



Inspecting policing
in the public interest

Crime inspection 2014

Sussex Police

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How effective is the force at cutting crime?

Overall summary

Sussex Police has mature and well-integrated partnerships focused on crime reduction and prevention. The force has completed a detailed assessment of victim vulnerability, allowing it to place victims at the centre of its activity. There have been overall reductions in crime of 3 percent over the last 12 months in Sussex. This is a greater rate of reduction than that for England and Wales. There have been reductions in the levels of anti-social behaviour, and Sussex Police and its partners use a wide range of powers to police this effectively.

Recently Sussex Police has put more emphasis on effective investigation and is making officers and staff more accountable for the quality of their investigations. The improvement in investigations has been limited by some misunderstanding of priorities among the workforce, insufficient allocation of resources and some examples of officers being responsible for investigations for which they are not trained or accredited.

The force is not investigating offending as effectively as it should be. It identifies victims of crime who are vulnerable, and influential partnerships provide a ready means of support for these individuals. However, those investigating crimes are not always adequately trained or supervised.

This year, HMIC undertook an inspection into the crime data integrity of all 43 police forces, to determine the extent to which police-recorded crime information can be trusted at a national level. HMIC has concerns about Sussex Police's approach to crime recording, which is not as accurate as it should be. Individual force reports are available at <http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/>

How effective is the force at reducing crime and preventing offending?

Good

Sussex Police has carried out an assessment of the threat, risk and harm that it faces. It has clear priorities, although these are not consistently understood and pursued across the workforce.

The force does well at identifying and prioritising those at risk of becoming a victim, although contact with victims is not always made as promptly as it should be.

Sussex Police has good relationships with partners which help it to prevent crime and reduce offending.

How effective is the force at investigating offending?

Requires improvement

There has been a reduction in reported crime of 3 percent over the last 12 months in Sussex. This is greater than the overall reduction for England and Wales. Notably, the rate of residential burglary has reduced in Sussex over the last 12 months, and the quality of investigation has been enhanced.

Staff and officers investigating crime in Sussex are not all accredited to the appropriate national standard. In particular, those working in Response Investigation Teams have not been given the training that they need in order to investigate crime effectively.

HMIC found that the service provided by officers responsible for gathering initial evidence required improvement and better supervisory oversight.

How effective is the force at tackling anti-social behaviour?

Good

HMIC found that there is good communication with the public and partners; neighbourhood officers are accessible and accountable to local communities. Neighbourhood officers use social media, face-to-face meetings and public forums to understand the needs of communities, and are responsive to their concerns.

HMIC found evidence of dedicated neighbourhood teams prioritising anti-social behaviour and working closely with partners.

The force has a strong focus on vulnerability. It uses a comprehensive risk assessment process which allows all partners to understand the risk factors associated with individuals.

**How effective is the force
at reducing crime and
preventing offending?**

Good

**How effective is the force
at investigating offending?**

Requires improvement

Sussex Police does not always take Victim Personal Statements; this means that important issues such as the trauma that victims have suffered are not always made available in court proceedings.

There are extensive delays to investigations due to a lack of capacity to examine mobile phones and computers within reasonable time frames.

**How effective is the force
at tackling anti-social
behaviour?**

Good

Introduction

This inspection looks at how effective police forces are at cutting crime. The public expects the police to reduce, prevent and investigate crime, bring suspects to justice and, in conjunction with other services and agencies, care for victims. To assess each force's effectiveness, we looked at three specific areas:

- How effective is the force at reducing crime and preventing offending?
- How effective is the force at investigating offending?
- How effective is the force at tackling anti-social behaviour?

Methodology

During our inspection we analysed data and documents from forces, and conducted in-force inspections. We interviewed the senior officers responsible for crime, neighbourhood policing and victim care in each force. We held focus groups with frontline police officers, investigators and police staff, and observed their activities first hand. We also reviewed 20 crime investigations in each force and interviewed heads of partner organisations such as local authorities. We focused on anti-social behaviour and the offences of: burglary dwelling; serious sexual offences; and violence with injury on this inspection. We chose to focus on these offences because they cover the areas of acquisitive and violent crime and the protection of vulnerable people. This has allowed us to make an assessment of how well the force treated the victim throughout the investigation – examining in particular how well officers gathered evidence and how well they were supervised.

Victims are at the heart of this inspection. Victims are entitled to a service from the police; this includes regular information about their case, an opportunity to provide an impact statement where relevant and to be consulted on potential criminal justice outcomes. When the police provide this service to victims, it increases victim satisfaction and builds trust and confidence in the police

As part of this inspection, we considered how well forces deal with domestic abuse, alongside other offence types. HMIC published a report in March 2014 on how well forces tackled domestic abuse and provided support to victims. As a result of that inspection all forces were asked to provide an action plan setting out how they were improving services to victims of domestic abuse and we have reviewed the action plans developed by forces. The action plans have not informed the judgments made in these reports.

The crime inspection provides HMIC with the first opportunity to test whether the force's approach to improving how it tackles domestic abuse is beginning to have an effect and this forms part of our overall assessment of the force.

How effective is the force at reducing crime and preventing offending?

HMIC looked at how the leadership of the force deploys its resources to reduce the volume of crimes being committed, maximise the quality of victim contact, and ensure that the force focuses on community priorities while mitigating national threats.

We looked at how the force prevents crime, how it uses police tactics such as stop and search powers to prevent and detect crime and reduce offending. We also looked at how the police work with other agencies such as social services to reduce crime.

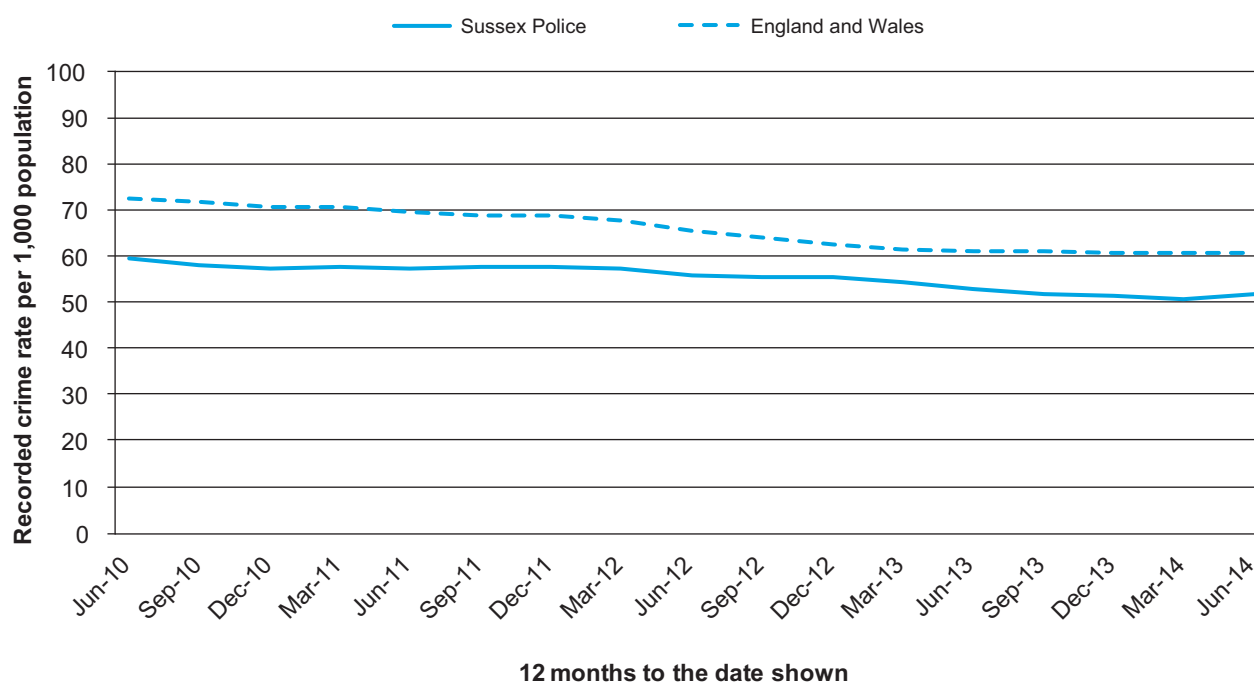
Crime

In 2010 the Home Secretary set a clear priority for the police service to cut crime. When compared with the 12 months to June 2010, recorded crime (excluding fraud) in the 12 months to June 2014 reduced by 13 percent in Sussex compared with a reduction of 16 percent across all forces in England and Wales.

Over this period, victim-based crime (i.e., crimes where there is a direct victim such as an individual, a group, or an organisation) decreased by 13 percent in Sussex, compared with a reduction of 16 percent across England and Wales.

During the 12 months prior to the end of June 2014, recorded crime (excluding fraud) in Sussex reduced by 3 percent, compared with a 1 percent reduction across England and Wales.

Figure: Recorded crime rate (per 1,000 population) between June 2010 and June 2014.



By looking at how many recorded crimes and incidents of anti-social behaviour occur per 1,000 population, we get an indication of how safe it is for the public in that police area. The table below shows crime and anti-social behaviour rates in Sussex (per 1,000 population) compared with the rest of England and Wales.

12 months to June 2014	Sussex Police rate (per 1,000 population)	England and Wales total rate (per 1,000 population)
Crime excluding fraud	51.9	60.7
Victim-based crime	46.5	53.9
Sexual offences	1.1	1.2
Violence with injury	4.6	5.9
Burglary in a dwelling*	4.7	8.9
Anti-social behaviour incidents*	33.8	36.8

***Note that anti-social behaviour data is for the 12 months to March 2014 and the rate for burglary in a dwelling is the rate per 1,000 households, not population.**

We have chosen these types of crime to give an indication of offending levels in the force area. We are not judging the effectiveness of the force on recorded crime rates only. For information on the frequency of other kinds of crimes in your area, go to www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/crime-and-policing-comparator

Sussex's detection rate (for crimes excluding fraud) for the 12 months to the end of March 2014 was 23 percent, which was lower than the 26 percent for England and Wales.

The new crime outcomes framework was introduced in April 2014. It replaces a previous framework for recording how the police finalise investigations through what was known as 'sanction detections' (e.g. charges and/or summons). The new crime outcomes framework is designed to support police officers to use their professional judgment to ensure a just and timely outcome which reflects the harm to the victim, the seriousness of the offending behaviour, the impact on the community, and which deters future offending. Data on the full range of outcomes achieved as a result of investigations (not just detections but also, for example, community resolutions such as mediation known as restorative justice) will be available from July 2015 and used in future HMIC inspections.

Meeting the needs of the community

Sussex Police has carried out a full assessment of the threat, risk, and harm that it faces, drawing on a range of information and intelligence. Strategic priorities are set through an operational delivery plan that focuses on anti-social behaviour, sexual offences, violence, and improving the experience of victims. These are closely aligned to the police and crime plan, which is informed by public consultation. There is clear oversight of the way the force aligns its activity to these community priorities.

Although clear priorities have been set by the force, they are not always understood by staff and do not always influence daily operational activity. We found evidence of an inconsistent understanding of priorities in different areas of the force. Different crime types prioritised include human trafficking, vehicle crime and burglary. Other priorities included improving response times, stop and search, and victim satisfaction. Staff are unclear about which types of offending are most important to the force, and therefore cannot consistently align their activity to force priorities.

Quality of victim contact

HMIC found that in the majority of cases staff understand the importance of victims being at the heart of investigations, and provide appropriate care for them. Sussex Police take steps to understand the needs of victims. In addition to standard victim surveys, the force also draws on feedback generated by surveys of neighbourhoods, victim journey mapping and from repeat victims of anti-social behaviour. The citizen focus team is developing an evidence database to gain a greater understanding of victims' needs and how best to address them - for example, follow-up phone calls in cases where the police have not attended the scene of a crime.

The force demonstrates a clear commitment to victim-focused crime reduction initiatives. Victims are referred to victim support services for specialist assistance, and this close collaboration allows early and effective intervention. However, not all victims are updated promptly, in line with the requirements of the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime. This is particularly true of cases managed by investigators with high workloads, where follow-up contact with victims is irregular.

An important measure of the impact of changes to service delivery for the public is how satisfied victims are with the overall service they receive when they seek police assistance. In the 12 months to the end of June 2014, Sussex had a victim satisfaction rate of 83.0 percent (± 1.1 percent) which is lower than the satisfaction rate in England and Wales of 85.0 percent (± 0.2 percent). Its current rate is lower than the 85.6 percent (± 1.2 percent) recorded for Sussex in the previous year.

Use of police tactics

Sussex Police uses a broad range of tactics to reduce crime and prevent offending. The force is trying to standardise the way it runs crime reduction campaigns across the force. For example, all crime reduction operations must address elements of prevention, intelligence, enforcement and reassurance (PIER). An example of the PIER principles being put into practice is a project to reduce street drinking, reduce associated crime and provide support for homeless people. This operation is founded on intelligence from partners and the public. In addition to a focus on enforcement by the police, partners working alongside the force provide immediate access to support services to the homeless at 'pop-up' hubs.

There have been real improvements in the way that Sussex Police is tackling burglary. The anti-burglary campaign, Operation Magpie, has made good use of a preventive tactic known as 'super cocooning' where householders likely to be targeted are visited, and advised how to secure their homes. The force has seen a 14 percent reduction for burglary in a dwelling in the 12 months prior to the end of June 2014. The force has also developed a technique to accurately forecast the likelihood of further burglaries being committed. This is known as predictive crime mapping, and it is a capability that the force may develop further after evaluation.

Partnership working and information sharing

Sussex Police has developed a commendable range of mature partnerships which are helping it to prevent and reduce crime. These are characterised by routine sharing of information and a common risk management process that enables all partners to understand vulnerabilities associated with individuals. A shared web-based case management system known as ECINS (Empowering Communities Inclusion and Neighbourhood Management System) facilitates the development of joint action plans to support victims and tackle offenders. For example, tasks are assigned to partners through ECINS and officers are held accountable through the anti-social behaviour action group, which meets on a monthly basis.

It is also clear that Sussex Police works well with its partners to identify and reduce vulnerability. It prioritises those at risk of becoming a victim. A good example is its multi-agency partnership work focusing on vulnerable and missing children leading to a greater understanding of the links between missing girls and child sexual exploitation. By working closely with Barnardo's and the youth offending service, the force has been able to encourage an increasing number of young girls to come forward with allegations.

HMIC considers that the force could do more with partners to learn which problem-solving tactics work best in any given situation. There was some evidence of sharing good ways of doing things across the force; for example the benefits of a street drinking campaign in Brighton and the recent introduction of an 'innovation team' to record organisational learning. However, HMIC found only a partial commitment to the evaluation of best practice.

Domestic abuse

In March 2014 HMIC published the results of its inspection of 43 forces on the effectiveness of the police approach to domestic violence, with a focus on outcomes for victims and whether risks to victims are adequately managed, this included clear recommendations for each force about improvements it should make. As a result of this inspection all forces were required to produce and publish an action plan setting out the steps they were taking to improve the services to victims of domestic abuse. This plan should demonstrate that HMIC recommendations are being addressed and also explain how:

- the leadership will ensure the changes necessary and hold the right people to account;
- the police respond when a victim first contacts them (by a 999 call or by visiting a police station) and when they first attend the scene of the incident is improved;
- the force will ensure there is a high quality investigation of all domestic abuse crime;
- victims will be properly supported and offenders properly managed; and
- the training and learning provided to officers ensures they can give the best available response to the victim.

HMIC has made an initial consideration of the action plan submitted by Sussex Police. We found the plan details activity in response to the specific recommendations made for the force by HMIC. The plan develops this further by outlining the joint work between Surrey and Sussex to improve the service to victims of domestic abuse. This work covers many of the areas identified as national priorities outlined above.

The crime inspection provided us with our first opportunity to test whether changes in the force's approach to domestic abuse were beginning to have a positive effect.

HMIC found evidence that Sussex Police has made improvements in how domestic abuse is tackled. A review of a small sample of files found evidence of some good investigations of high-risk cases with good supervision. For example, we reviewed a case where a high quality file was prepared without the victim being able to give evidence resulting in a successful prosecution. Additionally, a focus on this type of crime has meant tasks are now assigned to neighbourhood policing teams where the likelihood of repeat offending is high.

Recommendations

- Immediately, the leadership of Sussex Police should take steps to communicate the force priorities to staff and implement measures to ensure operational activities reflect these priorities.
- Within six months Sussex Police should ensure that there are methods in place to:
 - (a) systematically review and evaluate the benefits from both current tactics and new crime fighting and anti-social behaviour activities;
 - (b) systematically capture learning and good practice in crime prevention and local problem solving; and
 - (c) share learning and good practice across the force and with partners.

Summary

Good

- Sussex Police has carried out an assessment of the threat, risk and harm that it faces. It has clear priorities, although these are not consistently understood and pursued across the workforce.
- The force does well at identifying and prioritising those at risk of becoming a victim, although contact with victims is not always made as promptly as it should be.
- Sussex Police has good relationships with partners which help it to prevent crime and reduce offending.

How effective is the force at investigating offending?

HMIC looked at the range of police tactics and powers used by the force to investigate offending, including how investigations are conducted, whether persistent offenders are diverted from crime and how people vulnerable to repeat crime are supported. We looked at how the force learns from experience in order to improve professionalism in operational practice and leadership.

Vulnerability, risk and victims

We found that the leadership within Sussex Police is focused on vulnerability, and the need to protect those most at risk from harm. The force has taken steps to ensure that vulnerable members of the community, whose circumstances make them the most susceptible to becoming victims of crime or anti-social behaviour, are identified at the first point of contact. Calls to the force control room are graded to national standards and specific questions are asked of those making allegations of anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse and hate crime. A flagging system has recently been introduced on the force's crime recording system for repeat and vulnerable victims to ensure that they receive the level of service that they need.

Beyond this, the force relies on both statutory and voluntary multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARACs), which are supported by partners, to address risks facing victims. These conferences are used to manage cases of domestic abuse which are assessed as highest risk. The force's commitment to protecting the most vulnerable victims is further underlined by its use of shared information systems with partners, and a combined risk assessment process.

HMIC found varying levels of knowledge among officers and supervisors of the entitlements for victims specified in the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime. Sussex Police has a good understanding of how to support a victim as they progress through the criminal justice process. There is good use of 'special measures', for example, asking the court if a vulnerable victim can be allowed to give evidence via a video link.

However, there are no checks completed to ensure that victim personal statements are offered to or obtained from victims. These statements outline important considerations such as the psychological trauma of being victimised. On occasions, this has meant that these considerations cannot be taken into account when cases are presented at court.

Investigation

Sussex Police has placed more emphasis on the need to investigate crime effectively. The force recognises that it needs to improve in this area, and has introduced a new performance management framework. The force is also trying to ensure staff and supervisors are accountable for investigations. A review of a small sample of assault

investigations found that the overall standard of investigations was good, with some evidence of good practice and high quality supervision of domestic abuse cases.

However, HMIC found during the inspection that the standard of initial enquiries conducted by first response officers is poor. This is due to a lack of staff, poor supervision and the necessity to prioritise emergency calls over the completion of initial enquiries. This is likely to lead to a loss of evidence. Some officers in neighbourhood teams have investigative workloads, but little training in how to investigate crimes. This could result in a variation between the levels of service provided to communities.

HMIC identified some cases more suitable for investigation by accredited investigators being dealt with by response investigation teams (RIT) or response officers. Staff dealing with volume crime, such as minor criminal damage or shoplifting offences, should be trained to level one of the professionalising investigation programme (PIP). Those dealing with more serious offences should be trained to PIP level two. Occasionally, high risk domestic abuse cases and investigations involving vulnerable adults are dealt with by staff and officers in these teams who lack the specialist investigative training; this may adversely affect the service provided to victims and compromise the chance of a successful outcome. Officers from neighbourhood teams, some of whom also lack investigative training, are regularly asked to assist the RITs due to high levels of demand. Training is being introduced for existing staff in these units, but excessively high investigative workloads are hampering thorough investigation. It was evident that many supervisory reviews were not being completed within appropriate time frames and victims were not receiving regular updates. Partners also stated it was sometimes difficult to obtain information on the progression of cases and provide updates.

The investigation of more serious crime that was tackled by accredited investigators was subject to closer scrutiny but there are still extensive delays to investigations due to a lack of capacity within specialist support services to examine phones and computers and retrieve evidence within reasonable time frames. Both officers and partners expressed frustration at the impact this was having on victims of these crimes.

Tackling repeat and prolific offenders

The force has strong partnership arrangements in place for supporting and diverting the most prolific offenders away from crime. These integrated offender management (IOM ¹) teams are overseen by multi-agency boards chaired by superintendents in the force's three geographical areas. The Sussex Criminal Justice Board commissioned a recent review of IOM, which has resulted in both a strategic and an operational guide being agreed by all

¹ There is no standard national definition of who should be considered for IOM arrangements. Sussex Police decide who needs to be managed under these arrangements using its own assessment system.

partners. There is now a new scoring matrix to identify criminals who should be admitted to the scheme. High-risk domestic abuse perpetrators are dealt with through other statutory forums instead of IOM.

Sussex Police collaborates with Surrey Police to tackle organised crime groups, including those involving child sexual exploitation and modern slavery. Regular meetings ensure that investigations are progressed, with rigorous monitoring of activity. HMIC found that Sussex Police has effective ways of dealing with organised crime. An example of this is Operation Pipeline, an investigation into child sexual exploitation in Brighton, which is making good use of specialist investigators and analysis.

Learning from experience

All serious crime investigations are undertaken by accredited detectives. For other investigations, a mixture of accredited and non-accredited officers are used. Accreditation is dependent on the successful completion of tuition and professional development programmes in the workplace. There are good examples of this in the Child Protection Team.

Detection rates in Sussex are lower than the rate for England and Wales. This is being addressed through greater focus on investigation plans and a specific delivery group responsible for the improvement of investigative standards.

Recommendations

- Sussex Police should review immediately how it investigates cases involving vulnerable adults and high risk domestic abuse and assess whether the response investigation team have the capacity or necessary skills and knowledge to fulfil their investigative duties to standards required and in a timely manner. By January 2015 the force should have commenced the implementation of an action plan to improve the quality and timeliness of these investigations.
- Within three months Sussex Police should develop and commence the implementation of an action plan to improve the quality of victim service and contact which will ensure that:
 - (a) investigating officers and police staff are aware of the standards required within the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime, especially in relation to keeping victims informed and the use of victim personal statements, and have the professional skills and knowledge to fulfil their duties;
 - (b) supervisors know what is expected of them in driving up standards;

- (c) there is appropriate monitoring and oversight of quality and timeliness of victim service and contact; and
- (d) feedback from victims is used to improve the service provided.
- Within three months Sussex Police should develop and commence the implementation of an action plan to improve the quality of investigations, especially within the Response and Neighbourhood teams, which will ensure that:
 - (a) investigating officers and police staff are aware of the standards required;
 - (b) have the appropriate learning and development to fulfil their investigative duties;
 - (c) supervisors know what is expected of them in driving up standards; and
 - (d) there is appropriate monitoring and oversight of investigative workloads, quality and timeliness.
- Within three months, Sussex Police should review the resourcing and process for prioritising the examination of telecommunication and computer equipment seized as part of criminal investigations. By March 2015 the force should commence the implementation of a plan to improve the prioritisation and timeliness of these examinations.

Summary

Requires improvement

- There has been a reduction in reported crime of 3 percent over the last 12 months in Sussex. This is greater than the overall reduction for England and Wales. Notably, the rate of residential burglary has reduced in Sussex over the last 12 months, and the quality of investigation has been enhanced.
- Staff and officers investigating crime in Sussex are not all accredited to the appropriate national standard. In particular, those working in response investigation teams have not been given the training that they need in order to investigate crime effectively.
- HMIC found that the service provided by officers responsible for gathering initial evidence required improvement and better supervisory oversight.
- Sussex Police does not always take victim personal statements; this means that important issues such as the trauma that victims have suffered are not always made available in court proceedings.
- There are extensive delays to investigations due to a lack of capacity to examine mobile phones and computers within reasonable time frames

How effective is the force at tackling anti-social behaviour?

HMIC looked at how the force prevents and tackles anti-social behaviour; in particular the way victims are treated. We looked at the quality and consistency of victim contact across the force and whether victims of anti-social behaviour were dealt with in a comparable way to victims of other crimes.

Community contact and victim care

HMIC found that there is good communication between the force, the public and partners. Neighbourhood and anti-social behaviour satisfaction surveys are used both to identify policing priorities and to gauge confidence and satisfaction levels in communities. Neighbourhood officers are accessible and accountable. They provide regular updates to communities and are accessible to the public through a variety of means. These include panel meetings, street briefings, and use of engagement officers, social media and web-based surveys. Anti-social behaviour is a priority for the police and crime commissioner, who chairs bi-monthly governance boards.

At a strategic level, partners and the police are engaged in evaluation of the effectiveness of partnership activity, for example with the troubled families programme where case studies are reviewed, assessing what has worked, what impact different agencies are having, with training commissioned to build on reflective practice. However, HMIC found that the force's ability to measure the impact or the effectiveness of its activities in relation to anti-social behaviour and problem solving is limited.

Partnership working

HMIC found evidence of dedicated neighbourhood teams prioritising anti-social behaviour, and working closely with partners to prevent its escalation. Police and partners solve problems together and make good use of shared information to make interventions, using a range of powers.

Dedicated analysts collate and analyse data provided by partner service providers. This is an essential part of the development of anti-social behaviour action plans and case management on ECINS. In particular, it is important in the early identification of emerging trends of anti-social behaviour, and informs the development of interventions to prevent them from escalating.

Improving services to the public

Anti-social behaviour is a priority for the force. HMIC found that there is good awareness of the need to assess risk, and neighbourhood officers are well briefed to deal with emerging threats. For example, neighbourhood officers are tasked to focus on people vulnerable

to radicalisation and priority offenders, including those responsible for repeated domestic abuse. Neighbourhood teams work well with partners who share responsibility for anti-social behaviour, using a range of powers to improve the quality of life of residents. In the last 12 months, 2,500 anti-social behaviour warning notices have been issued along with civil injunctions, eviction notices and the use of community resolutions.

In the 12 months prior to the end of March 2014, Sussex Police recorded 55,292 incidents of anti-social behaviour. This is a reduction of 9 percent against the previous 12 months.

Restorative justice is being widely used in Sussex. This involves offenders meeting victims or agreeing to make amends for minor crimes as an alternative to being prosecuted. There has been a reduction in the number of first time offenders entering the criminal justice system and the force invests time and energy in this programme. These are positive examples of the force taking a proportionate approach to resolving crimes out of court that is sensitive to victim needs and can help to rehabilitate offenders.

Despite this varied use of powers, HMIC found that staff had not received training in the new legislation to combat anti-social behaviour, and were largely unaware of its imminent introduction. The force intends to provide online training to officers and staff on the new anti-social behaviour legislation.

HMIC found that police officers are being re-deployed from their normal duties, sometimes leaving police community support officers to fulfil officer roles. Currently the rate of anti-social behaviour incidents reported in Sussex is lower than that for England and Wales.

Recommendations

- Within three months, Sussex Police should review the abstraction of neighbourhood officers to assess the impact on its ability to deliver effective neighbourhood policing and tackle local problems.

Summary



Good

- HMIC found that there is good communication with the public and partners; neighbourhood officers are accessible and accountable to local communities. Neighbourhood officers use social media, face-to-face meetings and public forums to understand the needs of communities, and are responsive to their concerns.
- HMIC found evidence of dedicated neighbourhood teams prioritising anti-social behaviour and working closely with partners.
- The force has a strong focus on vulnerability. It uses a comprehensive risk assessment process which allows all partners to understand the risk factors associated with individuals.

What each judgment means

HMIC uses four categories for making judgments, two are positive and two are negative. The categories are:

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

Judgment is made against how well the force cuts crime. In applying the categories HMIC considers whether:

- the way the force is cutting crime and reducing offending is good, or exceeds this standard sufficiently to be judged as outstanding;
- the force requires improvement in the way it cuts crime, and/or there are some weaknesses; or
- the force's effectiveness at cutting crime is inadequate because it is significantly lower than is expected.