

PEEL: Police effectiveness 2015

An inspection of South Yorkshire Police



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

Overall judgment¹



Requires improvement

South Yorkshire Police requires improvement at keeping people safe and reducing crime. The force works well to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour and to keep most people safe. However, in some aspects of protecting vulnerable people from harm and supporting victims, it could do better. Similarly, how it investigates crime and manages offenders, could improve. It is good at tackling serious and organised crime, and understands its capability to address national threats. This is the first year HMIC has graded forces on their overall effectiveness so comparison of their year-on-year effectiveness is not possible.

Summary

HMIC judges that overall South Yorkshire Police requires improvement at keeping people safe and reducing crime.

The force engages well with communities and uses the full range of available legal powers to tackle organised crime groups and associated low-level crime, and anti-social behaviour. It works effectively with partners to prevent crime and to tackle anti-social behaviour. The force is making effective use of technology so that officers make best use of their time in those areas with a high concentration of anti-social behaviour and crime.

However, the force needs to improve the way it investigates crime. The responses to reports of crime are delayed sometimes and this, together with a lack of capacity in the major crime team, affects adversely the quality of investigation. While the main lines of enquiry are usually identified and pursued, few investigation plans, little or no evidence of supervision, and limited victim contact are recorded on the crime management system. In contrast, the force has good working arrangements with partner organisations to manage offenders and to divert people away from the criminal justice system.

South Yorkshire Police requires improvement in the way it protects vulnerable people and supports victims.² Child sexual exploitation and missing persons are a

¹ Outstanding, Good, Requires improvement or Inadequate – see Annex A for definitions.

² *PEEL: Police effectiveness 2015 (Vulnerability) – South Yorkshire Police*, HMIC, December 2015. Available from: www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmic/publications/police-effectiveness-vulnerability-2015-south-yorkshire/

priority for the force, and it has good systems in place to respond to repeat and vulnerable victims, children who go missing, and child sexual exploitation. However, the force needs to improve how it identifies and addresses risks to domestic abuse victims and their children.

The force responds well to the threat from serious and organised crime and has effective arrangements in place to meet its national policing responsibilities.

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



Good

South Yorkshire Police works effectively with partners to prevent crime and tackle anti-social behaviour. Strong relationships between police and partners are in place in each of the four metropolitan borough councils. At an operational level, there is effective two-way sharing of information to manage prolific and dangerous offenders, solve local problems and prevent crime.

As part of its response to financial pressures, the force is merging safer neighbourhood and response teams to form local policing teams. It has retained dedicated neighbourhood inspectors, police community support officers and introduced an anti-social behaviour team to keep people safe. Working together, these teams have demonstrated that they are able to engage with communities and use the full range of powers including gang injunctions and public space orders to tackle organised crime groups and associated low-level crime and anti-social behaviour. It is too early to say if this is sustainable and

How effective is the force at investigating crime and managing offenders?



Requires improvement

South Yorkshire Police investigates crime inconsistently. The force has good working arrangements with partners to manage offenders and divert people from the criminal justice system. The number of subjects suspected of violent and sexual offences within the offender management system is increasing, reflecting force priorities.

The force keeps people safe and starts a timely investigation where an ongoing risk of harm to the public is identified. If patrols are not available, or an offence recorded by the crime bureau is not allocated for investigation promptly, the quality of the investigation and the confidence of victims are affected adversely.

Once allocated for investigation, the main lines of enquiry, including digital evidence gathering, are usually identified and pursued, and victim satisfaction rates remain above the national average. However, there are few investigation plans, little or no evidence of supervision, and limited victim contact recorded on the crime management system. More

some local policing team staff have reported that their workload and shift patterns are such that meaningful community engagement has become difficult.

The force is making effective use of technology to enable officers to patrol, park their vehicles and complete paperwork as a visible deterrent in areas with a high concentration of anti-social behaviour and crime, in accordance with good practice.

detailed considerations are held on paper in the force crime unit, rather than on computer. At the time of our inspection in September 2015, the previously recognised quality of this team's investigations had been undermined by an unusually high workload and an inability to flex the available detective resource.

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



Requires improvement

South Yorkshire Police identifies vulnerable people effectively. It has good systems in place to respond to children who go missing. It is ensuring that it is well prepared to tackle child sexual exploitation. However the force needs to improve its response to domestic abuse victims with more consistent and thorough ways of working. The force is continuing to address the concerns identified in HMIC's crime inspection and domestic abuse reports 2014. Given the risk that is posed to some of the most vulnerable people overall, the force requires improvement.

The force identifies repeat and vulnerable victims well, but its initial

How effective is the force at tackling serious and organised crime, including its arrangements for fulfilling its national policing responsibilities?



Good

South Yorkshire Police has a good understanding of the threat posed by serious and organised crime. An effective threat assessment process is in place, which draws on information from both police and partner organisations. The force is working well with partners. It has created a local profile for serious and organised crime, which includes information on troubled families and prison data. This provides a platform for joint working to disrupt and dismantle organised crime groups. The force is now working with partners to develop district level local profiles to support activity against lower threat crime groups.

The force responds well to the threat

response to incidents, specifically the identification of opportunities to gather evidence and its use of scheduled appointments needs to improve. The force generally investigates offences well, particularly those requiring more specialist skills, but it should improve the computer records of investigation plans, decision-making and contact with victims.

The force's response to missing and absent children is good. It is clear, structured and well-supervised. The force works well with partners and has good relationships with the four local authorities.

As a result of strong leadership, the force is now well prepared to respond to child sexual exploitation locally and is leading the national policing response through Evolve3 and Operation Makesafe.⁴

In contrast, the force's response to domestic abuse is not consistently good. The inconsistent approach to assessing risk means the force cannot be sure it is taking adequate steps to safeguard victims and their children.

from serious and organised crime. It has a clear governance structure, experienced and capable staff working in its intelligence and organised crime investigation units, and support from officers at district level to disrupt and dismantle organised crime groups.

South Yorkshire Police has reviewed, and is taking steps to improve, its capability to respond to the six national threats, particularly cyber-crime.

This is the first year HMIC has graded forces on their effectiveness at tackling serious and organised crime, including a force's arrangements for ensuring that it can fulfil its national policing responsibilities, so no year-on-year comparison is possible.

³ Evolve is a multi-agency and voluntary sector project in Rotherham established to provide early and intensive support to children at risk of sexual exploitation.

⁴ Makesafe is a partnership between police and the service sector, which ensures their employees are able to spot the signs of child sexual exploitation and notify South Yorkshire Police where they identify children at risk.

Force in numbers



Calls for assistance

Calls for assistance per 1,000 population 12 months to 31 March 2015

South Yorkshire Police

335

England and Wales

350



Crime

Crimes recorded (excluding fraud) per 1,000 population 12 months to 30 June 2015

South Yorkshire Police

69.7

England and Wales

63.0

Crimes recorded (excluding fraud) per 1,000 population 12 months to 30 June 2014

South Yorkshire Police

67.9

England and Wales

60.3

Changes in recorded crime (excluding fraud) 12 months to 30 June 2014 against 12 months to 30 June 2015

South Yorkshire Police

+2.5%

England and Wales

+4.5%

Changes in recorded crime (excluding fraud) 12 months to 30 June 2010 against 12 months to 30 June 2015

South Yorkshire Police

-12.1%

England and Wales

-12.6%



Charge rate

Charge rate as a percentage of all crimes recorded (excluding fraud) 12 months to 30 June 2015

South Yorkshire Police

16.2%

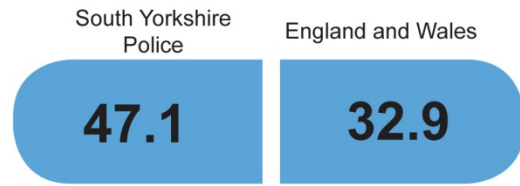
England and Wales

16.0%

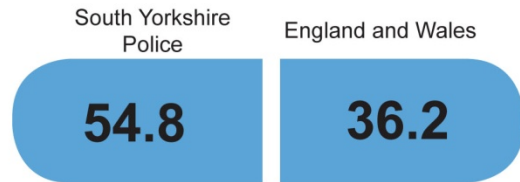


Anti-social behaviour

Anti-social behaviour incidents per 1,000 population 12 months to 30 June 2015



Anti-social behaviour incidents per 1,000 population 12 months to 30 June 2014

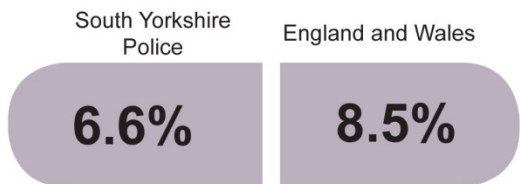


Domestic abuse

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



Domestic abuse as a percentage of all recorded crime (excluding fraud) 12 months to 31 March 2014



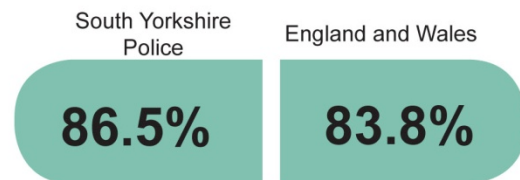
Organised crime groups

Organised crime groups per million population as at 30 June 2015



Victim satisfaction rate

Victim satisfaction rate 12 months to 31 March 2015



Introduction

The public expects their local police force to:

- Prevent crime and anti-social behaviour and, when crime occurs, to investigate it properly and provide support to victims.
- Use appropriately trained officers and staff and approved practice when investigating crime, gathering evidence and building cases to ensure offenders are brought to justice.
- Support victims of crime by responding to calls for service, identifying and putting in place the right help at the first point of contact, keeping them informed and consulting them about the possible outcomes of their case.
- Ensure that vulnerable people who might not have been a victim of crime are identified and given appropriate support, for example people at risk of domestic abuse, children at risk of sexual exploitation and missing or absent children.
- Understand and be prepared to respond to threats beyond their own force boundaries, including national threats such as terrorism, serious and organised crime and cyber-crime.
- Work effectively with local partner organisations and other bodies to prevent all types of crime and re-offending and to protect the public.

HMIC's annual inspections into police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy (PEEL) consider whether forces keep people safe and reduce crime (how effective a force is), whether these activities are being carried out at the most appropriate cost (how efficient a force is), and how forces are ensuring they have the confidence of their communities (the public legitimacy of a force).

All forces are subject to significant cost reductions; this is reflected in our efficiency reports published in October 2015. The judgments we are making in this effectiveness report are made understanding the financial challenges forces are facing. Reports on South Yorkshire Police efficiency and legitimacy inspections are available from the HMIC website (www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/).

HMIC's effectiveness inspections make an assessment of how well forces are preventing and investigating crime and anti-social behaviour; tackling serious and organised crime; and protecting victims and those who are vulnerable. These are the most important responsibilities for a police force, and are the principal measures by which the public will judge the performance of their force and policing as a whole.

Our effectiveness inspection focused on the overall question: "How effective is the force at keeping people safe and reducing crime?"

To answer this question we looked at four in-depth questions, three of which are discussed in more detail within this report:⁵

1. How effective is the force at preventing crime and anti-social behaviour, and keeping people safe?
2. How effective is the force at investigating crime and managing offenders?
3. How effective is the force at protecting from harm those who are vulnerable, and supporting victims?
4. How effective is the force at tackling serious and organised crime, including its arrangements for fulfilling its national policing responsibilities?

During our inspection, we collected data from forces, reviewed case files and surveyed the public to seek their views on the effectiveness of the force. We also surveyed and interviewed representatives from partner organisations to gather evidence about the effectiveness of their working relationships with the force. We interviewed chief constables and chief officers and held focus groups of officers and staff at all grades and ranks. We also made numerous unannounced visits to police stations to talk to frontline officers and staff about their work. This report sets out the findings from this wide-ranging inspection of South Yorkshire Police.

⁵ HMIC inspected forces on questions 1, 2 and 4 between September and November 2015. Question 3 was inspected between June and August 2015, and a separate report was published in December 2015 (available from: www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmic/publications/police-effectiveness-vulnerability-2015-south-yorkshire/). In 2014, in preparation for the PEEL programme, forces were inspected to assess how effective they are at cutting crime (available from: www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmic/publications/crime-inspection-force-reports/).

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

The police's ability to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour and to keep people safe is a principal measure of its effectiveness. Crime prevention can be cheaper and more effective than investigating crime, and it makes society a safer place. The police cannot prevent crime on their own; other statutory and non-statutory bodies have a vital role to play. Police effectiveness in this matter is therefore dependent on their ability to work closely with other partner organisations to understand local problems and have access to a wide range of evidence-based interventions to resolve them.

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

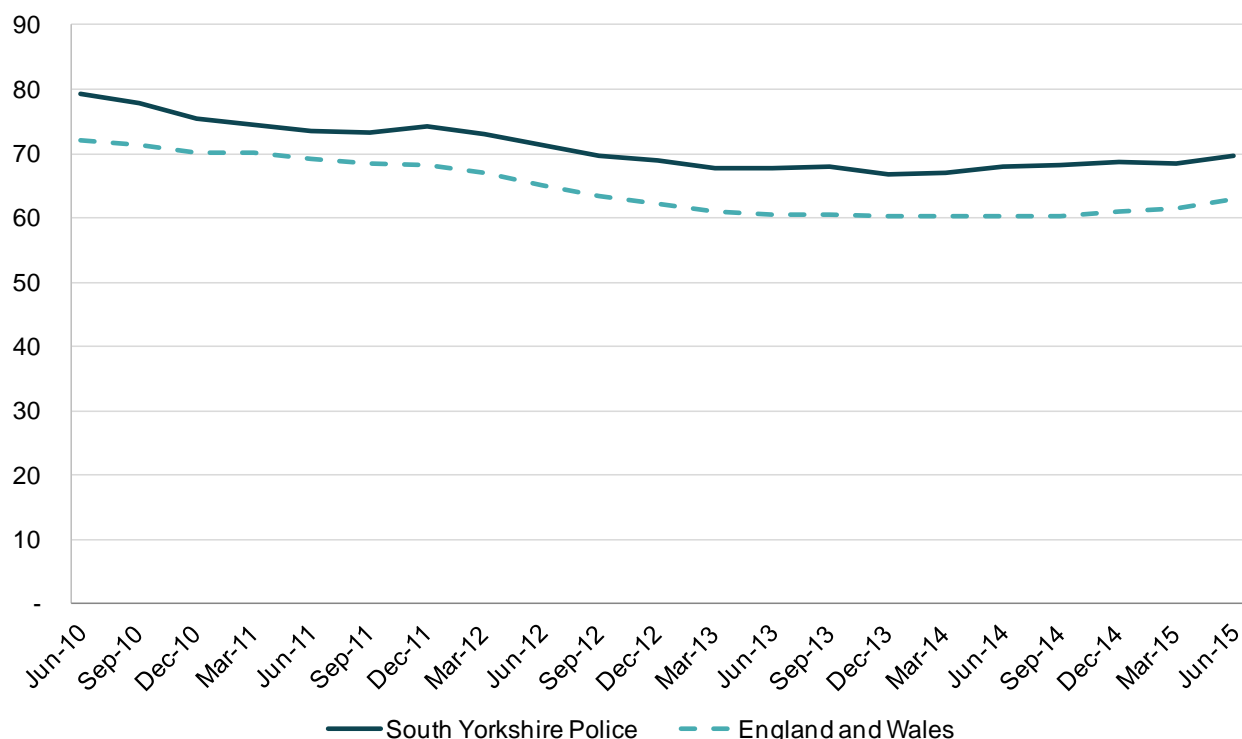
Although police recorded crime is by no means a complete measure of the totality of demand for calls on its service that a force faces, it does provide a comparable indication of performance across all forces. Crime rates are reported as a number of crimes per 1,000 population in each force area to enable comparison between areas. Total recorded crime is made up of victim-based crime (e.g. theft) and non victim-based crime (e.g. possession of drugs). More than two-thirds of forces showed an annual increase in total police recorded crime (excluding fraud) in the 12 months to 30 June 2015. This increase in police recorded crime may have been affected by the renewed focus on the quality and compliance of crime recording since HMIC's national inspection of crime data in 2014.

In 2010 the Home Secretary set a clear priority for the police service to cut crime. When compared with the 12 months to 30 June 2010, police recorded crime (excluding fraud) for the 12 months to 30 June 2015 fell by 12 percent in South Yorkshire compared with a reduction of 13 percent across all forces in England and Wales.

Over this same period, victim-based crime (i.e. crimes where there is a direct victim such as an individual, a group, or an organisation) decreased by 11 percent in South Yorkshire, compared with a reduction of 12 percent across England and Wales.

When compared with the previous year, police recorded crime (excluding fraud) in South Yorkshire increased by 3 percent for the 12 months to 30 June 2015. This is compared with an increase of 4 percent across England and Wales over the same period.

Figure 1: Police recorded crime rates (per 1,000 population) for the five year period to 30 June 2015



Source: Home Office data

The volume of police recorded crimes and incidents of anti-social behaviour per head of population indicates how safe it is for the public in that police area.

Figure 2 shows crime and anti-social behaviour rates in South Yorkshire (per 1,000 population) compared with England and Wales.

Figure 2: Police recorded crime rates (per 1,000 population) for the 12 months to 30 June 2015

Rates per 1,000 population	South Yorkshire Police	England and Wales
Recorded crime (excluding fraud)	69.7	63.0
Victim-based crime	63.8	56.0
Sexual offences	2.0	1.6
Assault with injury	6.6	6.3
Burglary in a dwelling*	11.8	8.4
Anti-social behaviour incidents*	47.1	32.9

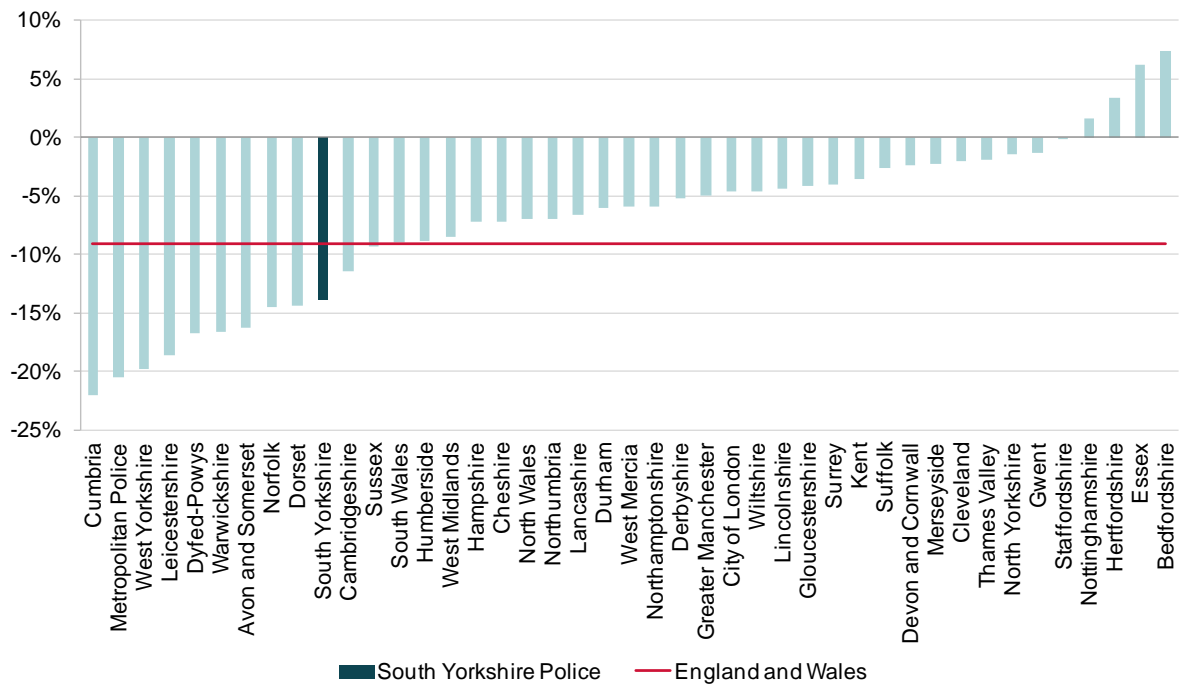
Source: Home Office data, HMIC data return

*Anti-social behaviour data is from the force's data return and the rate for burglary in a dwelling is the rate per 1,000 households, not population.

HMIC has chosen these types of crime to indicate offending levels in the force area. We are not judging the effectiveness of the force on police recorded crime rates only.

In the 12 months to 30 June 2015, South Yorkshire Police recorded 64,387 incidents of anti-social behaviour. This is 14 percent fewer incidents than the force recorded during the previous 12 months. When considering all forces across England and Wales, there were 9 percent fewer incidents in the 12 months to 30 June 2015, than recorded during the previous 12 months.

Figure 3: Percentage change in the volume of anti-social behaviour incidents, by force, comparing the 12 months to 30 June 2015 with the 12 months to 30 June 2014



Source: HMIC data collection

The force has not carried out a specific evaluation of why the reported anti-social behaviour figures have fallen so substantially. The force attributes the reduction to the combined effects of an increase in visibility due to the provision of specially adapted laptops, which allow officers to remain on the streets for longer, and the greater targeting of available patrol time in areas with a higher concentration of anti-social behaviour and crime.

The force is working with Sheffield Hallam University to understand better the relationship between the perceptions and reports of anti-social behaviour. And, as a result, how the force might improve its operational activity and communications.

How well does the force work to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour, and keep people safe?

How well is the force prioritising the prevention of crime and anti-social behaviour?

The force has a clear focus on the prevention of crime and anti-social behaviour. It is working towards three priorities under the banner 'Putting Safety First': protecting vulnerable people; tackling crime and anti-social behaviour; and enabling fair

treatment, which are well understood by officers and staff throughout the force. These priorities have been set through a process of public consultation and the force – together with the police and crime commissioner – has taken care to ensure that they reflect the views and needs of all its communities fairly.

The force has a consistent approach to preventing crime and anti-social behaviour, demonstrated through its strategic intelligence assessment, crime prevention strategy and anti-social behaviour strategy. The force supports operational activity to keep people safe by training staff in crime prevention techniques and its focus on threat, risk and harm in its call handling and daily management meetings. We have seen many examples of officers and staff working with the local authority and other partners to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour using the powers available in the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.⁶ All the staff we spoke to recognise the importance of early intervention to stop the increase of anti-social behaviour and maintain community cohesion.

Crime prevention is also central to the force's performance management meetings. These include discussions about offender management, hotspot policing, and qualitative analysis to identify and focus on those people or groups doing the most harm and the communities at the highest risk.

The force uses evidence-based tactics to reduce crime. The force identifies hotspot areas for crime and anti-social behaviour, it sets patrol plans and has equipped officers with modified laptops, which they can use while parked to make the most of the visibility of officers as a deterrent. The approach was reviewed in conjunction with Sheffield Hallam University and the force has increased its focus on resourcing preventative activity in dense residential areas, a change the force believes has contributed to recent reductions in domestic burglary.

⁶ Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. Available from: www.gov.uk/government/collections/anti-social-behaviour-crime-and-police-bill

How well are resources allocated to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour?

The force is committed to keeping a visible and accessible neighbourhood resource to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour.

The force is maintaining the proportion of its officers working on the front line, but overall police officer numbers are falling and the force expects this to continue. It is part way through a change in its operating model to take account of an anticipated change in staffing levels. It is creating local policing teams, merging teams with responsibility for responding to calls from the public with those officers who focus on problem-solving in neighbourhoods. The force expects that these larger teams will provide the resilience necessary to meet fluctuating demands in calls for service, prisoner handling and neighbourhood engagement responsibilities.

The force has also retained a limited resource dedicated to neighbourhood engagement and local problem-solving. Each safer neighbourhood area has a neighbourhood inspector, supported by a team of local police community support officers (PCSOs). At district level there is a team of anti-social behaviour officers and a sergeant dedicated to working with partners to manage offenders.

In both models, police officers who work in neighbourhoods or on local policing teams report that they are sometimes taken away from or unable to fulfil neighbourhood engagement responsibilities. This is because of the demands from calls for service from the public, prisoner handling and crime investigation. Police community support officers in both models are focused on local engagement and problem-solving.

It is too early to assess whether the new model will succeed in maintaining a high level of community engagement and local problem-solving. With fewer resources, the force recognises that its teams will have to work together to address local problems, particularly those where the public are at risk of harm.

How well is the force using a broad range of effective tactics to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour?

The force uses a broad range of tactics to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour. These include, for example, accredited crime prevention officers; CCTV; social media updates and campaigns; disruptive tactics; and restorative interventions, to tackle offending behaviour, reduce opportunities for crime, and improve victim satisfaction.

The force has improved the understanding of most staff around problem-solving methodologies, and there is evidence of supervisory oversight, in line with the recommendation we made in HMIC's crime inspection in 2014. In addition to using SARA⁷ and the national decision model (NDM),⁸ the force has also been training

⁷ SARA is an acronym for scanning, analysis, response, and assess. The process is aimed at identifying legal and ethical solutions to policing problems such as anti-social behaviour.

officers with a bespoke problem-solving course. The process aims to focus on those activities that will reduce the demand on the force. The force reports a number of practical suggestions from people who have taken part in the course which have had success operationally. One example was a problem with the anti-social use of quad bikes in an area of Sheffield. A course participant suggested the properly authorised use of long-range cameras to capture detailed photographs of the rider and bikes. The photographic evidence has meant that riders were identified and prosecuted, and quad bikes have been seized, which has reduced local reports of anti-social behaviour and associated demand on the force.

The force could do more still to evaluate the tactics it has used and share the best practice that it has identified internally and with partners. 'What works' is discussed at the force performance meetings and links to best practice can be found in the force's anti-social behaviour and criminal damage strategy, but at an operational level the good practice database has only just been introduced; it is not yet well stocked or well known among the officers and staff. The force has good links with local universities and the College of Policing and recognises there is an opportunity to work together to develop and share innovative practice.

How well does the force work with partners to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour, and keep people safe?

How committed is the force to working with partner organisations?

At a strategic level, the force understands it is most effective when working with partner organisations, to prevent crime and tackle anti-social behaviour, and the force invests significant time and energy in doing so. The assistant chief constable for local policing sits on the county-wide community safety partnership chaired by the police and crime commissioner.

Strong relationships between police and partners are in place in each of the four metropolitan borough councils. Partnership structures differ but joint working is evident from the co-location of local authority staff and police officers, local authority funding for PCSOs and the analytical support provided by partners to assist in preventing local crime and anti-social behaviour.

Staff recognise the importance of solving problems at the lowest level through mediation or single agency intervention. They appreciate the facility to refer complex problems upwards to meetings involving budget holders. This is for when finding solutions is difficult, or threat, harm and risk requires a quicker response.

⁸ The NDM is specific to policing. It provides a consistent framework in which decisions can be examined and challenged, both at the time and afterwards. It is composed of six main elements: the police code of ethics being central to the decision; gather information; assess threat and risk; consider powers and force policy; identify options; and, take action and review what happened.

This investment of time and resource in working with partner organisations, with their additional skills, powers and resources, means the force and partners are working together to keep people safe in their everyday lives, and solve problems as and when they occur.

How well does the force share and use information with partners to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour?

The force shares information well with partners at a strategic and operational level to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour. It has developed a force-level serious and organised crime profile, which it has shared with partners, district-level organised crime group profiles and joint strategic intelligence assessments. The analysis is used to support joint activities. In Sheffield, for example, this information is used to prioritise partnership resources to deal with crime and anti-social behaviour hotspots.

The quality of the information in these documents could be enhanced by greater use of partnership data. The force recognises this and points to technical difficulties in incorporating information from partners that should be resolved through the new information technology infrastructure.

At an operational level, there is effective two-way sharing of information to manage prolific and dangerous offenders, solve local problems and prevent crime. The force is aware of the difficulties of recording and using partnership intelligence on police systems where the origin and reliability of information is not clear. Steps are being taken locally to improve the quality of intelligence from partners.

How well is the force working with partner organisations to keep people safe and tackle anti-social behaviour in local neighbourhoods?

The force works well with partner organisations to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour and keep people safe using effective problem-solving. Good examples of this work include the 'magistrates in the community service' (MCS). Together with the force, this provides educational courses for children which aim to provide life skills for young people (14 years plus) involving the street safe initiative and other life skills such as alcohol advice, internet safety, and stranger danger. The scheme is well-established and the force is seen as a constructive and vital partner by the MCS.

Similarly, the force is working in partnership at a local level with schools. Neighbourhood officers provide support to the Green Pathway initiative which provides a ten-week educational support course to re-integrate children with high levels of truancy back in to full-time education.

Also notable is the health provision within custody, providing support for vulnerable people and diverting them from the criminal justice system and the force's work with South Yorkshire Rehabilitation Service. They reported excellent joint working and information sharing with South Yorkshire Police. Staff are co-located across the force and work to joint strategies and information-sharing protocols to prevent re-offending.

The force makes use of a range of powers to keep people safe in public places, prevent crime and tackle repeat and escalating anti-social behaviour. As part of a joint strategy, the police and partners are using acceptable behaviour contracts, dispersal orders, and a public space order to reduce anti-social behaviour and improve community cohesion in Hexthorpe.

The force also works well with partner organisations to promote resolutions that protect communities and victims, once crime and anti-social behaviour has occurred.

South Yorkshire Police reported 3,335 such outcomes in the 12 months to 30 June 2015, which is at a higher rate than the average for forces in England and Wales. Community remedy is strongly supported by the police and crime commissioner.⁹ Police officers have the discretion to resolve low-level criminal offences where the offence type and the person's offending history are suitable, and taking into account the views of the victim.¹⁰

⁹ The Community Remedy was introduced by the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. It is designed to give victims of crime a say in how offenders are dealt with out-of-court for certain types of low-level crime and anti-social behaviour. It is a list of actions – or "remedies" – which have been agreed by the police and crime commissioner and the chief constable. Both the victim and the offender need to be in agreement about the remedy to be used. Its use will also be dependent on the offender admitting their guilt – and it can also be used in conjunction with a more formal out-of-court disposal, such as a conditional caution.

¹⁰ A community resolution is an alternative to formal criminal prosecution. It is a way of dealing with less serious crimes, allowing officers to use their professional judgment when dealing with offenders. It can be used for offences such as low-level public order, criminal damage, theft, and minor assaults. Community resolution will enable victims to have quick resolutions and closure to their crime; offenders will receive speedy justice.

Summary of findings



Good

South Yorkshire Police works effectively with partners to prevent crime and tackle anti-social behaviour. Strong relationships between police and partners are in place in each of the four metropolitan borough councils. At an operational level, there is effective two-way sharing of information to manage prolific and dangerous offenders, solve local problems and prevent crime.

As part of its response to financial pressures, the force is merging safer neighbourhood and response teams to form local policing teams. It has retained dedicated neighbourhood inspectors, police community support officers and introduced an anti-social behaviour team to keep people safe. Working together, these teams have demonstrated that they are able to engage with communities and use the full range of powers including gang injunctions and public space orders to tackle organised crime groups and associated low-level crime and anti-social behaviour. It is too early to say if this is sustainable and some local policing team staff have reported that their workload and shift patterns are such that meaningful community engagement has become difficult.

The force is making effective use of technology to enable officers to patrol, park their vehicles and complete paperwork as a visible deterrent in areas with a high concentration of anti-social behaviour and crime, in accordance with good practice.

Areas for improvement

- The force should use evidence of 'what works' drawn from other forces, academics and partners to continually improve its approach to the prevention of crime and anti-social behaviour. There needs to be routine evaluation of tactics and sharing of effective practice.

How effective is the force at investigating crime and managing offenders?

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

HMIC referred to national standards and best practice in examining how well the force allocates and investigates both complex and non-complex (e.g. burglary, robbery and assault) crime. This included the full range of ways police officers and staff can gather evidence to support investigations (these include the more traditional forensics, such as taking fingerprints, as well as digital sweeps to find evidence of online abuse, for instance).

We also looked at how well the force works with partners to identify vulnerable offenders and prevent them from re-offending, and how well it identifies and manages repeat, and dangerous and sexual offenders.

How well does the force bring offenders to justice?

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

Given the work involved in amending police force crime-recording systems to accommodate fully the new outcomes framework, two forces have not yet been able to provide a full year of data for all new outcomes types. South Yorkshire Police, however, has been providing the Home Office with full data since July 2014. The complete range of new outcome types will be used in future HMIC inspections, once all forces have provided a full year of data. Figure 4 shows only those outcome types for which full data is available for all forces in England and Wales.

Figure 4: Outcomes recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2015 for all police recorded crime (excluding fraud)^{11 12 13}

Outcome type/group	South Yorkshire Police Number of outcomes	Rate	England and Wales Number of outcomes	Rate
Charged/Summoned	15,371	16.2	577,678	16.0
Taken into consideration	926	1.0	21,318	0.6
Out-of-court (formal)	3,299	3.5	165,384	4.6
Caution - youths	962	1.0	19,703	0.5
Caution - adults	1,489	1.6	115,000	3.2
Penalty Notices for Disorder	848	0.9	30,681	0.8
Out-of-court (informal)	3,895	4.1	159,915	4.4
Cannabis/Khat warning	560	0.6	41,964	1.2
Community resolution	3,335	3.5	117,951	3.3

Source: Home Office crime outcomes data

Outcomes are likely to differ from force to force for a number of reasons. Certain offences are more likely to be concluded without offenders being prosecuted; typically including types of crime such as cannabis misuse. If this type of crime is particularly prevalent in a force then it is likely that the level of 'cannabis/khat'¹⁴ warning' outcomes would be greater.

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

¹¹ Rate based on number of outcomes recorded in 12 months to 30 June 2015 divided by number of offences recorded in 12 months to 30 June 2015.

¹² For a full commentary and explanation of outcome types please see *Crime Outcomes in England and Wales 2014/15*, Home Office, London, July 2015. Available from www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/445753/hosb0115.pdf

¹³ Community resolutions are an out-of-court disposal the police can use to deal with anti-social behaviour and low-level crime. 'Taken into consideration' is when an offender admits the commission of other offences in the course of sentencing proceedings and requests those other offences to be taken into consideration.

¹⁴ A plant native to Africa and the Arabian Peninsula, the leaves of which are frequently chewed as a stimulant; the possession and supply of khat became a criminal offence in England and Wales in 2014.

How well does the force investigate crime and keep victims safe and informed?

How well does the force initially investigate and allocate cases?

It is important that when the police are called to an incident they respond in a timely manner, with officers or staff who are trained and competent to keep people safe, and who can take steps to apprehend offenders and investigate the circumstances if a crime has occurred. An effective initial response by the police increases the likelihood of a successful outcome for both the victim and the criminal justice system. Subsequent investigation by detectives and other specialist police staff also needs to be well managed and resourced.

The timeliness and quality of the initial response to a report of crime in South Yorkshire is inconsistent. The application of the NDM to grade calls, which required an immediate, or priority attendance was, on the whole, good. In these cases, where the communications staff recognised an ongoing risk of harm to the public, the force kept people safe and started a timely investigation.

In cases where the call takers do not identify immediate threat, risk, harm or opportunities to secure evidence, but the information suggests a crime has been committed, incidents are referred to the crime bureau. Some incidents referred to the crime bureau actually need an immediate or priority response to secure evidence or make an arrest. Crime bureau staff then have to arrange for the attendance of a patrol through the communications department or at the district level. This is inefficient and sometimes ineffective; the delay has meant that initial investigative opportunities, along with the confidence of some callers, have been lost.

Where immediate action is not required, crimes are recorded and allocated to the crime queues of inspectors within the force crime unit, or districts. The quality of the initial investigative response to these incidents is not consistently good.

The policy states, and crime bureau staff expect, that inspectors and their appointed supervisors regularly check these unallocated crime queues. However, crimes, including priority crimes such as burglary, are being allocated to officers up to three days after the offence is reported. Crime scene investigation may have taken place, but public dissatisfaction results from the length of delay before the caller can speak to an investigating officer; the officer's time is then spent re-building relationships with the victim.

In the main, the crimes are allocated to officers with the correct levels of skill and experience. However, non-specialist staff investigate a small number of less serious offences against high-risk domestic violence victims. The imminent introduction of safeguarding adult teams is aimed to address this concern.

How well does the force investigate different types of crime?

The force is not investigating crime consistently well. While investigators are able to identify, and make progress with, investigative opportunities, further improvements

are needed in supervision and how the officers record their investigation plans. Shortfalls in capacity mean that the quality and timeliness of serious crime investigations have deteriorated.

The force has three tiers of investigative responsibility. Local crime is investigated by response and neighbourhood officers,¹⁵ 'volume' crimes (the most frequent and less complex types of crimes like burglary, robbery and assault) are investigated by the priority crime team, and specialist crime, such as serious assault, kidnap, serious sexual offences and offences against vulnerable people, is investigated by the force crime unit and public protection unit respectively.

We are pleased to see that the force has made some progress in relation to the recommendations we made in HMIC's crime inspection in 2014. There has been an improvement in the computer records of supervisory involvement in crimes investigated by response and local policing team officers. We saw a greater number of investigation plans and in the main, investigative opportunities are identified and followed up in a timely manner.

The priority crime teams are staffed by accredited detectives and trainee investigators. Once allocated, officers identify and make progress with investigative opportunities in a timely fashion. Officers tend to record outstanding actions on the crime management system, but there is little evidence of investigation planning or supervisory activity.

In recent HMIC inspections and our latest file review, we considered the investigations into serious crime carried out by the force crime unit to be of good quality. This inspection (in September 2015) coincided with a period of high demand for the force crime unit: five new homicide investigations were started at the time of our inspection. Some force crime unit officers have been extracted from their duties to staff the murder investigations, with no capacity to re-allocate their existing crimes, and new crimes are being allocated to the reduced number of staff who remain in the office. The officers we spoke to and crime reports that we examined demonstrated that the officers are not able to pursue investigative opportunities consistently in a timely way. Officers are becoming frustrated and we are concerned that evidential opportunities can be lost along with the confidence of victims and witnesses.

The force has tried to lessen the effects of this unusual demand by using a number of detectives from priority crime teams, and purchasing the services of agency staff. The force is also looking urgently at how it may structure its detective resource better in order to flex and meet this demand in the short term. It is looking to collaborate with neighbouring forces in the longer term to increase resilience. How the force structures and deploys its detective resources to respond to spikes in demand is important for the effective investigation of crime.

¹⁵ In districts which have moved to the new policing model, local crimes are investigated by local policing team officers.

In this context, high quality investigation plans and good supervision are more important to ensure enquiries are prioritised and evidence is not lost. This remains an area where the force should look to improve, particularly when its new computer systems are introduced.

Similarly, effective investigation requires that suspects, once identified, should be managed through the investigation and criminal justice processes. The force has a large number of suspects who have yet to be arrested, failed to answer police bail and failed to attend court. A lack of clarity in management information means the force is not clear about what proportion of the apparent outstanding offenders is genuinely wanted. Neither is it clear about the risks that they may pose to the community. Outstanding suspects are monitored at district level and those wanted for offences that are more serious are prioritised, but the number of wanted persons remains stubbornly high. The cumulative effect of this is that victims and witnesses in these offences are waiting for resolution and a number of the outstanding suspects will continue to commit offences.

The force is investing in its officers to increase its detective capacity. There is good support to officers to apply for the ICIDP¹⁶ training course and prepare for the national examination. There is more work to be done to ensure that the trainees, particularly in the priority crime teams, are given tutors and the opportunity to gather evidence of the investigation of more serious offences, which they require to complete their accreditation.

Forensic services, including initial attendance and crime scene investigation, are provided through a collaborated service across the three Yorkshire forces and Humberside Police. We found that the arrangements in place were working effectively and provided sufficient capability and capacity in this specialist area.

How well does the force gather digital evidence?

Increasingly, crime in England and Wales is committed online and through the use of digital devices such as tablets, computers or mobile phones. All forces have to retrieve data from these devices and examine them for evidence; staff, in what may be known as high tech crime units (HTCUs), carry out these examinations.

South Yorkshire Police recognises the increasing demand placed upon it from digital evidence gathering. The force is investing £1.5 million in training and equipment to support local digital evidence recovery and screening.

¹⁶ ICIDP is the initial crime investigators development programme.

In serious crime investigations, the force is using digital evidence management strategies to limit submissions into the HTCUC to those devices that are most likely to contain evidence.

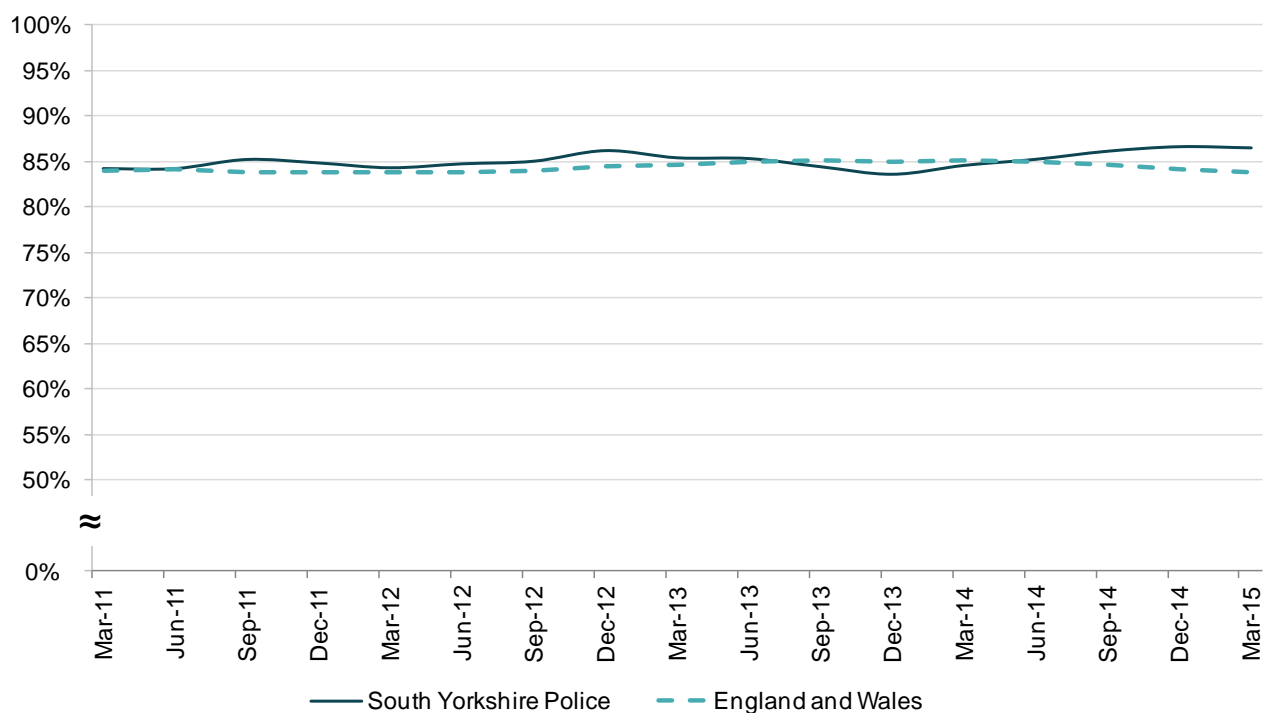
The HTCUC has reduced a backlog in the examination of mobile telephones and computers. The waiting time is now a month. However, many staff still believe this to be in excess of six months (which it had been previously).

We are concerned that messages from the HTCUC have led staff to feel it is appropriate for them to examine the content of digital devices they have seized to see if it is worth submitting to the HTCUC. This examination by officers is being done without the proper measures to secure and preserve the integrity of the exhibit. The force recognises the urgency in correcting this approach before it becomes engrained among staff.

How satisfied are victims of crime with the service provided by the force?

Of those who have been the victim of a crime in South Yorkshire in the 12 months to 31 March 2015, 86.5 percent were satisfied with their whole experience with the police. This is higher than the national victim satisfaction rate of 83.8 percent over the same time period. The victim satisfaction rate in South Yorkshire for the 12 months to 31 March 2015 is broadly in line with the previous year's rate, while it is significantly higher than the rate for the 12 months to 31 March 2011.

Figure 5: Percentage of victims satisfied with the overall service provided by the police, for the four year period to 31 March 2015



Source: Home Office data provided by forces

In HMIC's crime inspection in 2014, we found that officers were not providing updates to victims of crime routinely within the timeframes agreed or by appropriate

means. We recommended that the force implement an action plan to improve the quality of victim service and contact.

The force is now monitoring compliance with the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime¹⁷ and it is a subject of monthly performance meetings within districts but failures remain stubbornly high. Officers understand the principles of the code, and are often maintaining positive engagement with victims, but in our review of case files,¹⁸ we found evidence that the records of victim contact are often incomplete.

The force recognises that it needs to do more work to ensure that it has proper records of a prompt and effective service to victims.

How well does the force identify and manage offenders to prevent re-offending?

How well does the force divert offenders away from crime?

South Yorkshire Police has good ways of working in place to identify vulnerable offenders and divert them from the criminal justice system. It also uses community resolution for minor offences to ensure that people do not enter the criminal justice system and receive a criminal record where this is not appropriate.

The force works well in partnership with other organisations in custody offices. Mental health and substance misuse staff work to divert detainees, in appropriate cases, from the criminal justice system or refer offenders to appropriate treatment and support centres. Officers, particularly those based in neighbourhoods, have a good level of general awareness about those support services to which they can refer persons in need of help to prevent offending.

Each district produces a joint strategic intelligence assessment (JSIA) to assist in commissioning services and planning partnership activity to reduce crime and keep people safe. The JSIAs focus on cross-cutting themes including drugs and mental health. Each assessment examines the trends in new entrants to alcohol and drug treatment programmes and successful completion rates. The assessments also examine services for the diversion of young people from criminality and mental health provision.

¹⁷ *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime*, Ministry of Justice, October 2015. Available from: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/254459/code-of-practice-victims-of-crime.pdf

¹⁸ HMIC reviewed a sample of rape, burglary, offences of serious violence and actual bodily harm cases. In most forces the review consisted of 10 cases from each crime category but in some larger forces the sample was increased to 15. The file review was designed to provide a broad overview of the identification of vulnerability and the effectiveness of the investigation.

The force is changing who it includes in the integrated offender management (IOM)¹⁹ group to reflect its priorities better. This has meant that, as part of its strategy to prevent child sexual exploitation, there is an increasing proportion of suspected perpetrators with limited conviction history. Staff are using IOM plans, including sexual harm prevention orders,²⁰ to safeguard potential victims and divert potential offenders away from crime.

The force has also started to work with the 'Stronger Families'²¹ teams in local authorities to identify the overlap between managed offenders and troubled families. In time, this will support more effective and efficient joint working and help to ensure that siblings of offenders do not enter the criminal justice system.

How well does the force deal with repeat offenders?

South Yorkshire Police deals with repeat offenders effectively. The force has dedicated offender management resources centrally and on each district. They work well with partners to select offenders for management, in developing joint action plans and agreeing enforcement activity or in deciding when offenders are no longer deemed a risk. Staff we spoke to throughout the organisation recognised the importance of effective offender management to the prevention of crime.

In HMIC's crime inspection in 2014, we recognised that the force had strong integrated offender management ways of working which were contributing to a fall in re-offending rates. The force continues to build upon this good foundation. The offender group, or cohort, has been reviewed and is being refreshed, by police and partners, to reflect the priority to keep people safe. The force identified that a substantial number of its serious acquisitive crime offenders were also involved in domestic violence and have adapted management plans accordingly. At the same time, they are increasing the proportion of managed offenders whose primary offending behaviour is violence in the home and in public spaces.

Information sharing between police IOM managers, and staff in the national offender management service (NOMS), drug and alcohol intervention programme and immigration service is good. Information is shared during regular conferences and to notify the force of breaches of licence conditions or probation orders as they happen. The force responds quickly to notifications, securing early arrests and circulating information through the force briefing system.

¹⁹ IOM brings a multi-agency response to the crime and re-offending threats faced by local communities. The most persistent and problematic offenders are identified and managed jointly by partner agencies working together.

²⁰ Sexual harm prevention orders can be applied to anyone convicted or cautioned for a sexual or violent offence. They can place a range of restrictions on individuals depending on the nature of the case, such as limiting their internet use, preventing them from being alone with a child under 16, or preventing travel abroad.

²¹ South Yorkshire's Stronger Families programme is part of the government's extended Troubled Families programme to work with up to 400,000 families across England over five years.

In HMIC's crime inspection in 2014, we were concerned that some neighbourhood officers did not value the contribution that IOM could contribute to crime reduction. In 2015, we found a greater level of understanding of IOM as a preventive activity. We observed plans to tackle anti-social behaviour that included offender management activity and the offender management sergeant in early discussion with colleagues to include gang members within the IOM cohort following non-custodial sentences or release from prison.

We also recommended that the force communicate to staff their role in integrated offender management. Similarly, the force has made good progress. Officers are being assigned tasks in relation to managed offenders. We also saw evidence of closer working between staff on districts and offender management sergeants to identify violent offenders and child sexual exploitation perpetrators as possible members of the IOM cohorts. Offender management is also included as part of plans to address persistent anti-social behaviour, in places such as Hexthorpe.

How well does the force deal with sexual and other dangerous offenders?

The force has effective ways of identifying sex offenders, but the high individual caseloads mean that consistent monitoring is difficult. The force is working with probation to restructure the arrangements for managing dangerous offenders. This has resulted in a recent increase in the number of subjects managed at multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPAs)²² level 2 process,²³ reflecting the force's commitment to 'put safety first'.

As of 1 July 2015, the force had a large number of registered sex offenders and each officer was managing 70 cases. The size and complexity of the individual caseload can place a strain on the ability of staff to manage risk effectively. The force does re-assess risk to ensure it is prioritising its resource and this is evident from the higher proportion of medium and low-risk subjects when compared with its most similar forces.

South Yorkshire Police is using innovative approaches to the management of risk presented by sexual and other dangerous offenders. The force is piloting the use of polygraph tests ('lie detectors') to assist the officers to understand who among the subjects poses a continuing risk to the public. The force has secured the recall of one sex offender, because of the risk he posed to the public, identified following the results of a polygraph test.

²² MAPPAs are in place to ensure the successful management of violent and sexual offenders. Agencies involved include as responsible bodies the police, probation trusts and prison service. Other agencies may become involved, for example the Youth Justice Board will be responsible for the care of young offenders.

²³ Level Two: Often called local inter-risk agency management (cases with a high or very high risk of harm to others). MAPPAs meetings take place to develop a co-ordinated plan between the police, the probation service and other agencies.

Multi-agency public protection panel arrangements (MAPPAs) in the force are in transition. The restructure of offender management services has meant that information sharing among partner agencies has not been as effective. The force gave an example of a dangerous offender who was released from prison, and went on to commit a serious offence. The individual was not the subject of MAPPA consideration or notified to the force separately.

A temporary structure is now in place with senior probation managers aligned to each district. The central MAPPA team – which is co-located with the ViSOR²⁴ unit – is reviewing notification and screening methods to ensure that the right people are the subject of MAPPA and relevant release details or evidence of breaches are properly shared between NOMS and the police force. There is some evidence that this multi-agency working is improving public protection. The force has increased the number of MAPPA subjects at level 2 from 12 as at 1 July 2015, to 43, at the time of our inspection, September 2015.

Summary of findings



Requires improvement

South Yorkshire Police investigates crime inconsistently. The force has good working arrangements with partners to manage offenders and divert people from the criminal justice system. The number of subjects suspected of violent and sexual offences within the offender management system is increasing, reflecting force priorities.

The force keeps people safe and starts a timely investigation where an ongoing risk of harm to the public is identified. If patrols are not available, or an offence recorded by the crime bureau is not allocated for investigation promptly, the quality of the investigation and the confidence of victims are affected adversely.

Once allocated for investigation, the main lines of enquiry, including digital evidence gathering, are usually identified and pursued, and victim satisfaction rates remain above the national average. However, there are few investigation plans, little or no evidence of supervision, and limited victim contact recorded on the crime management system. More detailed considerations are held on paper in the force crime unit, rather than on computer.

²⁴ Violent and Sex Offender Register (ViSOR) is a database of records of those required to register with the police under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, those jailed for more than 12 months for violent offences and those thought to be at risk of offending.

At the time of our inspection in September 2015, the previously recognised quality of this team's investigations had been undermined by an unusually high workload and an inability to flex the available detective resource.

Areas for improvement

- The force should ensure that it responds with appropriate promptness to reports of crime.
- The force should ensure that all crimes are allocated promptly to investigators with the appropriate skills, accreditation and support to investigate them to a good standard.
- The force should ensure that all investigations are completed to a consistently good standard, and in a timely manner.
- The force should ensure that there is regular and active supervision of investigations to check quality and progress.
- The force should ensure that those who are circulated as wanted on the police national computer and named suspects identified through forensic evidence are swiftly arrested.

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

This question was inspected between June and August 2015, and the full report was published in December 2015.²⁵ The following is a summary of the findings.

Summary of findings



Requires improvement

South Yorkshire Police identifies vulnerable people effectively. It has good systems in place to respond to children who go missing and children who are vulnerable to sexual exploitation. However, the force needs to improve its response to domestic abuse victims with more consistent and thorough processes. HMIC's crime inspection report in 2014 identified that the force needed to strengthen its quality of victim service and contact and the process of assessing vulnerability at first point of contact. The force is continuing to address these concerns. Given the risk that is posed to some of the most vulnerable people overall, the force requires improvement.

The chief officer team has made the protection of vulnerable people a clear priority for the force, and police officers and staff understand and share this commitment. To translate this priority into practice, the force has invested in the parts of its organisation which support vulnerable people.

The force effectively identifies repeat and vulnerable victims and responds to them well. It also investigates well serious crimes committed against those victims who are most vulnerable, with generally the right level of expertise involved in the right complexity of investigation. The force plans to introduce adult safeguarding teams in September 2015. This is to ensure that victims involved in cases which are for less serious offences, but who are themselves high-risk domestic abuse and vulnerable victims, receive the right level of specialist investigation and victim care.

The force needs to improve its response to domestic abuse victims. Officers do not complete the risk assessment form consistently or to a high standard. In addition, there is scope to improve the quality of investigations through improvements to victim care and better planned investigations.

South Yorkshire has a clear, structured and well-supervised process for responding to reports that children are missing or absent, particularly where intelligence suggests that they might be at risk of child sexual exploitation.

²⁵ *PEEL: Police effectiveness 2015 (Vulnerability)* – South Yorkshire Police, HMIC, December 2015. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/police-effectiveness-vulnerability-2015-south-yorkshire/

The force ensures that it is very well prepared to tackle child sexual exploitation with its statutory, non-statutory and private sector partners. In terms of child sexual exploitation, this inspection only considered how well prepared the force is.

In July 2015, the force was also subject to a re-inspection in respect of its handling of child abuse. The more detailed findings from that inspection²⁶ should be read in conjunction with this inspection report.

²⁶ *National Child Protection Inspection Post Inspection Review – South Yorkshire Police*, HMIC, July 2015. Available at: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/south-yorkshire-national-child-protection-inspection-post-inspection-review/

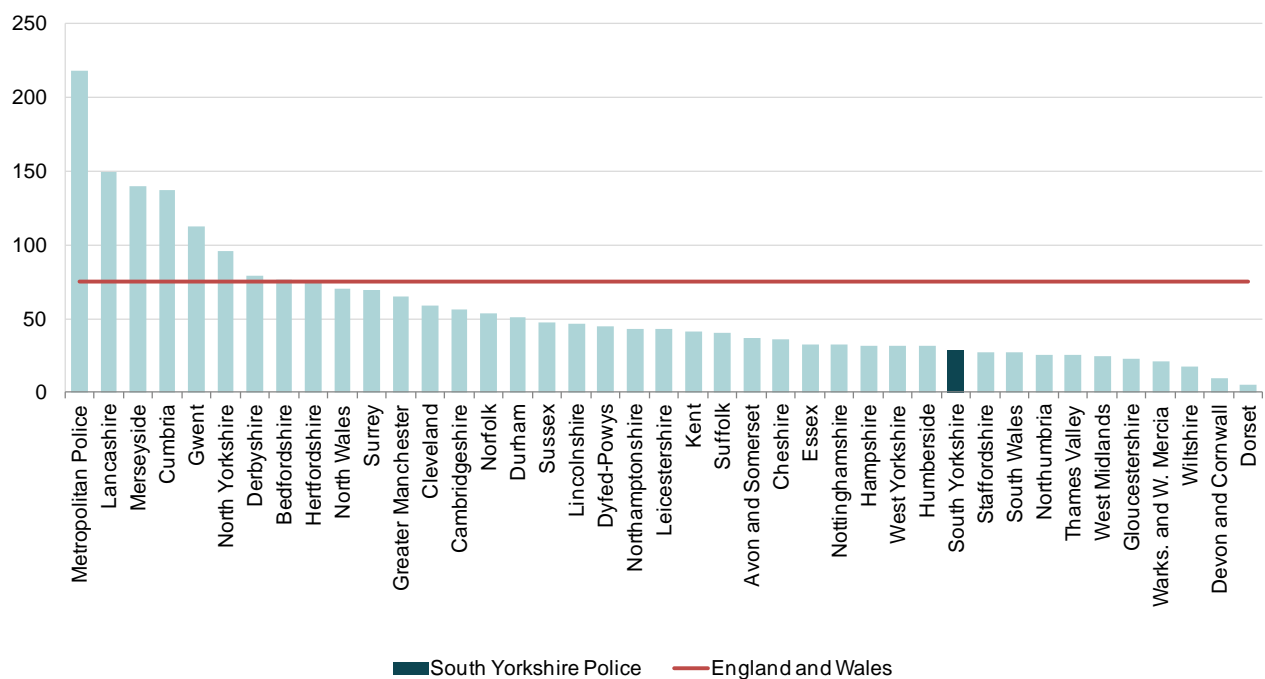
How effective is the force at tackling serious and organised crime, including its arrangements for fulfilling its national policing responsibilities?

Serious and organised crime poses a threat to the public across the whole of the UK and beyond. Individuals, communities and businesses feel its damaging effects. Police forces play a critical role in tackling serious and organised crime alongside regional organised crime units (ROCU), the National Crime Agency (NCA) and other partner organisations.

Police forces that are effective tackle serious and organised crime not just by prosecuting offenders, but by disrupting and preventing organised criminality at a local level. They also use specialist capabilities (for example surveillance and undercover policing) where appropriate in order to protect the public from highly sophisticated and rapidly changing organised criminal threats. A number of forces within a regional area often share specialist capabilities as this provides better value for money and is a more efficient way of working.

As at 30 June 2015, South Yorkshire Police was actively disrupting, investigating or monitoring 39 organised crime groups (OCGs). This represents 29 OCGs per one million of the population.

Figure 6: Organised crime groups per one million population, by force, as at 30 June 2015^{27 28}



Source: HMIC data collection

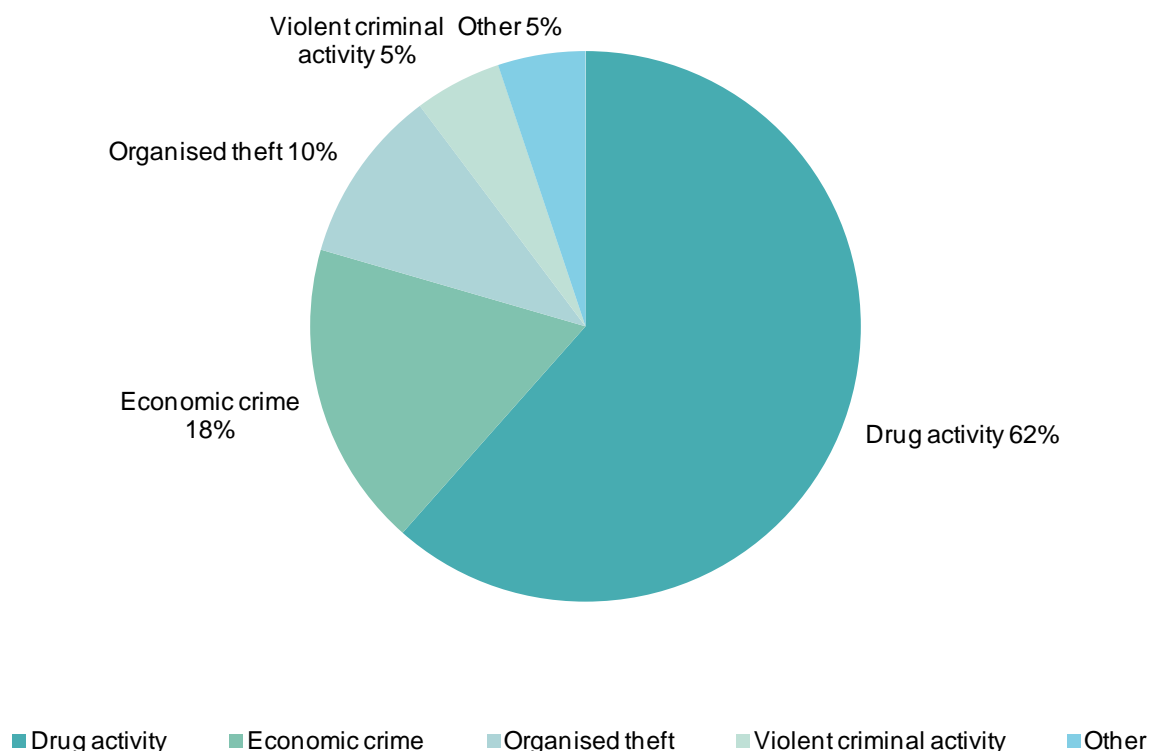
Forces categorise OCGs by the predominant form of criminal activity in which the group is involved. Although OCGs are likely to be involved in multiple forms of criminality, this indicates their most common characteristic. 'Drug activity' was the predominant crime type (62 percent) of the OCGs managed by South Yorkshire Police as at 30 June 2015. 'Drug activity' was also the most common predominant crime type recorded by all forces in England and Wales,²⁹ with 64 percent of all OCGs classified in this way.

²⁷ City of London Police data has been removed from the chart as its OCG data is not comparable with other forces due to size and its wider national remit.

²⁸ The number of OCGs in the Warwickshire Police and West Mercia Police force areas is a combined total of OCGs for the two force areas. The OCGs per one million population rate is based upon their areas' combined population figures.

²⁹ The Metropolitan Police Service is not included in the England and Wales figure because it does not categorise in the same way as other forces; by the predominant form of criminal activity.

Figure 7: Force organised crime groups by the predominant crime type, as at 30 June 2015³⁰



Source: HMIC data collection

Serious and organised crime is one of six national threats specified within *The Strategic Policing Requirement*.³¹ These are terrorism, serious and organised crime, national cyber-crime incidents, threats to public order or public safety, civil emergencies, and child sexual abuse. These are complex threats which means that forces must work together to respond to them effectively. It is beyond the scope of this inspection to assess in detail whether forces are capable of responding to these national threats.

Instead, HMIC has checked whether forces have the necessary arrangements in place to test their own preparedness for dealing with these threats, should they materialise.

³⁰ Figures may not sum to 100 percent, due to rounding.

³¹ *The Strategic Policing Requirement*, Home Office, March 2015. Available from: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/417116/The_Strategic_Policing_Requirement.pdf

The Home Secretary issues the SPR annually, setting out the latest national threats and the appropriate national policing capabilities required to counter those threats. National threats require a co-ordinated or aggregated response from a number of police forces. Forces often need to work collaboratively, and with other partners, national agencies or national arrangements, to ensure such threats are tackled effectively.

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

The force has a good understanding of the threat posed to its communities by serious and organised crime. An effective threat assessment process is in place which draws on information from both police and partner organisations. The force has also created a 'local profile' for serious and organised crime, in line with national guidance.³² The profile includes information on troubled families and prison data. The profile provides the force, local authorities and other agencies on the organised crime partnership board with a better understanding of serious and organised crime in South Yorkshire and a platform for joint working to disrupt and dismantle organised crime groups. The force is now working with partners to develop local profiles to support activity against lower threat crime groups at district level.

South Yorkshire has introduced a countywide organised crime partnership board. The board approved the serious and organised crime local profile and is now developing the strategic, countywide recommendations that follow from the report. It is also establishing information-sharing agreements with the prison service and the Government Agency Intelligence Network.³³ The intention is that the board will oversee the district level plans to tackle serious and organised crime, which are currently under development.

The force has a well-established process of identifying and mapping OCGs operating within its force boundaries, in line with national guidance. There is, though, some concern that the way in which judgments are made during the mapping process differs between forces in the region. The Yorkshire and Humber region are considering adopting a system used in other areas where the region performs an assessment on behalf of all its constituent forces. A consistent assessment should ensure the proper allocation of limited regional and local resources.

When a police force identifies a group of individuals whom it suspects may be involved in organised crime, it goes through a nationally standardised 'mapping' procedure. This involves entering details of the group's known and suspected activity, associates and capability into a computer system, which assigns a numerical score to each OCG. It also places each OCG into one of several 'bands' which reflect the range and severity of crime in which a group is involved as well as its level of capability and sophistication. Police forces, ROCUs, the NCA and a number of non-police organisations such as Border Force, use OCG mapping.

³² A local profile is a report that outlines the threat from serious and organised crime within a specific local area. Available from: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/371602/Serious_and_Organised_Crime_local_profiles.pdf

³³ The Government Agency Intelligence Network (GAIN) is a large network of partners, including all police forces in England and Wales, which shares information about organised criminals.

Despite the use of standard software and methods, forces carry out OCG mapping inconsistently and there is significant variation in the number of mapped OCGs per head of population across England and Wales. This inconsistency is partly due to the unavoidably subjective nature of some aspects of the mapping procedure, which relies on human judgment as well as computer algorithms. Sometimes, groups exhibiting similar characteristics are scored in different ways, and forces do not always use the full range of information available to generate OCG scores, which can compromise their accuracy and usefulness. For these reasons, HMIC has recommended that ROCUs assume responsibility for OCG mapping on behalf of their constituent forces.³⁴

The assessment of each crime group is informed by intelligence received from local policing districts and regional and national law enforcement agencies. Staff on the front line are able to identify the most harmful and active OCGs in their area and are able to contribute to the intelligence picture by answering tasks on the force briefing system, for example identification of vehicles used by the crime groups.

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

The force responds well to the threat from serious and organised crime. It has a clear governance structure, experienced and capable staff working in its intelligence and organised crime investigation units, and support from officers at district level to disrupt and dismantle OCGs.

The current mix of OCGs is still focused upon traditional areas such as drug supply and economic crime, but this is changing to reflect the force priorities. The force is currently investigating separate OCGs reported to be involved in human trafficking and child sexual exploitation; it also recognises that it has an intelligence requirement to identify any other organised groups systematically engaged in crimes against vulnerable people.

The force refers the OCGs, which pose the greatest threat, to the regional tasking and co-ordination group, part of the Yorkshire and Humber regional organised crime unit (ROCU). These groups will be investigated nationally, regionally or at force level, depending on the level of threat and available resourcing. They are able to use a wide range of covert tactics and can access additional capabilities through the regional structures if required. For example, the force uses the expertise of the regional asset recovery team and regional operational security advisor to support investigations into serious and organised crime.

We examined a single serious and organised crime investigation in detail. It was well led, with detailed policy for the use of the full range of law enforcement tactics. As a

³⁴ *Regional Organised Crime Units: A Review of Capability and Effectiveness*, HMIC, December 2015. Available at: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/regional-organised-crime-units.pdf

result of this investigation five people have been charged with threats to kill, conspiracy to supply class A and class B drugs, illegal possession of firearms and money laundering offences. The investigation we examined was not complete so did not have a closing report.

The force manages at a local level 28 active groups who the force considers to be of relatively low risk. The lead officer on the district, usually a chief inspector, is responsible for preparing a plan to disrupt and dismantle these crime groups. The plans are reviewed monthly at force level during the organised crime and gang assessment meeting. As part of our inspection we observed two meetings and are able to say that the force is providing a good response to the threats posed by these groups. The meeting also provides a formal opportunity to consider requests for intelligence and operational support from the centre when the resources required for specific operational activity cannot be met by the district.

In HMIC's crime inspection in 2014, we were concerned that officers at district level did not understand properly the importance of their role in disrupting OCGs. It was evident to us in 2015 that the force has made strong progress. For example, in Doncaster we observed how a number of teams at district level were working together to pursue members of an OCG and their associates, through enforcement. They had also sought the views of the affected community. In addition, they are working with the local authority to protect the public from low-level crime and anti-social behaviour associated with the group through public space orders and the installation of CCTV.

The force recognises that more can be done to ensure that the responsibility to disrupt organised criminality is understood and accepted throughout the organisation. It has recently embarked upon a communications plan to increase the understanding of all staff about the number and effect of OCGs at district level and are planning an OCG site on the force intranet to draw together relevant information on the force's response to organised crime. Information about every OCG is accessible to staff at district level through the force briefing system. Staff on the front line tend to be aware of those individuals and groups who featured in intelligence tasks or because they were notified of an OCG marker on force intelligence systems as a result of a check on an individual the officer had personally arrested or searched.

The force has a monthly meeting in which it discusses the effect of policing activity on OCGs, but there is no consistent standard against which disruption is measured. Forces that respond to organised crime most effectively use the national standards for measuring levels of disruption caused by activity against OCGs, and are able to identify and share the most effective tactics.

How effectively is the force working with partners to prevent serious and organised crime?

The force works well with other law enforcement partner organisations. It has established an organised crime partnership board to develop multi-agency action plans at county and at local authority level to tackle serious and organised crime. The force recognises that there is more work to do to engage with local communities and prevent the emergence of organised crime groups.

While the revised structures are being established, local policing teams continue to work well with a wide range of partners, including local authorities; trading standards; prison intelligence; environmental health; revenue and customs; housing associations; drug and alcohol services; and Immigration Enforcement to prevent serious and organised crime. A good example is the work done with the multi-agency support team (MAST) in Sheffield to assist troubled families who have chaotic lifestyles. The police and MAST used a range of powers to disrupt and dismantle a supposedly dormant OCG that had become active following a firearm discharge. This included securing criminal charges to support applications for criminal behaviour orders, and obtaining civil injunctions to disrupt the gang even more.

The force currently use the traditional press and social media to publicise arrests and convictions linked to organised criminality. The force recognises that the next step is to improve engagement with communities affected by serious and organised criminals, improve intelligence collection and build resilience among communities to stop the emergence or re-emergence of OCGs.

The force has made a conscious decision not to make extensive use of serious crime prevention orders (SCPOs),³⁵ securing just twelve SCPOs in the last three years and four this year. The force recognises that the value of the order will only be maintained where it is properly monitored and enforced. The force considers that the capacity to do this is limited and is targeting the use of the orders accordingly.

How effective are the arrangements in place to ensure that the force can fulfil its national policing responsibilities?

It is beyond the scope of this inspection to assess in detail whether forces are capable of responding to the six national threats. Instead, HMIC has checked whether forces have the basic arrangements in place to test their own preparedness for dealing with these threats, should they materialise.

South Yorkshire Police has reviewed its capability to respond to the national threats. The force identified that its main area of weakness was its ability to contribute to the

³⁵ An SCPO is a court order that is used to protect the public by preventing, restricting or disrupting a person's involvement in serious crime. An SCPO can prevent involvement in serious crime by imposing various conditions on a person; for example, restricting who he or she can associate with, restricting his or her travel, or placing an obligation to report his or her financial affairs to the police.

police response to a national cyber incident. The force is supporting a regional capability to combat cyber-dependent crime and is investing £1.5 million to improve its ability to gather and analyse digital evidence in cyber-enabled crime. It is also re-working its systems so that it can more readily identify cyber-dependent and cyber-enabled offences.

It has also recognised that it should be able to contribute a greater resource to national incidents of public disorder. It has a recognised centre of excellence for public order training and is using this to increase its capacity, to complement the experience it has developed policing a large number of recent protest marches and demonstrations.

The force meets its responsibilities to investigate serious and organised crime through its ROCU³⁶ partnership with the other forces in the Yorkshire and the Humber area, and based upon its own covert assets and capabilities.

The safety of children is now central to planning within South Yorkshire Police. Because of the demands from historical investigations, the National Crime Agency and neighbouring forces are supporting the force in its work. South Yorkshire Police has increased substantially the number of staff in its public protection unit, working with partners so that it can identify and prosecute offenders while protecting current and potential victims.

The force plays a key role in the local resilience forum. A recent multi-agency event, Exercise Solar Storm, tested the ability of the local authorities and emergency services to operate in an environment where there are no central command and control systems and personal electronic devices do not work. Exercises such as this are used to inform the local resilience forum's risk register and contingency plans that the forum have in place for a range of incidents.

³⁶ Regional organised crime units (ROCU) provide police forces with access to a standardised range of 'capabilities' to help them tackle serious and organised crime. These capabilities encompass specialist areas such as undercover policing, surveillance and cyber-crime investigation. The regional provision of these capabilities can reduce or remove the need for forces to maintain specialist capabilities of their own, many of which are expensive to maintain and only required on relatively rare occasions.

Summary of findings



Good

South Yorkshire Police has a good understanding of the threat posed by serious and organised crime. An effective threat assessment process is in place, which draws on information from both police and partner organisations. The force is working well with partners. It has created a local profile for serious and organised crime, which includes information on troubled families and prison data. This provides a platform for joint working to disrupt and dismantle organised crime groups. The force is now working with partners to develop district level local profiles to support activity against lower threat crime groups.

The force responds well to the threat from serious and organised crime. It has a clear governance structure, experienced and capable staff working in its intelligence and organised crime investigation units, and support from officers at district level to disrupt and dismantle organised crime groups.

South Yorkshire Police has reviewed, and is taking steps to improve, its capability to respond to the six national threats, particularly cyber-crime.

This is the first year HMIC has graded forces on their effectiveness at tackling serious and organised crime, including a force's arrangements for ensuring that it can fulfil its national policing responsibilities, so no year-on-year comparison is possible.

Areas for improvement

- The force should develop a better understanding of the impact of its activity on serious and organised crime, and ensure that it learns from experience to maximise its disruptive effect.

Annex A – HMIC judgments

Our judgments

The judgment categories are:

- outstanding;
- good;
- requires improvement; and
- inadequate.

Judgment is made against how effective the force is at keeping people safe and reducing crime; it is not an assessment of the overall effectiveness of policing. In applying the categories HMIC considers whether:

- the effectiveness the force is achieving is good, or exceeds this standard sufficiently to be judged as outstanding;
- the effectiveness of the force requires improvement, and/or there are some weaknesses; or
- the effectiveness of the force is inadequate because it is considerably lower than is expected.