, which have included domestic abuse victims. The force recognises this behaviour as serious corruption and the issue is identified as one of the main threats to the force’s integrity within its strategic assessment of corruption. This approach is underpinned by strong messaging from senior officers, including a recent video message from the chief constable. The PSU newsletters identify sexual exploitation of vulnerable people as one of the force’s main corruption threats and provide guidance on the standards required and the consequences if staff engage in such behaviour.

The force treats cases of abuse of authority for sexual gain as a mandatory referral to the IPCC.

¹⁷ 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

¹⁸ 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.

¹⁹ *Integrity matters*, HMIC, January 2015. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/integrity-matters/

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

The force has recently engaged with groups of independent domestic violence advisors, independent sexual violence advisors and health professionals to demonstrate support for victims of this type of behaviour. The force shares its understanding of the problem, including lessons learnt from local cases, and encourages these agencies to report any suspicious behaviour. This proactive approach, which is already generating new intelligence, has been introduced by professional standards officers who have joined the department with recent public protection experience.

Taking action to prevent abuse of authority for sexual gain

The force recognises that this is a growing problem, both locally and nationally. As a preventative measure, in addition to messages from the chief officers, the force has recently communicated with the entire workforce to increase awareness of this behaviour and to provide guidance on the early identification of risk indicators. The ACU has developed a matrix to improve understanding of potential indicators of abuse of authority for sexual gain and to provide a structured investigative response when suspicions are raised.

Building public trust

The force recognises the adverse impact of these types of cases on public trust and confidence. We heard of one example of the force engaging directly with the community to restore trust following a high-profile misconduct investigation. Apologies were offered to the community, and it was acknowledged that the officer had done wrong and that he and the organisation had let the community down. This was communicated via a media release and letters to victims. However this was an exceptional case and the force could use its good community links to do more of this type of activity.

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.²⁰ 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

²⁰ *Literature review – Police integrity and corruption*, HMIC, January 2015. Available at: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/integrity-matters/

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

Staffordshire Police publishes the outcomes of complaint and misconduct cases on its website. Force media releases acknowledge the public's expectation of high standards and seek to reassure the public about how seriously the force treats misconduct.

The force publicises forthcoming police officer misconduct hearings on its website. Generally, unless the chair of the misconduct panel deems it is not appropriate, misconduct hearings are made accessible to the public.

Working with the workforce

When Staffordshire Police was inspected in 2014, we recommended the force should publish to all staff the outcomes of misconduct hearings. This should include sufficient circumstances of the conduct to allow staff to understand the boundaries of unprofessional behaviour and the sanctions it is likely to attract. The force has successfully implemented this recommendation. The force frequently engages with its workforce about the outcomes of misconduct and corruption cases using a range of channels. As well as publishing outcomes on the force intranet, the force distributes sufficient details of complaint and misconduct investigations in PSU newsletters, force-wide emails and the chief constable's video messages. In addition, the force uses case studies in training to demonstrate expected standards and the consequences of not adhering to them. Officers and staff have a very clear understanding of the required standards of behaviour.

Summary of findings



Good

The force ensures that its workforce behaves lawfully and ethically.

Staffordshire Police is effective at identifying threats to integrity and has the necessary processes in place to intervene early. Interventions such as vetting, regular random drug testing, use of an internal confidential reporting system and monitoring of IT systems send out a strong preventative message. The force's use of vetting 'aftercare' is not yet part of routine practice and only 54 percent of the current workforce staff have been vetted to the required standards. Internal communications and a variety of training events, which incorporate the use of lessons learnt from the force's own cases, continue to reinforce the required standards.

In cases of abuse of authority for sexual gain, professional standards officers with public protection experience work with victim advocates to demonstrate support for victims, and to encourage reporting of any suspicious behaviour. The force has developed a structured investigative response when suspicions of this type of activity are raised.

The force publishes complaint and misconduct outcomes for police officers and staff on its website. The force could use its good community links to engage more frequently to restore trust after high profile misconduct cases.

The force frequently engages with its workforce about the outcomes of misconduct and corruption cases, using a range of channels, resulting in a very clear understanding of the required standards of behaviour and the consequences of misconduct.

Area for improvement

- 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.²¹ 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.²² On this basis, HMIC assessed how well the force engages with its workforce to identify and understand the issues that affect them, and how well it acts on these issues and demonstrates it has done so.

Identifying and understanding the issues

The force frequently records a wide range of information and uses a variety of methods to identify the issues which affect its workforce's perceptions of fair and respectful treatment. The force conducted a staff survey in 2014 and is planning to repeat the process again later in 2016. It has conducted consultation exercises as

²¹ *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, Herrington C and Roberts K, AIPM Research Focus, Issue 2, 2013. Available at: www.aipm.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Org-Justice-Final.pdf

²² *Fair cop 2: Organisational justice, behaviour and ethical policing*, College of Policing, 2015, page 11. Available at:

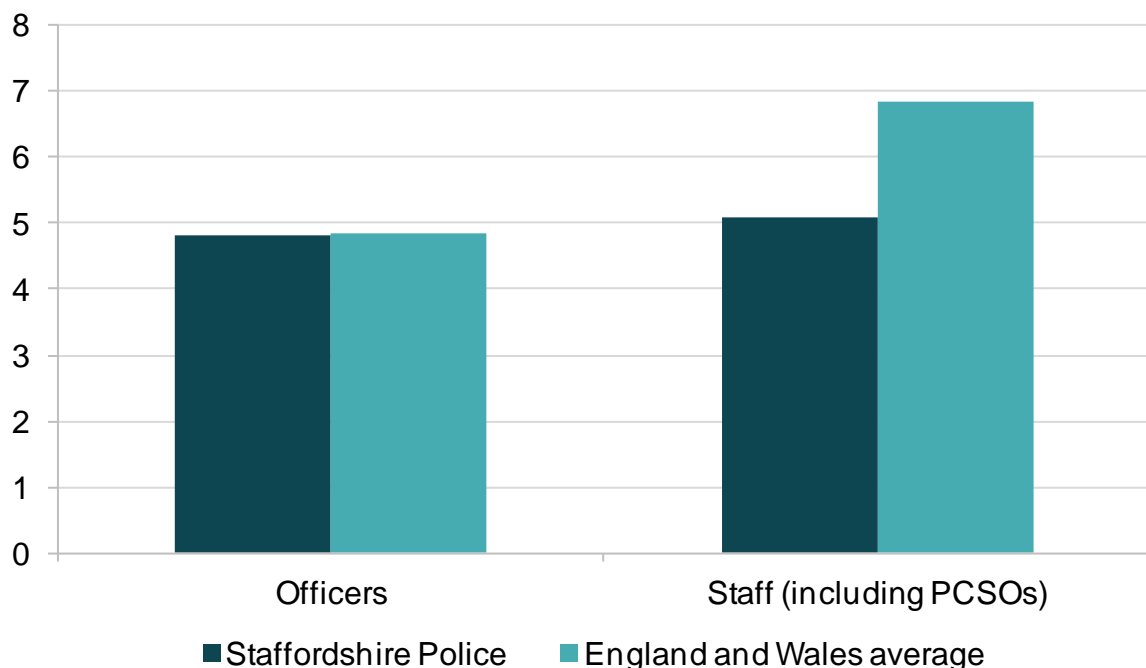
http://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/150317_Fair_cop%202_FINAL_REPORT.pdf
f

part of its transformation programme and a sleep pattern survey as part of its wellbeing work. As well as running ‘Grapevine Live’, an online forum involving a group of chief officers responding to queries and concerns raised by staff, the force conducts bi-monthly checks with local policing teams. These involve the use of focus groups and one-to-one interviews. The force carries out six chief officer road shows across the force area each year to reach as much of the workforce as possible. At these road shows, staff can question the command team on issues that affect them, and the road shows are either filmed or fully transcribed for internal circulation.

The force also has a very productive relationship with staff associations and networks and encourages them to challenge and provide feedback. The force has a well established grievance process incorporated in its fairness at work policy.

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 Staffordshire Police 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, Staffordshire Police finalised 4.8 formal grievances raised by officers per 1,000 officers, which was in line with the England and Wales average of 4.8 per 1,000 officers. During this period, the force finalised 5.1 formal grievances raised by staff per 1,000 staff (including PCSOs), which was broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 6.8 per 1,000 staff (including

PCSOs). However, we found that some members of the workforce lacked confidence in the effectiveness of the grievance process to provide speedy and effective resolutions.

Making improvements and demonstrating effectiveness

The force reviews its data to ensure it has a full understanding of issues and takes effective and timely action to address feedback it receives. The workforce provided examples of the force responding effectively to issues raised such as increased transparency of promotion processes and involvement of frontline officers as observers in meetings between staff associations and chief officers.

The workforce is consistently involved in decision-making. For instance, staff associations were involved in the selection of a new ICT partner and workforce panels interview prospective chief officer appointees. A junior member of the organisation attends the monthly chief officers meeting where they are privy to all discussions and can pose questions. At the end of the meeting this same staff member then interviews the chief constable. Information provided by the force indicates that filming of this process attracts 2,000 views on the force intranet so it is aware that its response reaches a wide internal audience. Some of the force's responses are self evident to the workforce and others are communicated via email or through briefings to staff associations. The workforce acknowledges that senior officers have developed a culture of consistently listening and acting to improve perceptions of fair and respectful treatment.

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 force has a clear focus on wellbeing that is credible and respected by the workforce. The force engages in numerous wellbeing initiatives and we heard from the workforce that this is perceived to be as a direct result of the force executive listening to and acting upon the concerns of the wider workforce.

We found supervisors across the force had a comprehensive understanding of their wellbeing responsibilities and are well supported. A single occupational health team (that also serves Staffordshire Fire and Rescue) provides a comprehensive multi-

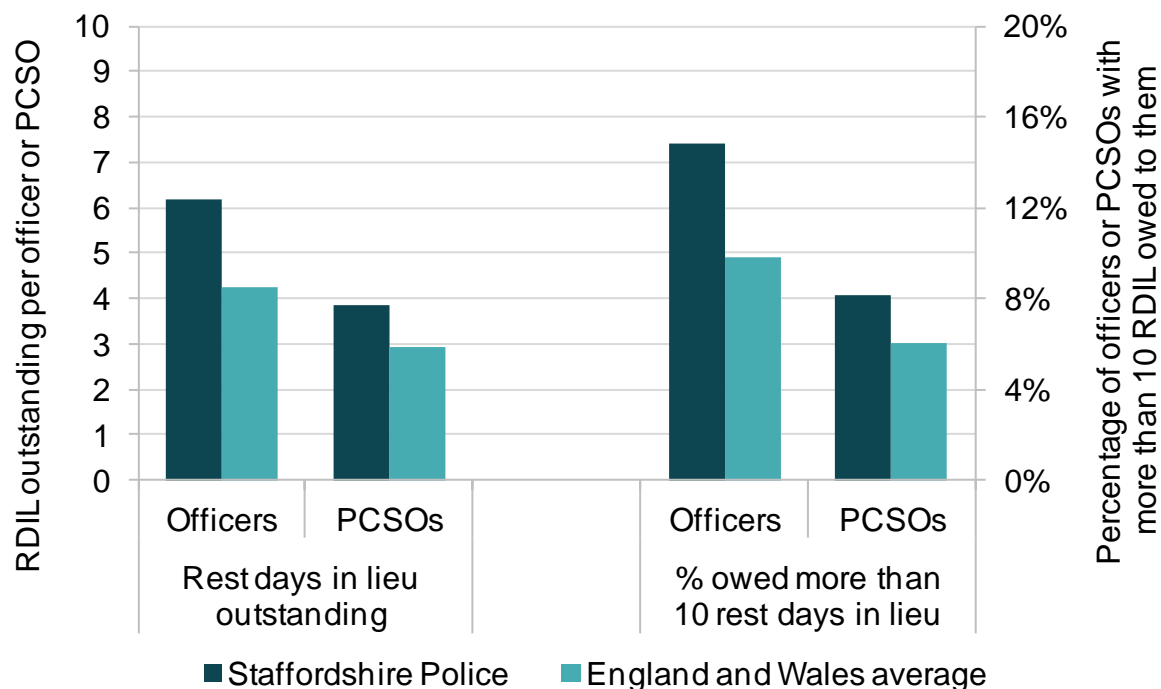
layered wellbeing approach. Numerous innovative initiatives that address both physical and mental wellbeing needs are co-ordinated and supported by a wellbeing steering group. These include organised lifestyle improving events such as 'stride into spring', a wellbeing bus touring the force and a sleep pattern initiative. The executive team support the wellbeing initiatives through their personal leadership and endorsement.

Identifying and understanding the workforce's wellbeing needs

The force takes a proactive approach to understanding the wellbeing needs of the workforce. Results from the survey conducted in 2014 with Durham University provided a comprehensive understanding of wellbeing in Staffordshire Police and continues to inform activity. The force is planning to conduct a similar survey later in 2016. The force has also conducted a survey of individual work-life balance and sleep patterns which led directly to an initiative related to sleep deprivation called 'Are you getting enough'?

Rest days in lieu (RDIL) 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. 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 useful tools for forces to identify and understand potential wellbeing concerns for individuals and teams.

Figure 4: 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 Staffordshire Police compared with England and Wales, as at 31 March 2016



Source: HMIC Legitimacy data collection

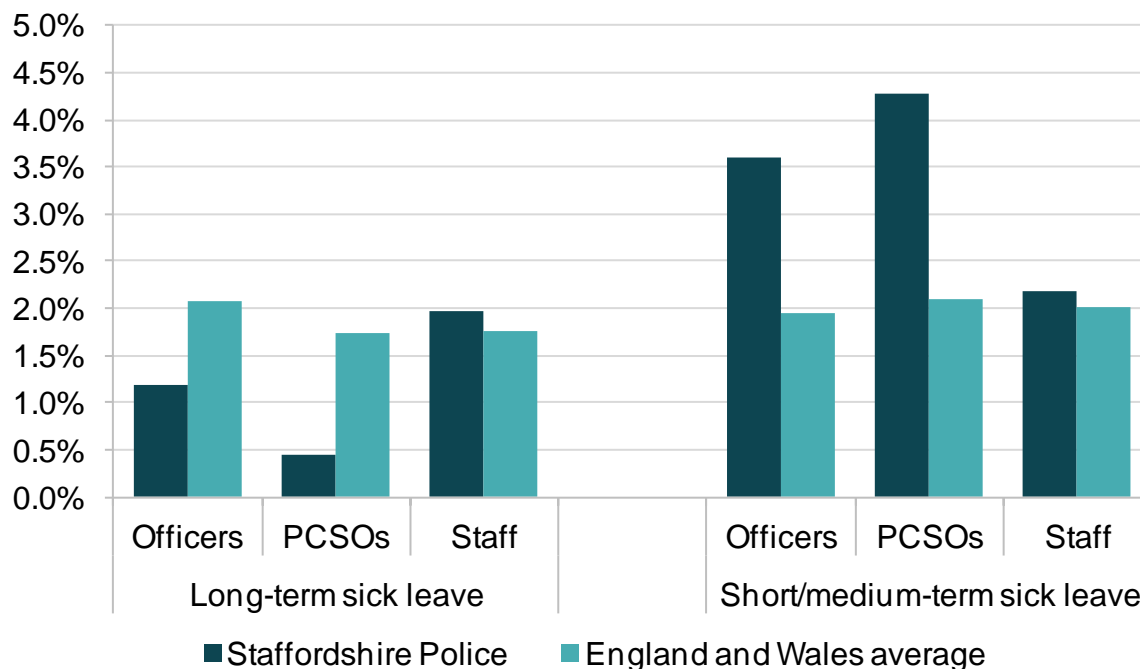
Note: For some police forces data about the number of rest days in lieu outstanding are estimated from data on hours owed. For further information about the data in figure 4 please see annex A.

As at 31 March 2016, there were 6.2 rest days in lieu outstanding per officer in Staffordshire Police, which was higher than the England and Wales average of 4.2 days per officer. On the same date, there were 3.9 rest days in lieu outstanding per PCSO in the force, which was broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 2.9 days per PCSO. As at 31 March 2016, 14.8 percent of officers in Staffordshire Police 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. As at 31 March 2016, 8.2 percent of PCSOs in the force had more than 10 rest days in lieu owed to them, the England and Wales average was 6.0 percent of PCSOs. The data on PCSOs did not allow a comparison with the average.

However, the force does not solely rely upon survey data. The occupational health unit (OHU) analyses qualitative feedback from individuals including visits to police stations and psychological testing for higher-risk roles. The force also considers data sources such as reported sickness rates and increases in OHU referrals.

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.

Figure 5: Percentage of officers, police community support officers and staff on long-term and short/medium-term sick leave in Staffordshire Police 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 5 please see annex A.

Figure 5 provides data on the proportion of officers, PCSOs and staff who were absent due to sickness on 31 March 2016.

- 1.2 percent of officers were on long-term sick leave, which is lower than the England and Wales average of 2.1 percent.
- 3.6 percent of officers were on short or medium-term sick leave, which is higher than the England and Wales average of 2.0 percent.
- 0.5 percent of PCSOs were on long-term sick leave, which is lower than the England and Wales average of 1.7 percent.
- 4.3 percent of PCSOs were on short or medium-term sick leave, which is higher than the England and Wales average of 2.1 percent.
- 2.0 percent of staff were on long-term sick leave, which is broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 1.7 percent.
- 2.2 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.

Taking preventative and early action to improve workforce wellbeing

The force has trained 485 of its first and second-line managers in wellbeing. We found supervisors were well equipped to recognise individual warning signs. The OHU assess that the increasing number of 'same day' OHU referrals is testament to the increased levels of awareness among the workforce.

The force has a number of initiatives, many of which are innovative, which together provide a comprehensive suite of health and wellbeing interventions. The force's wellbeing bus visited 13 different stations in 2015 and conducted health checks on large numbers of the workforce. This added to the force's understanding of the health and wellbeing issues affecting the workforce and provided individuals with vital health information.

The force also takes into account wider evidence of wellbeing issues such as the increased risk of mental health problems for members of the emergency services. This has enabled the force to tailor its wellbeing programme to focus on identified need, such as the development of a 50-strong mental health peer support network and proactive support provided to teams attending repeated traumatic incidents. The force is a signatory to the blue light pledge.²³ In addition to these preventative measures aimed at mental health issues, the force also has a range of measures to improve wider health issues. These include weight and blood pressure monitoring facilities across the force, organised lifestyle improving events such as 'stride into spring' and seminars on issues such as breast cancer and testicular cancer.

The force monitors sickness rates and other data including qualitative feedback from the workforce, in order to evaluate the effectiveness of its wellbeing initiatives. The force has also submitted a portfolio of evidence to gain Workforce Wellbeing Charter accreditation. The accrediting body told HMIC that the force's self assessment against the existing standards was above and beyond what they have seen previously. The body was particularly impressed with some of the force's creative activities such as the work to raise awareness and acceptance of the problem of mental health and the provision of wellbeing zones throughout the force. The force has since been advised that it will be awarded Workforce Wellbeing Charter accreditation at the level of 'excellence in all areas' and is the first police force in England and Wales to achieve this formal recognition. HMIC commends Staffordshire Police for this achievement which reflects the force's very strong commitment to workforce wellbeing.

²³ The mental health charity MIND is running a Blue Light Programme to provide mental health support for emergency services staff and volunteers from police, search and rescue, fire and ambulance services across England. For more information see: www.mind.org.uk/campaigns/bluelight

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.²⁴ 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.²⁵

The performance assessment process

In 2015, some officers stated that they had not had a formal appraisal for a number of years. At that point, the force had only just launched the 'i-matter' performance review system, incorporating formal meetings between line manager and staff, during which performance and welfare issues are discussed. The use of 'i-matter' is now increasing, however the force estimates that only half of the workforce have completed a performance review. The force acknowledges that governance, particularly to ensure fairness, is limited. This is an area for improvement.

The results of performance assessment

The force has adequate arrangements in place to manage performance, such as the 'i-matter' process, but they are not being used consistently. HMIC found examples of the workforce engaging positively with the 'i-matter' process and using it effectively to support professional development and address underperformance. However a large proportion of the workforce has not had a performance review and HMIC found some members of the workforce who did not recognise its value.

Staffordshire Police needs to improve its governance and scrutiny arrangements to ensure the 'i-matter' performance review process becomes firmly embedded and is used consistently and fairly across the force.

²⁴ *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

²⁵ 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

Summary of findings



Good

The force frequently uses a range of effective methods to identify the areas which affect its workforce's perceptions of fair and respectful treatment. The force undertakes effective and timely action in response to issues raised, such as the need for increased transparency of promotion processes.

The workforce is consistently involved in decision-making, for instance staff associations were involved in choosing an ICT partner. However some members of the workforce lack confidence in the effectiveness of the force's grievance process to provide speedy and effective resolutions.

Staffordshire Police has a clear and authentic focus on wellbeing. The force has a wide range of wellbeing initiatives. Its approach could be further enhanced with more frequent and regular evaluation of their success. The force has been advised that it will be awarded Wellbeing Charter accreditation and the force believes it is the first in England and Wales to achieve this formal recognition.

A substantial number of the workforce have not completed a performance review and the force needs to develop its governance and scrutiny arrangements to ensure the 'i-matter' performance review process becomes an everyday part of force practice and is used consistently and fairly across the force to promote development and improvement²⁶.

Area for improvement

- The force should improve how it manages individual performance.

²⁶ The force estimates that only half of the workforce have completed a performance review.

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.²⁷

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.

²⁷ 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: 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 4 were provided to HMIC by individual forces via a bespoke data collection in April 2016 prior to inspection.

Figure 5: 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 5 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