

Committee(s): Audit and Risk Committee – For Information	Dated: 30 th November 2021
Subject: City of London Police -Annual review of HMICFRS Inspections and reports	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1 - People are safe and feel safe.
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	N/A
Report of: Commissioner of Police	For Information
Report author: Stuart Phoenix, Head of Strategic Development	

Summary

This report provides Members with an overview of Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) continuing programme of inspections and published reports, together with the City of London Police (CoLP) response where relevant.

During the reporting period (October 2020 – November 2021) HMICFRS published 11 reports relevant to the City of London Police:

National Reports	
8 th December 2020	Pre-charge bail and released under investigation: Striking a balance
26 th February 2021	Disproportionate use of police powers
21 st March 2021	Getting the balance right: an inspection of how effectively the police deal with protests
20 th April 2021	Police response to the coronavirus pandemic during 2020
23 rd June 2021	Review of policing domestic violence during the pandemic
16 th July 2021	Joint thematic inspection of the Police and Crown Prosecution Service’s response to rape
5 th August 2021	A review of Fraud: Time to choose
17 th September 2021	Police Response to violence against women and girls – Final inspection report

Super-complaints¹	
17 th December 2020	Police data sharing for immigration purposes
26 th May 2021	Joint report on Hestia's super-complaint on the police response to victims of modern slavery
24 th August 2021	Police use of restorative measures in cases involving violence against women and girls
City of London Police Reports	
None	

Members are asked to note that none of the reports published have resulted from a physical inspection of the City of London Police, with all being assessed against data returns and self-assessments. All reports together with details of progress against recommendations and areas for further improvement are reported in detail for scrutiny and oversight to the quarterly Strategic Planning and Performance (Police) Committee, a sub-committee of the Police Authority Board.

Recommendation

Members are asked to receive this report and note its contents.

Main Report

Background

1. This report provides Members with an overview of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) continuing programme of inspections and published reports, together with the City of London Police (CoLP) response where relevant. It also provides assurance that the recommendations from reports are being addressed by the Force.
2. HMICFRS use the terms 'recommendation' and 'area for further improvement' (AFI) to denote specific levels of concern. A recommendation is only made where in HMICFRS's assessment there is a significant underlying cause for concern. Where there is no such concern but where HMICFRS feel general improvements can be made, areas for further improvement are identified.

Current Position

3. During the reporting period (October 2020 – November 2021) HMICFRS published 11 reports relevant to the City of London Police. This is an increase in the number of reports published during the pandemic (7) and is an indication that inspection activity is returning to pre-covid levels. There follows at

¹ Super-complaints were introduced by the Policing and Crime Act 2017. They allow for designated organisations to raise issues or concerns on behalf of the public about a feature of policing which is, or appears to be, harming the interests of the public. They are not force-specific.

paragraph 5 *et seq* summaries of all the inspections conducted by HMICFRS relevant to CoLP during the reporting period.

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Pre-charge bail and released under investigation: Striking a balance (national joint report of HMICFRS, HMCPSI² and CPS³ published December 2020)

5. This inspection examined the Police and CPS's response to pre-charge bail changes and the use of released under investigation (RUI) provisions, particularly with regard to how forces identify and manage vulnerability where a suspect has been RUI. Data to inform the inspection was supplied by all forces, but only 6 forces were physically inspected.
6. The report made 10 recommendations but only 2 related directly to forces (the remainder were all for the Home Office, College of Policing and National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC)). Of the 2 recommendations, 1 is complete, the other is nearing sign-off pending a compliance review in December 2021.

Disproportionate use of police powers (national report of HMICFRS published 26th February 2021)

7. This national report focuses on how effectively forces use stop and search powers. It requires forces to be able to explain disproportionate use of the power on those from Black, Asian and minority Ethnic backgrounds, based on published data. The inspection was informed by assessing force level data from 2019/20, the findings from HMICFRS's own Integrated PEEL Assessments covering police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy, and a review of 10,000 records which looked at the strength and reasonableness of the reasons stops were made.
8. The report made 6 recommendations, 4 of which have been delivered, 2 remain in progress.

Getting the balance right: an inspection of how effectively the police deal with protests (national report by HMICFRS published 11th March 2021)

9. This national report held that a modest 'reset' was required to properly balance the rights of protesters and rights of residents, businesses and those holding opposing views. It found that all too often when forces failed to assess accurately the level of disruption caused or likely to be caused by a protest, the balance may tip too readily in favour of the protesters.

² Her Majesty's Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate

³ Crown Prosecution Service

10. The report made 5 recommendations, all of which have been implemented.

Police response to the coronavirus pandemic during 2020 (national report of HMICFRS, published 20th April 2021)

11. As the title suggests, this report looked in detail at how forces responded to the rapidly changing policing landscape that was brought about by the pandemic. This included rebalancing priorities to adapt to changing patterns of criminality, how the lockdown rules were being policed/enforced, the impact on the vulnerable, and the impact on staff and officers of the forces themselves. Whilst a number of areas for improvement were identified, the report concluded that policing responded well to the particular challenges presented by the pandemic.

12. The report made 5 recommendations for forces, all of which have been implemented by CoLP.

Review of policing domestic violence during the pandemic (national report of HMICFRS, published 23rd June 2021)

13. This national report was the fifth in a series of thematic domestic abuse publications since HMICFRS's first report in 2014. Similar to the preceding report, this inspection looked in detail at how the police responded to the unique challenges the Covid-19 pandemic placed on preventing and responding to domestic abuse. The report found that the police were largely proactive in keeping people safe and worked well with partner organisations to make good use of technology and innovated to support victims.

14. The report made 3 recommendations, all of which have now been implemented by the Force.

Joint thematic inspection of the Police and Crown Prosecution Service's response to rape (national joint report of HMICFRS and HMCPSI⁴, published 16th July 2021)

15. This national report is the first of two inspection reports that considers the response, decision-making and effectiveness of the police and Crown Prosecution Service at every stage of a rape case – from first report through to finalisation of the case. This report focuses on those cases where either the police or the CPS made the decision to take no further action (that is, not to proceed with the case). The second report, considering cases from charge to disposal, will be published later this year.

16. The report made 7 recommendations for forces. 4 of the recommendations have been implemented, 3 remain in progress.

A review of 'Fraud: Time to choose' (national report of HMICFRS published 5th August 2021)

⁴ HMCPSI- Her Majesties Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate

17. This inspection revisited a previous inspection to assess forces' response to the recommendations made in the original 'Time to Choose' report published in April 2019. Whilst the report praised CoLP in its role as national lead force in this area, it found that all too often forces continue to treat fraud as a low priority or 'victimless' crime. HMICFRS notes that fraud is an area that continues to expand and should be prioritised by forces given its impact on victims and the vulnerable.
18. Three new recommendations were made in the report, 2 are complete and 1 (which is specifically for the National Coordinator for Economic Crime) is in progress. It should be noted that as well as regular updates to the Strategic Planning and Performance (Police) Committee, updates on this have also been regularly submitted to the Economic and Cyber Crime (Police) Committee.

Police response to violence against women and girls (VAWG) - Final inspection report (national report of HMICFRS published 17th September 2021).

19. This report was commissioned by the Home Secretary following the murder of Sarah Everard in March 2021. The inspectorate carried out a root and branch review of the policing response to VAWG from prevention work in schools to the management of the most dangerous offenders. HMICFRS concluded that a new system approach is needed to end the epidemic of such violence as too many women and girls saw their cases closed without charge, with major gaps in the data recorded on VAWG offences.
20. The report made 2 recommendations directly relevant to police forces, 1 is complete and the other is in progress. Members should be aware that this area was recently subject of 'deep dive' assurance report that was submitted to the Strategic Planning and Performance (Police) Committee and Police Authority Board.

Super-complaints

Police data sharing for immigration purposes (national joint report of HMICFRS, College of Policing and Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) published 17th December 2020).

21. This investigation into what information is shared by agencies for immigration purposes concluded that immediate action by government and police was necessary to ensure vulnerable migrant victims of crime can confidently report issues to the police. Forces should restrict the sharing with immigration enforcement of information about vulnerable victims of crime, such as domestic abuse.
22. The report made 4 recommendations. 1 is complete, the remaining 3 are all dependent on the Home Office and NPCC completing actions before the Force can progress them.

The Hidden Victims - Report on Hestia's super-complaint on the police response to victims of modern slavery (national joint investigation report of HMICRS, College of Policing and Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) published 26th May 2021.

23. This super-complaint examined the policies and practices of all police forces in England and Wales with respect to the standard of support that victims of modern slavery receive. The report found that practices across forces could cause harm to the public interest in this area.

24. The report made 3 recommendations, 1 is complete and 2 remain in progress.

A duty to protect: Police use of restorative measures in cases involving violence against women and girls (national report of HMICFRS published 24th August 2021).

25. This complaint, submitted by the Centre for Women's Justice, raised concerns that the police fail to use protective measures (e.g., pre-charge bail with conditions and restraining orders) in cases involving violence against women and girls. The report concluded that the police should change their approach to using protective measures to safeguard women and girls as despite evidence of dedicated officers working to protect victims, practices were inconsistent, and powers not always used effectively.

26. The report made 7 recommendations, 3 are complete and 4 in progress, although it is anticipated they will be delivered by the end of January 2022.

Conclusion

27. The Force continues to work with the HMICFRS, in order to continuously improve the service it provides to the public and victims of crime. All progress on HMICFRS inspections is reported quarterly to the Strategic Planning and Performance Committee of the Police Authority Board which scrutinises the Force's performance in this area.

Appendices

None

Stuart Phoenix

Head of Strategic Development, City of London Police

T: 020 7601 2213

E: Stuart.Phoenix@cityoflondon.pnn.police.uk