



RESPONSE BY THE PCC TO HMICFRS INSPECTIONS OF CLEVELAND POLICE

INSPECTION DETAILS

Title of Inspection - Vetting Misconduct and misogyny in the Police service

Date Inspection Published – 2 November 2022

Type of Inspection:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cleveland Specific | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> National |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Follow Up | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thematic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Partner Inspection | |

Is Cleveland Police quoted in the Report? Yes No

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

Following the murder of Sarah Everard by a serving Metropolitan Police Officer, the case raised substantial questions about police recruitment and vetting arrangements and the standards of behaviour in the workplace. The then Home Secretary commissioned HMICFRS to carry out a thematic inspection of current vetting and counter-corruption arrangements.

The report made 43 recommendations covering the following categories

- Updating minimum standards for pre-employment checks
- Establishing better processes for assessing, analysing and managing risks relating to vetting decisions, corruption investigations and information security
- Improving the quality and consistency of vetting decision-making and improving the recording of the rationale for some decisions
- Extending the scope of the law relating to police complaint and misconduct procedures
- Strengthening guidance for forces in respect of vetting processes, relationships and behaviours in the workplace
- Understanding and defining what constitutes misogynistic and predatory behaviour in a policing context
- improving the way the police collect corruption-related intelligence
- improving the way police assess and investigate allegations of misconduct.
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FORCE RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS

All new reports into the Force follow a specific process which involves holding a plenary session with relevant stakeholders to discuss the actions and agree how they will be progressed. The outcome from this session is reported to the Deputy Chief Constable for approval; progress is then monitored through governance meetings until such a time as the action is considered complete. The process for closing actions is depicted by HMICFRS as they award each action a level and the Force complies with the appropriate course of action.

As expected, this report is receiving more attention than most other reports. So, in addition to the Force internal process all forces have also had to provide additional updates direct to the National Police Chiefs Council and some additional file reviews are being carried out by HMICFRS for reassurance.

The timing of the report coincided with the conclusion of our Force specific HMICFRS Counter Corruption (CC) and Vetting Inspection which gave us a good indication where we compare to the national picture, which was mainly positive.

The Force has received and accepted the report and recommendations. A plenary session took place and the 29 Force specific Recommendations, and 5 Areas for Improvement (AFIs) were discussed and rated, over two thirds of the recommendations are considered complete, many supported by the soon to be published CC and Vetting report findings.

Areas requiring further attention fall into the following categories:

- Quality assuring vetting decisions
- Analysing vetting data to identify, understand and respond to disproportionality.
- Reviewing vetting status following misconduct proceedings.
- Identifying required vetting levels for all posts.
- Raising awareness for staff to report changes in the personal circumstances.
- Routinely checking staff against the Police National Database (PND)
- Adding behaviour flags to newly recorded relevant cases.
- Having a robust process for completing Annual Integrity Reviews.

The Force is actively working to satisfy all the recommendations and AFIs which are discussed regularly in the relevant Governance meetings.

PCC RESPONSE TO INSPECTION

Comment by the PCC:

The PCC is committed to scrutinising Cleveland Police in respect of all aspects of violence against women and girls, police perpetrated domestic abuse and ensuring misconduct and vetting systems are fit for purpose.

At a scrutiny meeting on 20 March 2023 the PCC sought assurance on a number of related issues, including the HMICFRS Report – he asked the force the following question.

1. The PCC would like assurance that the recommendations for the Force, as listed in the HMICFRS report – An inspection of vetting, misconduct and misogyny in the police service are being actioned and that they will be implemented within the timescales set.

The Force updated the PCC on how systems to address misconduct were being strengthened and improved and as a result the PCC was comfortably assured by the robust action taken by Cleveland Police. He was also assured that the Force were progressing with the recommendations contained within the HMICFRS report.

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