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Police and Crime Commissioner  
Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer:

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## **Police and Crime Commissioner for Cleveland**

### **Scrutiny Meeting**

**Date: Tuesday 1 April 2025**

**Time: 9:00am - 10:00am**

**Venue: PCC Office/Teams [Join the meeting now](#)**

### **Agenda**

	<b>Item</b>	<b>Presented By</b>
1.	Apologies for Absence	PCC
2.	Draft Notes - Scrutiny Meeting (Right Care Right Person) - 4 February 2025 ( <i>for internal use only</i> )	PCC
3.	Scrutiny Actions - An Update	PCC
4.	Child Protection and Child Exploitation	Cleveland Police
5.	Any Other Business	PCC
6.	Date of the next meeting: Wednesday 21 May 2025 Topic: TBC	PCC



## Scrutiny Meeting 1 April 2025

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Child Protection and Child Exploitation</b>
<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Tuesday 1 April 2025</b>

### Rationale for Questions

Children are among the most vulnerable in society. Most children grow up in loving, caring families and reach adulthood unharmed. But some do not - they fall prey to people who coerce them into criminal enterprises or exploit them for sexual gratification. Children who do not grow up in loving, caring families face heightened risks, as do children who go missing from home.

Public services, including the police, have a shared responsibility to look for the warning signs, be alert to the risks and act quickly to protect children.

In 2022, the Vulnerability Knowledge and Practice Programme (VKPP) undertook a national analysis of police recorded child sexual abuse and exploitation. The analysis sets out the consistent growth in Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation (CSAE) with 107,000 crimes reported to policing, a figure that has risen significantly in the last ten years. More than half of CSAE offences were committed by children, a significant increase from what was previously known. The report also shows that over a third of CSAE contact crimes take place within the family environment. Group-based CSAE accounts for 5% of all identified and reported CSAE.

In December 2023, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Constabulary and Fire Rescue Services (HMICFRS) published a document entitled - An inspection of the effectiveness of the police and law enforcement bodies' response to group-based child sexual exploitation in England and Wales. In this report, HMICFRS identifies one area for improvement and makes nine recommendations that are intended to support the work of the Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Taskforce (Hydrant Programme).

In February 2024, HMICFRS introduced a new child protection rolling inspection programme. For each police force in England and Wales, HMICFRS makes five judgments on how effectively it safeguards children at risk.

In HMICFRS's report, published in January 2025, Cleveland Police was found as "requires improvement" in two areas, "inadequate" in two areas and "adequate" in one. The five areas are:

- Leadership of child protection arrangements (requires improvement)
- Working with safeguarding partners (adequate)
- Responding to children at risk (inadequate)
- Assessing the risk to children and making appropriate referrals (requires improvement)
- Investigating reports of abuse, neglect, and exploitation (inadequate)

The HMICFRS identified two causes of concern regarding the performance of Cleveland Police in safeguarding children at risk. These concerns relate to how the Force responds to children that are missing, and how the Force investigates online child sexual exploitation.

Following the publication of the reports referenced above, the PCC will be looking to:

- seek assurance that the Force is proactive in protecting and safeguarding children and preventing them being exposed to exploitation and harm; and
- provide reassurance to the public that the Force is making the necessary improvements at pace.

### Questions to the Chief Constable

1. In light of HMICFRS's child protection inspection findings, published in January 2025, please can the following be provided:

- a brief overview of the immediate and ongoing actions taken by the Force to respond to HMICFRS's causes of concern and subsequent recommendations; and
  - with the work that is being undertaken, details of the expected impact and outcomes and when improvements will start to be seen in this area, including those expected from Op Unified.
2. In light of the recommendations and the area of improvement referenced in the HMICFRS's 2023 report on the response to group-based child sexual exploitation, please can the following be provided:
    - details of the Force's problem profile for child sexual exploitation, including its assessment of the nature and extent of group-based child sexual exploitation;
    - information on the measures the Force has in place to identify group-based child sexual exploitation;
    - details of how the Force engages with the Hydrant Programme's continuing professional development offer;
    - information on the steps that the Force has taken to eradicate victim-blaming language; and
    - details of how the Force works with statutory safeguarding partners to review, promote and make sure that relevant group-based child sexual exploitation disruption and prevention initiatives are implemented effectively?
  3. In terms of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) and the increase in offenders aged 10 to 17, how can the Force and the OPCC work together to reduce child on child abuse and minimise the escalation of concerning sexual behaviours?

**OPCC Background Information** (OPCC will provide information they have, for example from public feedback, stakeholder engagement, OPCC work streams, scrutiny panel and joint audit committee information, any Force responses from previous scrutiny meetings, national findings/reports, HMICFRS, performance data etc).

## **LOCAL CONTEXT**

### **Force Management Statement (Published - May 2024)**

#### **Child Sexual Abuse (CSA)**

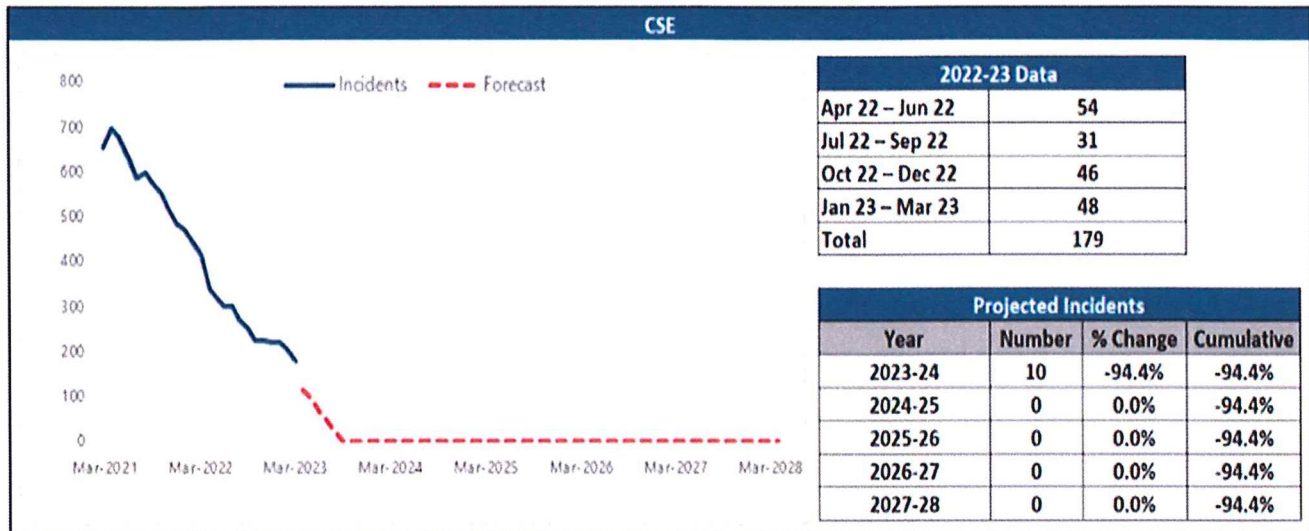
There were 2,119 crimes recorded for CSA in the 12-month period ending March 2023, an increase of 5.8% compared to the previous 12-month period ending March 2022. The total number of crimes recorded for the 12-month period ending March 2023, was 16.1% less than data analysis projected in FMS5.

The Vulnerability Knowledge and Practice Programme (VKPP) has undertaken national analysis of police recorded child sexual abuse and exploitation. The report demonstrates an increase in offenders aged 10 to 17 with 14-year-olds being the most common age. Historically child on child abuse accounted for around one third of offences but data now suggests this has increased to just over one half. Following a positive pilot in 2021-22, Barnardo's Tees Valley were awarded funding up until July 2023 to work with children in a school's context across the Cleveland area. Intervention work focussed on minimising the escalation of concerning sexual behaviours and supporting teaching staff to confidently handle safeguarding incidents. The following chart illustrates changes since March 2021 and a projection of CSA until March 2028:



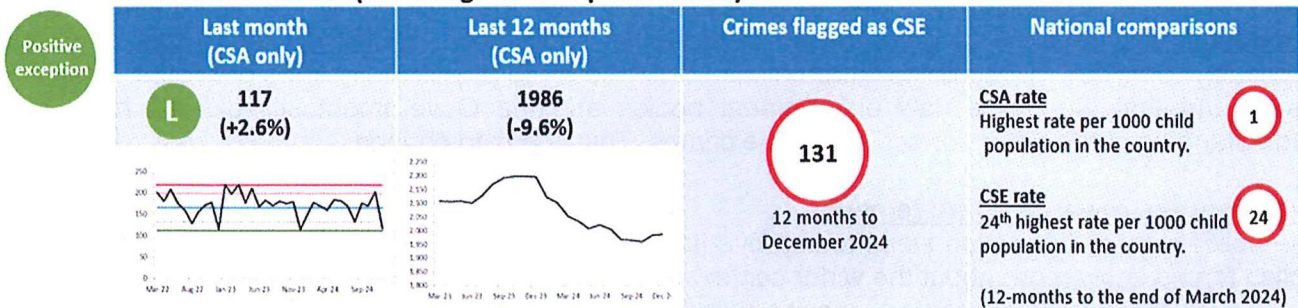
## Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

There were 179 crimes recorded with a CSE qualifier in the 12-month period ending March 2023, a decrease of 56.9% compared to the previous 12-month period ending March 2022. This measure relies on identification by the investigating officer or the Force Crime Management Unit (FCMU) that the incident is CSE and applying the correct qualifier. Previously audits found this process to be unreliable; however more recent audits have had a higher compliance rate. The total number of crimes recorded for the 12-month period ending March 2023, was 29.0% less than data analysis projected in FMS5. The following chart illustrates changes since March 2021 and a projection of CSE until March 2028:



## IMPACT Board - 30 January 2025

### Child sexual abuse (including obscene publications)



## NATIONAL CONTEXT

### Vulnerability Knowledge and Practice Programme - National Analysis of Police-Recorded Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation (CSAE) Crimes Report (January 2022 to December 2022)

The National Analysis of Police-Recorded Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Crimes Report is a transparent, public-facing and in-depth analysis of all police recorded Child Sexual Abuse & Exploitation (CSAE) crime in 2022.

The report has revealed some significant key points to influence and inform policing, partners and the public:

- **There were around 107,000 offences reported in 2022 - a 7.6% increase compared to 2021.** In fact, it is a number that has nearly quadrupled in 10 years. Evidence continues to suggest many crimes remains unreported.
- **Around 75% of CSAE offences** related to sexual offences committed against children, and around **25% relate to offences of Indecent Images of Children.** It is worth noting that CSAE covers sexual assault and rape.
- **The crime types regarding CSAE are changing.** For example, historically **child-on-child abuse** accounted for around third of offences. The data in the report suggests that today this is **just over half.**

- **CSAE within the family environment** remains a **common form** of reported abuse, accounting for an estimated 33% of **reported contact CSAE crime**. Parents and siblings were the two most common relationships featuring.
- **Group-based CSAE accounts for 5% of all identified and reported CSAE** ranging from unorganised peer group sharing of imagery, to more organised complex high harm cases with high community impact.
- **Reported CSAE is heavily gendered, as expected, with males (82% of all CSAE perpetrators) predominantly abusing females (79% of victims)**. Sexual offending involving male victims are more common in offences involving indecent images and younger children.
- **The number of recorded incidents of Online Sexual Abuse continues to grow. It accounts for at least 32% of CSAE**. It is believed this is partly because of the increased growth and popularity of mobile phones and technologies available in our lives.
- **The majority (52%) involved reports of children (aged 10 to 17) offending against other children with 14 being the most common age. This is a growing and concerning trend** (previously thought to be a third) involving a wide range of offending. Whilst some include exploratory online sexual behaviours, some of the most prevalent forms include contact abuse up to rape.

A copy of the full report can be found here: [National Analysis of Police-Recorded Child Sexual Abuse & Exploitation \(CSAE\) Crimes Report - January 2022 to December 2022](#).

### **HMICFRS - An inspection of the effectiveness of the police and law enforcement bodies' response to group-based child sexual exploitation in England and Wales (published December 2023)**

Group-based child sexual exploitation has a devastating effect on children and their families. It should not be underestimated how complex and challenging these crimes are to prevent and investigate, and the police cannot tackle them alone. The police, law enforcement bodies, government departments and child protection agencies need to work together effectively to protect children from harm and bring offenders to justice.

The purpose of the inspection was to establish how well the police and law enforcement bodies understand and respond to group-based child sexual exploitation. HMICFRS found that challenges previously identified in academic literature and reported through public inquiries persisted. HMICFRS also found that the police, law enforcement bodies and the Government still did not have a full understanding of the nature or scale of these crimes. This needs to change.

#### **The progress towards improvement**

The police service has taken steps to improve its response to child sexual exploitation over the years. Police forces know more about the wider context in which cases of child abuse occur. Many forces now undertake strategic assessments of specific child protection issues, such as child sexual abuse, grooming and indecent images of children. These assessments help senior leaders to understand the nature and scale of these issues in order to inform the development of force priorities.

However, progress remains slow. HMICFRS found that an accurate view of group-based child sexual exploitation still was not available to the police service as data collection is unreliable and intelligence gathering is not prioritised. These concerns are exacerbated by the absence of a common definition of group-based child sexual exploitation.

#### **The police service has problems identifying group-based child sexual exploitation because there is no clear definition of it**

HMICFRS found that forces were using different definitions to tackle group-based child sexual exploitation. This was demonstrated by the difficulty forces experienced in identifying (for this inspection) which child sexual exploitation cases under investigation were group-based.

Having multiple definitions creates problems for the police service and the Home Office when attempting to understand the true nature and scale of group-based child sexual exploitation. A shared definition would provide forces with greater clarity about their performance in tackling group-based child sexual exploitation. This, in turn, would support better oversight of policing practice and help the service to track progress and show it is making improvements.

### **Strategic oversight**

At the start of HMICFRS's inspection, the National Police Chiefs' Council had two separate leads in this subject area at deputy chief constable level. One was for child protection and abuse investigation and the other was for group-based child sexual exploitation. HMICFRS spoke to both leads, who had recognised the need for better national co-ordination across the police service. During the inspection, group-based child sexual exploitation became part of the wider responsibilities of the child protection and abuse investigation portfolio. This avoids duplication, co-ordinates most child protection matters and provides national leadership for the policing response. HMICFRS regard the change as an important and positive development.

### **There isn't enough reliable information about group-based child sexual exploitation**

HMICFRS visited six forces and two regional organised crime units as part of its inspection. HMICFRS found inconsistencies in how they analysed and developed intelligence on group-based child sexual exploitation. Some forces held intelligence on local rather than central intelligence systems. This meant they did not have a force-wide understanding of the problem.

The police generally use problem profiles to provide them with a greater understanding of established or emerging threats. They use data from partner organisations to help senior leaders decide how to prioritise their allocation of resources. Problem profiles also help frontline police officers and staff and their supervisors understand local risks and demands.

None of the six forces or two regional organised crime units inspected had produced a problem profile specifically for group-based child sexual exploitation. Group-based child sexual exploitation is often seen as a subset of wider child sexual abuse and exploitation. This means forces should have a problem profile for child sexual abuse or child sexual exploitation, which should ideally include an assessment of group-based child sexual exploitation. HMICFRS found two of the six forces had problem profiles for child sexual exploitation, which had been completed in the previous 12 months from the start of the inspection. But only one force had included group-based child sexual exploitation as part of a wider problem profile that related to general child sexual exploitation.

Before the inspection, HMICFRS asked each of the 43 forces in England and Wales whether they had a problem profile on child sexual exploitation; only 24 said that they did and of those, only half updated it yearly.

After HMICFRS had finished this inspection, in April 2023, the Government announced that it intended to establish a new child sexual exploitation task force. The task force aims to improve how the police respond to and tackle group-based child sexual exploitation.

### **The quality of criminal investigations is inconsistent**

HMICFRS found that forces struggled to identify group-based child sexual exploitation investigations among their wider child sexual exploitation investigations when HMICFRS requested them. However, HMICFRS was still able to identify 27 investigations into reports of group-based child sexual exploitation from the 6 forces inspected. HMICFRS assessed how well forces, regional organised crime units and National Crime Agency officers and staff recognised and identified group-based child sexual exploitation and acted to protect children harmed or at risk.

HMICFRS found that when specialist officers took charge of investigations, they were of a better quality. Specialist investigators were more likely to identify and pursue lines of enquiry promptly and to address any safeguarding concerns. This is because they have the right training and skills to investigate group-based child sexual exploitation offences.

In some of the other investigations reviewed, HMICFRS found that non-specialist investigating officers lacked the experience and training to progress investigations promptly and effectively. Enquiries were often carried out in isolation with little, if any, consideration that other incidents may be linked to or may involve additional victims, offences and associates. Developments regarding the examination of devices, such as mobile telephones, were not always recorded, and warning markers to alert others to the risks posed by individuals were often absent. This meant that opportunities were missed to identify group-based child sexual exploitation and protect other children.

### **Despite efforts to avoid criminalising children unnecessarily, in some forces HMICFRS found victim-blaming language being used**

HMICFRS found that most officers understood that children were being sexually exploited and made efforts to avoid criminalising them. In the cases reviewed, HMICFRS did not see any examples of officers making efforts to prosecute children when there was evidence of coercion and exploitation. This is positive.

HMICFRS did not find examples of victim-blaming language in three of the six forces inspected. One of these forces had challenged another organisation about its use of inappropriate language. HMICFRS commends the leadership shown by that force.

While HMICFRS found examples of specialist officers who demonstrated sensitivity and understanding in their references to victims, inappropriate language was used on a few occasions in the other three forces. HMICFRS saw more than a dozen examples of this in our audits of case file records, in focus groups with frontline officers and in a multi-agency meeting. One example was: "Concerns raised [due] to her general proclivity with older men."

The use of victim-blaming language indicates that some police personnel did not understand the vulnerability of children. It meant that responses to protect and help them were at times inadequate and risk was missed. This lack of understanding was evident from the response of two senior officers in one force when HMICFRS brought concerns to their attention. They did not appreciate that HMICFRS's findings may have demonstrated a cultural issue for the force rather than the shortcomings of individual officers. However, a senior officer in another force immediately recognised the effects this type of language might have on the approach to children and, therefore, the potential outcomes. They made it clear that they intended to address its use across the force.

### **Forces are not always doing enough to disrupt the threat of group-based child sexual exploitation**

During the inspection, HMICFRS found that most forces' use of disruption was limited and did not always involve partner agencies. For example, disruptions predominantly revolved around measures such as arresting suspects and the use of bail conditions, which might have only a short-term effect. Other options, such as targeting fast food and taxi businesses or other locations where offending is committed, were not considered by all forces.

The forces HMICFRS visited made limited use of campaigns to raise awareness of group-based child sexual exploitation. The campaigns HMICFRS saw were usually limited to one part of the force area and in some cases, were one-off local interventions.

Senior leaders interviewed recognised the importance of force-wide awareness campaigns and the need to resume them. This is because some officers HMICFRS spoke to in focus groups and interviews expressed a lack of understanding of the tools to prevent group-based child sexual exploitation. One force commented that it does not have any meaningful prevention or disruption capability when it comes to group-based child sexual exploitation or wider exploitation.

### **Recommendations**

HMICFRS have made nine recommendations and identified one area for improvement. These aim to improve how the police and law enforcement bodies understand the nature and scale of group-based child sexual exploitation and achieve better outcomes for children.

#### **Recommendation 1**

By 31 December 2024, the Home Office, the Department for Education, the Welsh Government, the National Crime Agency, the National Police Chiefs' Council and the College of Policing should adopt the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse's definition of an 'organised network' as a definition of group-based child sexual exploitation. Or they should devise and implement a suitable alternative.

#### **Recommendation 2**

By 31 December 2024, all chief constables should make sure that their forces have problem profiles for child sexual exploitation, each of which should include an assessment of the nature and extent of group-based child sexual exploitation. This should include relevant data from local partner agencies and should be updated frequently, at least annually.

### **Recommendation 3**

By 30 May 2025, the National Crime Agency should produce an assessment of group-based child sexual exploitation as part of its annual strategic assessment of serious and organised crime. The assessment should use the agreed definition of group-based child sexual exploitation from our recommendation 1.

### **Recommendation 4**

By 31 December 2024, all chief constables and the relevant business user groups for police record management systems should make sure there are sufficient measures in place to identify group-based child sexual exploitation.

### **Recommendation 5**

By 31 March 2025, the Home Office should stop collecting group-based child sexual exploitation data through its annual data requirement on custody, known as ADR149.

### **Recommendation 6**

By 31 March 2026, the Home Office should introduce a new and specific annual data requirement on group-based child sexual exploitation. This should be aligned with its existing child sexual abuse and exploitation crimes annual data requirement. The supporting guidance to forces should use the agreed definition of group-based child sexual exploitation from our recommendation 1.

### **Recommendation 7**

By 31 December 2024, the College of Policing should update its authorised professional practice on child sexual exploitation to include group-based child sexual exploitation. It should use the agreed definition from our recommendation 1.

### **Recommendation 8**

By 30 June 2024, all chief constables of forces that are yet to receive the Hydrant Programme's continuing professional development offer should arrange it.

### **Recommendation 9**

With immediate effect, all chief constables should take effective steps to eradicate victim-blaming language in their forces.

### **Area for improvement**

All chief constables should work with their statutory safeguarding partners to review, promote and make sure that relevant group-based child sexual exploitation disruption and prevention initiatives are implemented effectively in their forces.

This should include consideration of options such as the advice given in the Home Office disruption toolkit and an Operation Makesafe (a national police initiative to raise awareness of child sexual exploitation in the business community) type of approach.

A copy of the full report can be found here: [An inspection of the effectiveness of the police and law enforcement bodies' response to group-based child sexual exploitation in England and Wales - His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services](#)

### **HMICFRS National child protection inspections - Cleveland Police 17-28 June 2024 (published January 2025)**

The report sets out the findings of HMICFRS's 2024 inspection of child protection services in Cleveland Police.

In each inspection, HMICFRS focuses on the experiences of children who come into contact with the police when there are concerns about their safety or well-being.

### **HM Inspector's summary**

Cleveland Police has worked hard over the years to improve how it safeguards vulnerable children and families. But there is still much more to do.

Two causes of concern have been identified regarding the performance of Cleveland Police in safeguarding children at risk. These concerns relate to how the Force responds to children that are missing, and how the Force investigates online child sexual exploitation.

The Force does not consistently recognise the risks posed to missing children. Nor does it respond to them effectively. And the Force needs to improve how it investigates cases involving children being sexually exploited online. This includes how it assesses wider risks posed by offenders, and how it provides support to children and families.

The Force does not have enough trained officers and staff to investigate reports of child abuse, neglect and exploitation. Also, although the Force has worked hard to train its officers and staff, this training does not always result in improving outcomes for children.

The Force needs to make sure it equips officers and staff to recognise risk and consistently record the voice of the child. It needs to make sure it effectively shares relevant information with its safeguarding partners. And it needs to improve how it assesses and responds to children at risk of, or harmed by, exploitation.

Chief officers and senior leaders understand their statutory responsibilities to safeguard children. The Force chairs one of its two safeguarding children partnerships. This demonstrates the Force's investment in partnership working.

However, at an operational level, improvements are needed. Especially to the Force's joint working arrangements in managing children at risk of exploitation.

The dedication and steadfastness shown by officers and staff at Cleveland Police is commended. They are committed to safeguarding children, while operating in an increasingly complex and demanding environment. But despite the efforts of senior leadership, the Force is not yet achieving consistently good outcomes for children. This affects the provision of safeguarding and potentially leaves children at risk.

Progress will be monitored closely within Cleveland Police over the coming months.

### **Leadership of child protection arrangements**

Cleveland Police's leadership of its child protection arrangements requires improvement.

#### **Areas for improvement**

- *The Force needs more officers and staff trained to investigate reports of child abuse, neglect and exploitation*
- *The Force needs to record children's demographic information more consistently*

#### **Main findings**

- Chief officers and senior leaders understand their statutory child protection and safeguarding responsibilities, but there is no child-centred strategy in place
- The Force still needs to improve the quality of its performance data
- There are regular monthly performance meetings in local policing areas, but many senior district leaders do not use the data well enough to reduce risk to some vulnerable children
- The Force has worked hard to train its officers and staff, but the training is not always having the desired results
- The Force has invested in the welfare of its workforce, but high workloads are having a negative effect on the wellbeing of some teams

### **Working with safeguarding partners**

Cleveland Police is adequate at working with safeguarding partners.

#### **Area for improvement**

- *The Force needs to work more effectively with its safeguarding partners*

#### **Main findings**

- The Force understands and carries out its statutory responsibilities to safeguard children

- The Force learns from local and national reviews to improve the effectiveness of local safeguarding arrangements for children
- The Force works well with local and national partner organisations on safeguarding arrangements for children
- The Force invites partners to its daily district meetings

### **Responding to children at risk of harm**

Cleveland Police is inadequate at responding to children at risk of harm.

#### **Cause of concern**

- *The Force does not consistently recognise the risks posed to missing children, or respond to them effectively*

### **Recommendations**

With immediate effect, in respect of missing children, Cleveland Police should make sure that:

- officers and staff responsible for grading the risks of incidents involving missing children are sufficiently trained and able to appropriately assess the risks using all relevant information held by or available to the Force;
- risk assessments are appropriate in all cases;
- that its response is proportionate to the level of risk;
- investigations into cases of missing children are effective from the first point of contact;
- the Force works with its partners to improve the quality of prevention interviews so that the voice of the child is clearly recorded; and
- the Force policy and guidance for responding to missing people is up-to-date, and that it is consistent with the College of Policing's authorised professional practice, including the definition of serious harm.

#### **Main findings**

- The Force website provides advice and information that is beneficial for children and those who care for them
- The Force's control room is using research appropriately to highlight risks to children
- The Force uses a scheduled appointment system in its control room to effectively manage non-critical demand
- The Force's response to missing children incidents is frequently poor
- The Force's supervision of missing children incidents is inconsistent
- The Force does not always understand the links between missing children and child exploitation
- The Force responds to domestic abuse incidents well, but does not always recognise risks in incidents involving children
- Frontline officers use police protection powers well
- Officers prioritise finding suitable accommodation when taking children into police protection

### **Assessing risk to children and making appropriate referrals**

Cleveland Police requires improvement at assessing risk to children and making appropriate referrals.

#### **Areas for improvement**

- *The Force needs to make sure it equips officers and staff to recognise risk and consistently record the voice of the child, and effectively share relevant information with its safeguarding partners*
- *The Force needs to improve how it responds to child sexual exploitation*

#### **Main findings**

- The Force's understanding of child sexual exploitation has some weaknesses
- The Force is not always recognising how to support children at risk of child criminal exploitation
- The Force's protecting vulnerable people hub provides a support function to improve the quality of referrals from domestic abuse incidents
- The Force has a clear process for overseeing the domestic violence disclosure scheme, but this does not always include children
- The Force provides good multi-agency planning and support for victims and children affected by domestic abuse

- The Force regularly completes PPNs for children brought to custody
- The Force is not always recognising when to initiate strategy discussions or meetings
- There is good attendance by the Force at initial child protection conferences

### **Investigating reports of abuse, neglect and exploitation of children**

Cleveland Police is inadequate at investigating reports of abuse, neglect and exploitation of children.

#### **Cause of concern**

- *The Force should improve how it responds to and investigates cases involving children who are sexually exploited online*

#### **Recommendations**

With immediate effect, Cleveland Police should take steps to make sure:

- it allocates all exploitation investigations to officers and staff who have the appropriate knowledge and skills;
- officers and staff have the knowledge, skills and appropriate tools to identify children at risk from online child sexual exploitation and share these concerns with partners to make sure children get the right help;
- it effectively uses the Police National Database by completing intelligence checks during investigations;
- it follows all reasonable lines of enquiry to identify suspects; and
- it signposts all victims and families to available guidance and support.

#### **Main findings**

- The Force has effective arrangements to respond to the sudden and unexpected deaths of children, but the officers who need training have not received it
- The Force's initial investigation of reports of online child sexual exploitation is inadequate
- Specialist teams usually carry out good child protection investigations
- Too often the Force relies on children's social care services to decide whether a criminal investigation is required
- Some investigations are poorly supervised

#### **Next steps**

Within eight weeks of this report's publication, Cleveland Police should tell HMICFRS in writing how it has addressed or intends to address the areas for improvement, causes of concern and recommendations specified. It would be helpful for this information to be in an action plan.

A copy of the report can be found here: [National child protection inspections: Cleveland Police](#)

#### **Areas of Focus - things to consider in the response may include information on the following, where applicable**

- **Current Status** (*what is the Force doing and why*)
- **Key Successes to Date** (*what is working well and why*)
- **Areas for Development** (*what is not working so well and why, what planned work is due to take place*)
- **Assurance from Force** (*where appropriate, what will be different and by when, which forum has oversight of this work*)
- **Performance Information** (*linked to Force Performance and Quality Framework - key performance indicators related to subject area, commentary on past performance, current performance and future target performance - what does good look like?*)
- **Risks** (*identified risks to future performance/delivery and how these will be mitigated against?*)
- **Resource implications** (*are there any resource implications in terms of finance, staff, estates, IT etc?*)
- **Timescales** (*what are the timescales for delivery?*)
- **Impact** (*Where change has taken place what difference has it made, is this activity considered business as usual*)



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Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer:

Matt Storey  
Lisa Oldroyd

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## **Police and Crime Commissioner for Cleveland**

### **Scrutiny Meeting**

**Date: Wednesday 21 May 2025**

**Time: 2:30pm - 4:00pm**

**Venue: PCC Office/Teams [Join the meeting now](#)**

### **Agenda**

	<b>Item</b>	<b>Presented By</b>
1.	Apologies for Absence	PCC
2.	Draft Notes - Scrutiny Meeting (Child Protection and Child Exploitation) - 1 April 2025	PCC
3.	Scrutiny Actions 2024/25 - An Update	PCC
4.	PEEL Assessment 2023-2025	Cleveland Police
5.	Any Other Business	PCC
6.	Date of the next meeting: Wednesday 25 June 2025 Topic: Neighbourhood Policing, including residential burglary and vehicle crime	PCC

**DRAFT NOTES - SCRUTINY MEETING (CHILD PROTECTION AND CHILD EXPLOITATION) - 1 APRIL 2025**

Question	Brief Summary of Evidence	Decision of PCC
<p><b>1. In light of HMICFRS’s child protection inspection findings, published in January 2025, please can the following be provided:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>a brief overview of the immediate and ongoing actions taken by the Force to respond to HMICFRS’s causes of concern and subsequent recommendations; and</b></li> <li>• <b>with the work that is being undertaken, details of the expected impact and outcomes and when improvements will start to be seen in this area, including those expected from Op Unified.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To effectively safeguard children at risk, the Force’s approach focusses on governance, policy &amp; process, training &amp; development, communication, performance management and partnerships.</li> <li>• The Force’s approach links closely with the Chief Constable’s Strategic Plan Delivery Objective of protecting the most vulnerable from harm.</li> <li>• Since June 2024, the Force has undertaken a substantial amount of work to address the areas of concern and areas of improvement identified by His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire Rescue Services (HMICFRS).</li> <li>• The Force’s improvement journey has included developing an improvement action plan, establishing a Harm Outside The Home (HOTH) Strategic Group, agreeing an Op Unified model (an approach to vulnerability and local investigations) and introducing a Tactical Vulnerability Performance Group.</li> <li>• In terms of governance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An immediate improvement plan was developed and submitted during the HMICFRS inspection.</li> <li>• Governance arrangements have been improved at both a strategic and tactical level with weekly meetings of a Gold Group, chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable, and weekly meetings of a Silver Group, chaired by the Detective Chief Superintendent for Prevention and Safeguarding.</li> <li>• Terms of Reference have been reviewed to ensure the membership of each group includes representation from local policing teams.</li> <li>• In terms of strategic considerations, a new Tactical Vulnerability Performance Group and Missing Persons Delivery Group have been established to provide operational and tactical oversight. The information considered and discussed at these meetings is fed into the Safeguarding Governance Group and then the Force IMPACT Board.</li> <li>• The Public Protection Notice (PPN) Improvement Group now has an enhanced focus, ensuring safeguarding concerns are fully recorded and shared with partner agencies to inform a multi-agency response.</li> <li>• The submission of PPNs has improved and work is ongoing to improve the flow and exchange of information.</li> <li>• The Chief Officer Team (COT) receives weekly missing person progress updates to maintain oversight of these cases.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p align="center"><b>Partly Assured</b></p> <p align="center"><i>The PCC commends the commitment and dedication of the Force in making immediate and ongoing improvements to safeguard children at risk. The PCC will continue to monitor performance in this area.</i></p>

- In terms of policy and process:
  - Immediate process changes have been introduced to drive prompt improvements, this includes a Missing Persons Investigation Team undertaking quality and assurance activities in respect of missing person risk assessments and online Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) cases being assigned to the Paedophile Online Investigation Team (POLIT) with a new dedicated Detective Inspector.
  - A new Child First Strategy has been developed. The Child First Strategy is an approach that has been developed using evidence of what works to reduce children becoming engaged in criminal and antisocial behaviour, achieve positive outcomes, and create safer communities.
  - The Force's online Child Sexual Abuse (CSA)/CSE investigation guidance has been reviewed.
  - The Force's policy and guidance for responding to missing people has been reviewed and updated.
  - The Force's Vulnerability Strategy and the 4P (prevent, pursue, protect, prepare) plans are being developed/enhanced in line with the new national strategy. The aim of the Vulnerability Strategy is to ensure the Force is providing the best policing service to effectively identify vulnerability, respond to it and work with others to prevent harm.
  - The Force is refreshing its missing person problem solving plan.
  - In September 2025, the Force will be implementing a new delivery model, Op Unified, to manage vulnerability and local investigations. This will support the aim of improving outcomes, providing a better service to victims of crime and improving staff wellbeing.
  - The Force has developed a clear policy and has effective arrangements in place to respond to the sudden and unexpected deaths of children.
- In terms of training and development:
  - To improve the Force's response, immediate training has been delivered to the:
    - Force Control Room;
    - District Duty Officers;
    - Silver Commanders;
    - Response Inspectors; and
    - Frontline staff and supervisors.

- The Force has mandatory Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for all operational officers/staff and supervisors involved in the journey of a missing child.
- The Force has introduced CSA/CSE Subject Matter Experts (SMEs), who are based in local policing teams.
- Additional training has been delivered in respect of the Specialist Child Abuse Investigation Development Programme (SCAIDIP) and Sudden Unexpected Death in Childhood (SUDC).
- Inputs have been provided at meetings of the Force IMPACT Board, regarding the lived experience of children and recognising the voice of the child.
- The POLIT SharePoint site has been updated to provide a better understanding of the investigation process.
- In terms of communication:
  - The Force has delivered a child-centred internal communications campaign.
  - The Force has ongoing corporate communications regarding its AWARE campaign. AWARE can be used in any context and provides signs to look out for, and be aware of, to identify early intervention and safeguarding opportunities. AWARE supports both the Voice of the Child and Voice of the Vulnerable Adult risk assessments within Cleveland Police. AWARE stands for:
    - A - Appearance
    - W - Words
    - A - Activity
    - R - Relationships and dynamics
    - E - Environment
  - To assist with safeguarding children at risk, the Force ensures that regular messages are circulated to staff via COT videos and daily news articles.
  - The Force has refreshed guidance on the use of appropriate language.
  - The Force has developed a bespoke package of support for victims of online CSA/CSE.
  - Internal and external online CSE communication campaigns are currently in development.
  - The Force is delivering External Safer Internet Day webinar sessions, which are hosted by the Force's Cyber Protect and Prepare Officers.

- In terms of performance management:
  - The Force is developing a new vulnerability performance framework to recognise and respond to vulnerability-related risks.
  - Force performance frameworks are being developed to improve the visibility of children in performance outcomes.
  - New and enhanced PowerBi dashboards have been developed to monitor performance statistics and inform performance conversations at a strategic and operational level.
  - The Force has developed a new recurring audit schedule, which focusses on quality.
  - The Review and Assurance Team conduct monthly thematic audits.
  - There is a weekly review of missing child risk assessments and daily dip sampling of high-risk missing persons across all local policing areas.
  - The Force reviews/audits a sample of CSA and CSE investigations to help improve child protection arrangements.
  - The results of audits are reported to Force governance groups to ensure that any learning is actioned.
  - An officer/staff quality scorecard is being developed to drive improvement.
  - The Force is continuing to work to improve the recording of ethnicity and demographic data.
- In terms of partnerships:
  - A Tees Initial Harm Outside of the Home (HOTH) Screening Tool has been developed. This Tees-wide risk assessment and screening tool is designed to help practitioners to recognise risk from outside a child or young person's home.
  - Arrangements for the Vulnerable, Exploited, Missing, Trafficked (VEMT) Practitioners Group (VPG) and Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) are being reviewed.
  - HOTH arrangements have been agreed on a Force-wide footprint and all four local authorities will have a consistent initial triage and risk screening process.
  - Safeguarding partners attend district morning meetings and are represented in Clear/Hold/Build (CHB) governance structures. CHB is a framework for bringing the tackling of serious and organised crime threats into neighbourhood policing.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work is being undertaken to validate data quality relating to regulated and unregulated placements.</li> <li>• Work is being undertaken with local authority partners to improve return interview acceptance rates.</li> <li>• Guidance is being developed regarding the requesting and attending of strategy meetings.</li> <li>• An improved process has been developed for recording and updating strategy meetings.</li> <li>• To date, the Force's work in this area has secured improvements in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• risk assessment accuracy and quality</li> <li>• reductions in missing children and reductions in repeat incident rates involving children; and</li> <li>• successful investigation and prosecution of offenders.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<p><b>2. In light of the recommendations and the area of improvement referenced in the HMICFRS's 2023 report 'An inspection of the effectiveness of the police and law enforcement bodies' response to group-based child sexual exploitation in England and Wales', please could the force provide an update in relation to progress made?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Force is making good progress with implementing the recommendations outlined in the report.</li> <li>• The Force has recently submitted a progress update to HMICFRS.</li> <li>• The Force is currently developing a problem profiles for CSE and CSA. The CSE profile will include an assessment of the nature and extent of group-based child sexual exploitation.</li> <li>• The Force has received the Hydrant Programme's continuing professional development offer. The Force takes part in peer reviews, peer support, debriefs and CPD.</li> <li>• The Force continues to take effective steps to eradicate victim-blaming language and regular audits of case files are undertaken.</li> <li>• The Force continues to work with statutory safeguarding partners to review, promote and make sure that relevant group-based child sexual exploitation disruption and prevention initiatives are implemented effectively.</li> <li>• The Force recognises the importance of outreach work to improve intelligence and target resources effectively.</li> <li>• The Force is reviewing its Niche operational platform to ensure group-based child sexual exploitation can be identified.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>3. In terms of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) and the increase in offenders aged 10 to 17, how can the Force</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Around half of CSA offences in Cleveland are committed by children.</li> <li>• The Force welcomes the opportunity to work alongside the OPCC to develop and enhance opportunities to work with partners to prevent and reduce offending and escalation. This work should focus on:</li> </ul>	

<p><b>and the OPCC work together to reduce child on child abuse and minimise the escalation of concerning sexual behaviours?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improving the educational offer e.g. POL-ED;</li> <li>• introducing specialist outreach resources;</li> <li>• capturing the voice of young people;</li> <li>• assisting in reducing exclusions from Teesside education establishments;</li> <li>• continuing the prevention and education journey with partners; and</li> <li>• developing a children’s scrutiny panel.</li> </ul>	
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**Actions**

1	That the topic of Child Protection and Safeguarding be revisited by the PCC next year and that performance data, demonstrating the impact of the Force’s work in this area, be presented.
2	That, once finalised, a copy of the Force’s CSE Problem Profile and the CSA Problem Profile be sent to the PCC/OPCC.
3	That a copy of the Force’s progress update/report, regarding the implementation of recommendations associated with HMICFRS’s 2023 publication on group-based child sexual exploitation, be sent to the PCC/OPCC.

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**Scrutiny Meeting  
21 May 2025**

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>PEEL Assessment 2023-2025</b>
<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Wednesday 21 May 2025</b>

**Rationale for Questions**

On 10 April 2025, His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) published its PEEL (police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy) Assessment 2023-25 for Cleveland Police and graded the force’s performance across eight areas. It found the service was ‘good’ in four areas, ‘adequate’ in two areas and ‘requires improvement’ in two areas.

HMICFRS is pleased with the performance of Cleveland Police in keeping people safe, reducing crime and giving victims an effective service. But in order to provide a consistently good service, there are still areas in which the force needs to do better, such as protecting vulnerable people and carrying out investigations. However, the HMICFRS is optimistic that the force’s leadership and management, together with its committed officers and staff, will continue to make improvements.

- Following the publication of the Cleveland PEEL Assessment 2023-25, the PCC will be looking to:
- seek assurance that the force has sufficient plans in place to address the areas of improvement identified by the HMICFRS;
  - provide reassurance to the public that the force is making the necessary improvements at pace; and
  - seek confirmation that good performance will be improved upon, maintained and monitored to clearly demonstrate the impact of improvements on outcomes for victims of crime, the public, officers and staff.

**Questions to the Chief Constable**

1. Following receipt of the early indications of HMICFRS’s findings, what improvements were immediately put in place?
2. In relation to the ‘areas for improvement’, identified within the report, what will be different and by when?
3. How does the Force plan to maintain, and improve on, good performance?

**OPCC Background Information** (OPCC will provide information they have, for example from public feedback, stakeholder engagement, OPCC work streams, scrutiny panel and joint audit committee information, any Force responses from previous scrutiny meetings, national findings/reports, HMICFRS, performance data etc).

In 2014, HMICFRS introduced its PEEL (police efficiency, effectiveness and legitimacy) inspections, which assess the performance of all 43 police forces in England and Wales. Since then, HMICFRS has been continuously adapting its approach and has moved to a more intelligence-led, continual assessment approach.

On 10 April 2025, HMICFRS published its PEEL Assessment 2023-25 for Cleveland Police.

The report covers the inspection findings across the areas of the PEEL assessment framework. It is informed by evidence gathered through the continuous assessment activity and final evidence collection period of the PEEL programme. It does not take account of any developments or action carried out since the final evidence collection period.

In the financial year 2023/24, Cleveland Police received the equivalent of £273 per resident. This is within the typical range for forces in England and Wales. The force received 28.9 percent of its funding from

precept, which is at the lower end of the typical range for forces across England and Wales for which the average is 35.6 percent.

In the Cleveland Police area, 33.5 percent of neighbourhoods were in the top 10 percent most deprived for employment across England and Wales, and 32.1 percent of neighbourhoods were in the top 10 percent most deprived for household income. For household income deprivation, this is the highest level of any police area, and much higher than the England and Wales average of 9.2 percent.

In the year ending 31 March 2024, Cleveland Police had the highest level of recorded incidents per 100,000 population among forces in England and Wales. It also received an above-average number of 999 calls per 1,000 population than England and Wales. The force answers most of those calls quickly, and it assesses the level of risk appropriately.

Since the HMICFRS's earlier PEEL Assessment 2021-22, the force has improved the policing service it provides for the public. Officers, staff and volunteers continue to work hard to serve the communities of Cleveland. Because of that work, the force has made progress in all areas since its last PEEL inspection and has improved in most judgment grades. But it recognises that there is still work to do, and HMICFRS has identified areas in which it needs to improve.

HMICFRS's inspection assessed how good Cleveland Police is in nine areas of policing. The HMICFRS graded judgments in eight of these nine as follows:

Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires improvement	Inadequate
	Police powers and public treatment	Responding to the public	Investigating crime	
	Preventing crime	Leadership and force management	Protecting vulnerable people	
	Managing offenders			
	Developing a positive workplace			

HMICFRS also inspected how effective a service Cleveland Police gives to victims of crime. HMICFRS do not make a graded judgment for this area.

### **Leadership**

Using the College of Policing leadership standards as a framework, in this section HMICFRS set out the most important findings relating to the force's leadership at all levels.

The force's investments and change plans align with its clear strategy. The force uses data and analysis to understand its current and future demand. It has reviewed its policing model and resources to meet the demand it faces.

The force's structured governance and performance arrangements correspond to its strategy and priorities. Through these arrangements, the force holds senior leaders to account for its productivity and proactivity, and the quality of the service it provides for the public. During the inspection, HMICFRS found improvements to the way the force approaches prevention. HMICFRS also found a developing culture of problem-solving.

The chief constable has a cohesive chief officer team. The force has a clear strategic direction, and officers and staff understand the priorities.

Officers and staff see the chief officer team at policing operations and roadshows, where chief officers reiterate force plans, investments and priorities. They also celebrate success and remind the workforce of the force's values and expected standards. HMICFRS found that officers and staff were highly complimentary about the chief officer team and its leadership.

The force understands what it needs from its leaders and there is a development route for achieving this. The force supports student officers well. The local police development units act as a point of contact, giving student officers support and mentorship during the assessment phase of their training.

The force is also now successfully attracting more experienced and skilled officers than it is losing to other areas. First-line managers support the workforce's well-being.

More detail on Cleveland Police's leadership is included in the main body of the report.

### **Reducing crime assessment**

The reducing crime assessment sets out what Cleveland Police is doing to reduce crime and how effective this action is. This assessment doesn't include police recorded crime figures. This is because they can be affected by variations and changes in recording policy and practice, making it difficult to draw comparisons over time.

The force understands its current and future demand. It has invested in a prevention command and is developing a problem-solving culture across the force. The neighbourhood policing teams work well with communities to understand and meet their needs. They are working on building the public's trust and confidence, and they encourage members of the public to share information to help reduce and detect crime.

The force works well with other organisations. This helps it develop long-term, sustainable plans to find the root cause of repeat problems and to make changes that will benefit communities. When crimes take place, officers generally take positive action to arrest offenders. The force is working on improving the way it supervises its investigations, and on making sure it follows all reasonable lines of enquiry.

The force has early intervention programmes to divert young and vulnerable people from committing crime. The force has problem-solving plans to reduce and detect neighbourhood crime such as robbery and burglary. Good governance and performance arrangements evaluate the effectiveness of its problem-solving.

The overwhelming majority of recorded grounds for stop and search are reasonable. This helps the force reduce crime. The force uses analysis and monitoring at force-level meetings to understand and improve the way it uses stop and search powers. It can show that its use of stop and search is fair and effective, and that it helps to reduce crime.

More detail on what Cleveland Police is doing to reduce crime is included in the main body of the report.

### **Providing a service to victims of crime**

#### **Victim service assessment**

This section of the report describes HMICFRS's assessment of the service Cleveland Police provides to victims. This is from the point of reporting a crime and throughout the investigation. As part of this assessment, HMICFRS reviewed 100 case files. Although the victim service assessment is ungraded, it influences graded judgments in the other areas inspected.

#### **Main findings:**

- The force carries out a structured initial triage when it receives calls for service, but it doesn't always record the vulnerability of the caller
- In most cases, the force responds promptly to calls for service
- The force carries out timely investigations, but they aren't always thorough or effective
- The force assigns the right outcome types to investigations

### **Police powers and treating the public fairly and respectfully**

**Grade: Good**

## **Cleveland Police is good at using police powers and treating people fairly and respectfully.**

### **Main findings:**

In this section of the report, HMICFRS sets out its main findings that relate to police powers and treating people fairly and respectfully.

- The force trains its officers and staff to work and communicate with the public respectfully
- The force uses stop and search powers fairly and respectfully
- The force has external scrutiny of stop and search and use of force
- The force is improving the way it records use of force

## **Preventing and deterring crime and antisocial behaviour, and reducing vulnerability**

### **Grade: Good**

### **Cleveland Police is good at prevention and deterrence.**

#### **Promising practice:**

Cleveland Police deploys a medicar – a car containing a police officer, a paramedic and emergency equipment

#### **Main findings:**

In this section of the report, HMICFRS sets out its main findings that relate to prevention and deterrence.

- The force prioritises prevention
- The force is developing a culture of problem-solving
- The force works well with partners to prevent crime and antisocial behaviour
- The force has a good understanding of antisocial behaviour, and it uses prevention powers well
- The force listens to communities and works with them to make the area safer
- The force supports local people to volunteer and get involved in local policing activities
- The force has an effective neighbourhood policing model

## **Responding to the public**

### **Grade: Adequate**

### **Cleveland Police is adequate at responding to the public.**

#### **Areas for improvement**

- Cleveland Police should improve the way it flags vulnerable people on its incident logs
- Cleveland Police needs to attend calls for service in line with its published attendance times

#### **Main findings**

In this section of the report, HMICFRS sets out its main findings that relate to how well the force responds to the public.

- The force effectively oversees control room performance
- The force needs to make sure call handlers give appropriate advice on preserving evidence and preventing crime
- The force gives its call handlers technology to help them carry out risk assessments, and access specialist support and external experts
- The force performs well in relation to non-emergency calls
- The force should continue to focus on improving its performance in relation to emergency calls
- The force appropriately prioritises the calls it receives for service

## **Investigating crime**

### **Grade: Requires improvement**

### **Cleveland Police requires improvement at investigating crime.**

#### **Areas for improvement:**

- Cleveland Police doesn't consistently achieve appropriate outcomes for victims
- Cleveland Police needs to make sure it completes a victim needs assessment when appropriate

#### **Main findings:**

In this section of the report, HMICFRS sets out its main findings that relate to how well the force investigates crime.

- The force is improving the way it governs and oversees investigations
- The force needs to make sure it allocates investigations to people with the right skills and experience to carry out high-quality investigations
- The force supports response officers to manage their investigations
- The digital forensic unit has the capacity and capability to manage demand

## **Protecting vulnerable people**

### **Grade: Requires improvement**

**Cleveland Police requires improvement at protecting vulnerable people.**

#### **Areas for improvement:**

- Cleveland Police should continue to improve the strategic and tactical oversight of its safeguarding strategy and tactical plans
- Cleveland Police should improve its initial response to reports of domestic abuse

#### **Main findings:**

In this section of the report, HMICFRS set out its main findings that relate to how well the force protects vulnerable people.

- The force is changing the way it uses its investigative resources to meet the demand for its services
- The force listens to feedback from victims and other organisations to help it improve its service to the public
- To protect victims of domestic abuse, the force applies for prevention orders and monitors its use of them
- The force makes good use of the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme
- The force works well with other organisations to help keep vulnerable people safe

## **Managing offenders and suspects**

### **Grade: Good**

**Cleveland Police is good at managing offenders and suspects.**

#### **Main findings:**

In this section of the report, HMICFRS sets out its main findings that relate to how well the force manages offenders and suspects.

- The force has clear policies on arresting wanted suspects
- The force effectively monitors its use of pre-charge bail to safeguard victims
- The force effectively manages the risks posed by the most dangerous offenders
- The force routinely considers using ancillary or prevention orders to protect the public from the most dangerous offenders
- The force investigates online child abuse images in line with nationally recognised risk assessment time limits

## **Building, supporting and protecting the workforce**

### **Grade: Good**

**Cleveland Police is good at building, supporting and protecting the workforce.**

#### **Promising practice:**

- Cleveland Police has a culture that focuses on well-being

#### **Main findings:**

In this section of the report, HMICFRS sets out its main findings that relate to how well the force builds, supports and protects the workforce.

- The force has improved its governance arrangements for building, supporting and protecting the workforce
- The force's occupational health unit supports and improves workforce well-being
- The force is improving its support for the well-being of officers and staff in high-risk roles, and for those who attend potentially traumatic incidents
- The force effectively supports new recruits and encourages them to stay in policing
- The force is making efforts to retain new recruits
- The force is committed to developing its first-line leaders
- The force offers some support for officers and staff from under-represented groups to develop and progress

## **Leadership and force management**

### **Grade: Adequate**

**Cleveland Police's leadership and management is adequate.**

#### **Areas for improvement:**

- Cleveland Police's operating model should allow it to respond effectively and consistently to priorities, and to assess current and future demand

- Cleveland Police has invested in some new digital processes to help reduce sources of internal demand, but several processes are still inefficient

**Main findings:**

In this section of the report, HMICFRS sets out its main findings that relate to leadership and management.

- The force has improved its governance structure and performance framework, and it is working with its community to provide a better service
- The force's leadership is more visible and engaging
- The force's operating model doesn't always help its workforce respond to current and future demand
- The force collaborates well with other organisations, but it needs to invest in technology
- The force understands its finances and is using its reserves to smooth the impact of expenditure

The full report is available to read on the HMICFRS website here: [His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services - His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services.](#)

**Areas of Focus - things to consider in the response may include information on the following, where applicable**

- **Current Status** (*what is the Force doing and why*)
- **Key Successes to Date** (*what is working well and why*)
- **Areas for Development** (*what is not working so well and why, what planned work is due to take place*)
- **Assurance from Force** (*where appropriate, what will be different and by when, which forum has oversight of this work*)
- **Performance Information** (*linked to Force Performance and Quality Framework - key performance indicators related to subject area, commentary on past performance, current performance and future target performance - what does good look like?*)
- **Risks** (*identified risks to future performance/delivery and how these will be mitigated against?*)
- **Resource implications** (*are there any resource implications in terms of finance, staff, estates, IT etc?*)
- **Timescales** (*what are the timescales for delivery?*)
- **Impact** (*Where change has taken place what difference has it made, is this activity considered business as usual*)

**NOTES - SCRUTINY MEETING (PEEL ASSESSMENT 2023-2025) - 21 MAY 2025**

Question	Brief Summary of Evidence	Decision of PCC
<p><b>1. Following receipt of the early indications of HMICFRS's findings, what improvements were immediately put in place?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immediate improvements are usually linked to 'causes of concern' i.e. a serious issue identified during the inspection process indicating a problem with a force's practice, policy or performance.</li> <li>• There were no causes of concern identified during the recent inspection. Activity associated with identified 'areas for improvement' (AFIs), will be delivered via the Force's continuous improvement processes and long-term strategic plan.</li> <li>• Questions raised throughout the inspection process were tracked and monitored to ensure appropriate action was taken in advance of the report being released.</li> <li>• <b>Appendix 1</b> provides details of the Force's improvement journey.</li> <li>• <b>Appendix 2</b> demonstrates the significant improvements that have been made since the previous inspection in March 2023. The Force has improved the policing service it provides to the public, it has made progress in all areas since the last inspection and has improved in most judgment grades.</li> </ul>	<p align="center"><b>Assured</b></p> <p><i>The PCC noted the journey of improvement the Force had made since the last PEEL inspection and was assured that with its robust governance and internal assurance processes, the Force was well placed to achieve positive improvements in the next inspection.</i></p>
<p><b>2. In relation to the 'areas for improvement', identified within the report, what will be different and by when?</b></p>	<p><b>Responding to the public</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In terms of responding to public and securing improvements in flagging vulnerable people on incident logs, the Force has: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• introduced enhancements to the Initial Contact Enquiry (ICE) system to assist with the assessment of risk;</li> <li>• updated the question set used by call handlers to ensure there is a key focus on vulnerability;</li> <li>• revised methodology for quality assurance audits and additional scrutiny of THRIVE (threat, harm, risk, investigation, vulnerability and engagement) assessments;</li> <li>• introduced the AWARE mnemonic to help identify early intervention and safeguarding opportunities; and</li> <li>• secured a notable improvement in its priority response, however, work will continue to improve the timeliness of the response to incidents involving vulnerable people.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• As a result of the work undertaken by the Force in respect of this area of policing, early indications of progress include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an increase in the number of THRIVE assessments assessed as 'good' or 'outstanding';</li> <li>• an increase in the number of priority incidents attended on target; and</li> <li>• a significant reduction in the average time taken to respond to a vulnerable victim.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Investigating crime</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In terms of investigating crime and securing improvements in investigative outcomes, the Force has: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• developed a co-ordinated approach with recognisable branding;</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

- developed an investigative approach to Continuous Professional Development;
- focussed on improving detective resilience;
- re-designed the crime assessment and allocation framework;
- enhanced performance management and data insight in relation to crime investigations;
- introduced Thematic Testing to assess the quality of investigations;
- focussed on staff wellbeing and introduced protected time through Op Shield and Op Excellence; and
- provides recognition of good work e.g. Achieving Investigative Excellence (AIE) Awards and 'You Made an Impact' cards.
- In terms of investigating crime and securing improvements in supporting the needs of the victim, the Force has:
  - progressed activity through the Victims and Witnesses Group;
  - developed more robust and visible performance management in relation to the Victims' Code;
  - devised Victim Needs Assessment Problem Solving Plans to address any gaps;
  - developed a Citizens Portal; and
  - focussed on case file quality to improve outcomes for victims and address demand.
- As a result of the work undertaken by the Force in respect of this area of policing, early indications of progress include:
  - an increase in the number of accredited detectives;
  - a reduction in vacancy levels;
  - an increase in the solved crime rate;
  - an increase in the use of out of court disposals;
  - an increase in the completion of timely supervisor reviews;
  - an increase in the completion of victim needs assessments; and
  - an increase in the provision of timely updates to victims.

#### **Protecting vulnerable people**

- In terms of protecting vulnerable people and securing improvements in oversight of safeguarding strategy and tactical plans, the Force has:
  - refreshed its Vulnerability Strategy and aligned it to the National Strategy, which is underpinned by the 4Ps (Prepare, Protect, Prevent, and Pursue);
  - strengthened its governance arrangements, including a Tactical Vulnerability Performance Group and Domestic Abuse Improvement Board;
  - developed a bespoke Vulnerability Performance Framework to track and monitor delivery; and
  - developed more detailed performance dashboards to provide additional transparency and further insight.

- As a result of the work undertaken by the Force in respect of this area of policing, early indications of progress include:
  - an increase in the child concern Public Protection Notice (PPN) submission rate;
  - an increase in the identification of high-risk missing children;
  - a reduction in the number of repeat missing children;
  - a reduction in the average time to locate missing children; and
  - a reduction in the child repeat victim rate.
- In terms of protecting vulnerable people and securing improvements in the initial response to reports of domestic abuse, the Force has:
  - introduced changes to the deployment policy regarding use of appointments;
  - reviewed the Vulnerability Desk and Rapid Video Response pilot;
  - introduced the RADAR Domestic Abuse Response Model;
  - introduced a domestic abuse question set for call handlers and reporting via Single On-line Home; and
  - introduced a new Domestic Abuse Improvement Board to drive and scrutinise progress.
- As a result of the work undertaken by the Force in respect of this area of policing, early indications of progress include:
  - an increase in arrest rate;
  - higher levels of PPN completion;
  - an increase in solved crime rate;
  - a reduction in the victim withdrawal rate; and
  - an increase in victim satisfaction rate.

**Leadership and management**

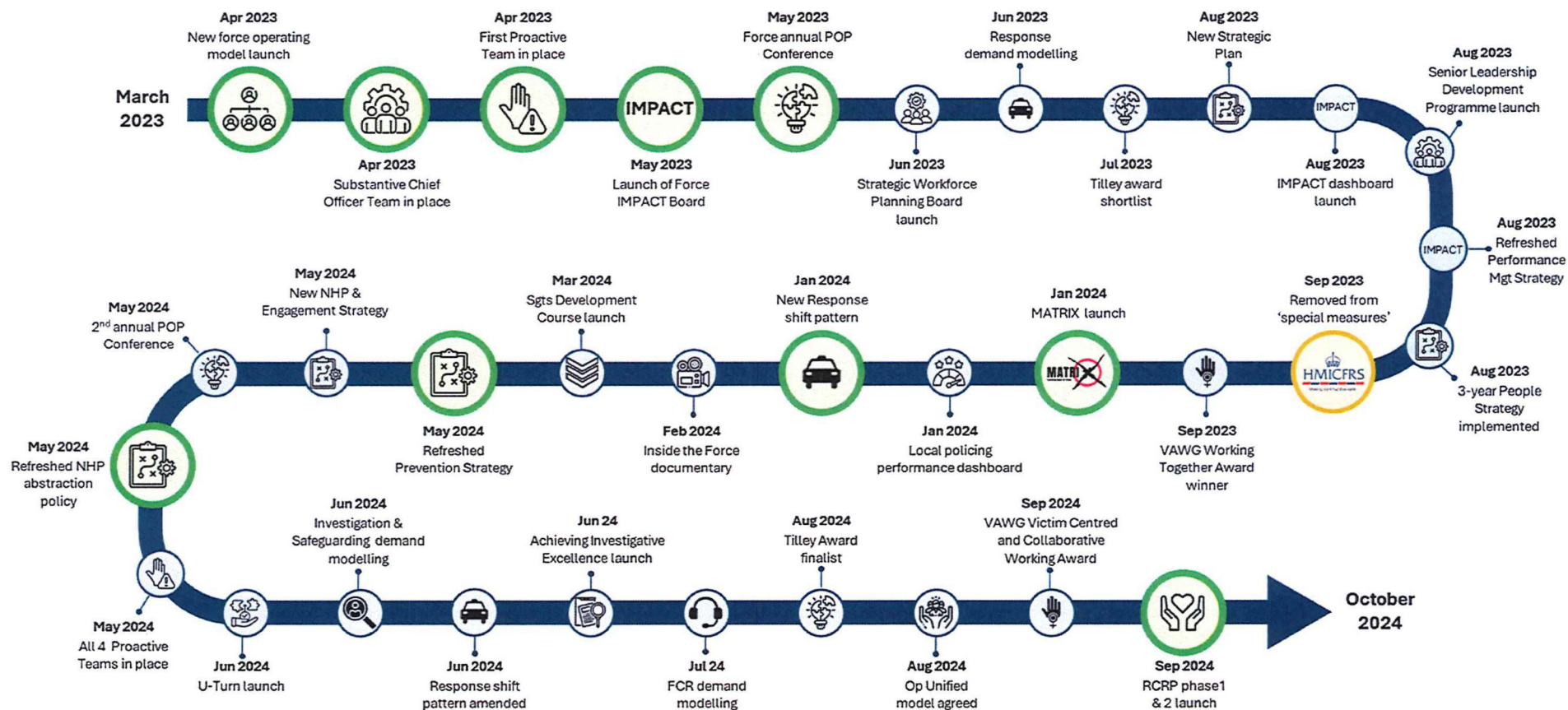
- In terms of leadership and management and securing improvements in demand management and resource allocation, the Force has:
  - introduced a Monthly Officer Deployment Group;
  - developed demand models for most operational teams and an annual demand modelling plan;
  - completed scenario modelling to test the impact of resourcing changes;
  - developed further changes to Force Operating Model to improve service delivery and resource efficiency - Op Unified;
  - introduced annual resourcing and Training Needs Analysis (TNA) reviews, as part of Force Management Statement (FMS) process;
  - introduced ongoing monitoring of officer workloads;
  - introduced skills balancing, which is built into all shift pattern review activity;
  - invested significantly in additional training and upskilling, following the National Child Protection Inspection (NCPI); and
  - improved detective resilience and crime allocation.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In terms of leadership and management and securing improvements in processes and increasing productivity through the use of technology, the Force has: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• developed a new Force Digital Strategy, which will be launched in 2025;</li> <li>• revised the operating structure for the Data, Digital and Technology (DDAT) command;</li> <li>• introduced more robust governance to support improved data quality and its use e.g. Niche Tactical Working Group, Data Ethics Board, Data Quality Tactical Working Group, Legacy Systems Working Group;</li> <li>• implemented system upgrades and platform developments relating to legacy systems e.g. Oracle;</li> <li>• developed iPatrol functionality, including desktop access;</li> <li>• rolled out redaction software;</li> <li>• continued development and deployment of Robotic Process Engineering and artificial intelligence;</li> <li>• developed Power Bi dashboards and refinement of others to improve data transparency and insight, whilst maximising automation opportunities; and</li> <li>• launched a quality improvement programme to improve process efficiency and reduce demand.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<p><b>3. How does the Force plan to maintain, and improve on, good performance?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To maintain, and improve on, good performance the Force has robust governance and scrutiny arrangements in place.</li> <li>• The Force has in place a GAIN Board, an Improving and Managing Performance Across Cleveland Together (IMPACT) Board, Thematic Delivery and Assurance meetings and a Strategic Actions and Recommendations Tracker, the Force uses these mechanisms to fully understand and monitor performance, manage demand and hold people to account for making improvements to services.</li> <li>• A designated Chief Officer leads and questions owners for each element of the PEEL Assessment Framework (PAF).</li> <li>• The Force takes a proactive approach to evidence gathering and has a central storage repository i.e. FIVES - Force Inspections and Visits Evidence Store.</li> <li>• Further external assurance will be provided, in respect of the Force's governance and scrutiny arrangements, via a commissioned RSM audit.</li> </ul>	

# Cleveland Police's Improvement Journey

## Our improvement journey

We have made significant improvements with limited external support



**PEEL Outcomes**

Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires improvement	Inadequate
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**April  
2025**

Police powers and public treatment	Responding to the public	Investigating crime	
Preventing crime	Leadership and force management	Protecting vulnerable people	
Managing offenders			
Developing a positive workforce			

**March  
2023**

Recording data about crime	Engaging with and treating the public with fairness and respect	Investigating crime	Preventing crime and anti-social behaviour
	Responding to the public	Protecting vulnerable people	Good use of resources
	Managing offenders and suspects	Building, supporting and protecting the workforce	
	Disrupting serious organised crime		



**Police and Crime Commissioner for Cleveland**  
**c/o St Marks House**  
**St Marks Court**  
**Thornaby**  
**Stockton on Tees**  
**TS17 6QW**

Email: [pcc@cleveland.pnn.police.uk](mailto:pcc@cleveland.pnn.police.uk)  
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Police and Crime Commissioner  
Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer:

Matt Storey  
Lisa Oldroyd

Tel: 01642 301861  
Tel: 01642 301861

## **Police and Crime Commissioner for Cleveland**

### **Scrutiny Meeting**

**Date: Tuesday 9 July 2024**

**Time: 14:30 - 16:00**

**Venue: PCC Office/Teams [Click here to join the meeting](#)**

### **Agenda**

	<b>Item</b>	<b>Presented By</b>
1.	Apologies for Absence	PCC
2.	Notes - Scrutiny Meeting (Neighbourhood Policing) - 11 June 2024	PCC
3.	Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR)	Cleveland Police
4.	Any Other Business	PCC
5.	Date of the next meeting: Tuesday 3 September 2024 Topic: Use of Out of Court Disposals and Outcome 16 (victim does not support further action)	PCC



## Scrutiny Meeting

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR)</b>
<b>Meeting date</b>	<b>Tuesday 9 July 2024</b>

### Rationale for Questions

The revised Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR) published in 2023 provides, for the first time, strengthened detail around the action required from policing at the local and regional level to the critical national threats. It supports policing, both Chief Constables and Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs), to plan, prepare and respond to these threats by clearly linking the local response to the national, highlighting the capabilities and partnerships that policing needs to ensure it can fulfil its national responsibilities.

One of the main requirements of PCCs within the SPR is to hold their Chief Constable accountable for ensuring they meet their duty within the SPR. Chief Constables, alongside PCCs, are responsible for the implementation of the SPR and ensuring that their force fulfils its national responsibilities for tackling the national threats.

PCCs are required to have regard to the SPR when issuing or varying their police and crime plans. They must keep the police and crime plan under review in light of any changes made to the SPR by the Home Secretary. Chief Constables must have regard to both the police and crime plan and the SPR when exercising their functions.

In receiving information on the SPR, the PCC will be looking to:

- hold the Chief Constable to account for the delivery of functions associated with the SPR;
- seek assurance that the Force has an effective and proportionate response to each of the national threats; and
- formulate the Police and Crime Plan and the Annual Report and pay due regard to the SPR threat types in both documents.

### Questions to the Force

What is the Force's assessment of its ability and preparedness to fulfil the requirements of the SPR?

To include details of:

- i) the process to assess, plan, prepare and respond each threat type;
- ii) the governance and reporting mechanisms to ensure that the Force is fulfilling its responsibilities for tackling the seven threats; and
- iii) the threat types that have been identified as the most significant risks locally and the response required to fully combat these risks.

**OPCC Background Information** (OPCC will provide information they have, for example from public feedback, stakeholder engagement, OPCC work streams, scrutiny panel and joint audit committee information, any Force responses from previous scrutiny meetings, national findings/reports, HMICFRS, performance data etc).

### Home Office -The Strategic Policing Requirement

In 2023, the Home Office revised the SPR. The SPR contains seven national threats overall, reaffirming the validity of six national threats from the previous 2015 version, which are terrorism, serious and organised crime (SOC), a national cyber incident, child sexual abuse,

public order and civil emergencies. It also includes Violence against Women and Girls, reflecting the threat it presents to public safety and confidence at the time of publication.

### **Violence Against Women and Girls**

The term violence against women and girls refers to acts of violence or abuse that disproportionately affect women and girls. Crimes and behaviour covered by this term include rape and other sexual offences, domestic abuse, stalking, 'honour'-based abuse (including female genital mutilation, forced marriage, and 'honour' killings), as well as many others, including offences committed online. While the term 'violence against women and girls' is used this refers to all victims of any of these offences.

### **Terrorism**

Terrorism is the use of, or threat of, action that inflicts serious violence against a person, serious damage to property, endangers a person's life (other than the person committing the action), creates a serious risk to the health or safety of the public, and/or is designed to seriously interfere with or disrupt an electronic system where that use of threat is designed to influence the government or an international governmental organisation, or to intimidate the public or a section of the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, ideological, racial or religious cause. This action could include, but is not limited to, activity carried out using explosives, firearms, vehicles as a weapon, low sophistication devices (such as bladed weapons), and chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) weapons by international and domestic groups or individuals.

### **Serious and Organised Crime**

Serious and organised crime (SOC) is defined as individuals planning, coordinating, and committing serious offences, whether individually or in groups and/ or as part of transnational networks. The main categories of SOC are: child sexual abuse, modern slavery and human trafficking and organised immigration crime (vulnerabilities); illegal drugs (including supply methodologies such as county lines), illegal firearms; and organised acquisitive crime (communities); and cybercrime, fraud, money laundering, bribery and corruption, and sanctions evasion (economic).

### **National Cyber Event**

A national cyber event covers cyber-attacks across the thirteen sectors of the Critical National Infrastructure (CNI) which include: chemicals, civil nuclear communications, defence, emergency services, energy, finance, food, government, health, space, transport and water. It covers those incidents identified as Category 1 (C1) or Category 2 (C2) as defined by the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC). A C1 incident is a "national cyber emergency" which causes sustained disruption of UK essential services or affects UK national security, leading to severe economic or social consequences, or to a loss of life. A C2 incident is a "highly significant incident" which has a serious impact on central government, UK essential services, a large proportion of the UK population or the UK economy. Additionally, a C3 (High) incident may also be relevant. A C3 incident is "a cyber attack which has a serious impact on a large organisation or on wider / local government, or which poses a considerable risk to central government or UK essential services. A "High" flag is applied when there is a particular sensitivity, speed of response, or additional level of response resource required.

### **Child Sexual Abuse**

Child sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images,

watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

### **Public Disorder**

Public disorder can take many forms and can include rioting, looting, vandalism, violence and arson. There are a number of trigger or flash points that could lead to localised disorder including controversial or fatal incidents involving the police and public; escalating inter-community tensions; and large-scale organised protest at risk of hijack by those intent on causing public disorder. Lawful protests are not considered a form of disorder and we support the right to protest peacefully, where such protests do not cause serious disruption to the lives of others.

### **Civil Emergencies**

A civil emergency is an event or situation which threatens serious damage to human welfare in a place in the UK, the environment of a place in the UK, or war or terrorism which threatens serious damage to the security of the UK. It covers, but is not limited to, events such as natural hazards, severe weather, flooding, human and animal disease, major industrial or transport accidents, and terrorist or cyber security incidents.

### **SPR Application**

The SPR applies to Chief Constables and PCCs in Home Office forces in England and Wales and supports them to ensure their force fulfils its national responsibilities in tackling the national threats. The SPR:

- a) helps PCCs to plan effectively, in consultation with their Chief Constable, for policing challenges that go beyond their force boundaries;
- b) guides Chief Constables in the exercise of these functions; and
- c) enables and empowers PCCs to hold their Chief Constable to account for the delivery of these functions.

### **APCC Guidance: The Strategic Policing Requirement**

In 2024, the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) produced guidance as a resource to assist PCCs in understanding and adhering to the statutory requirements of the SPR. The purpose of the guidance is to enhance accountability and transparency with respect to the duty to have regard to the SPR. The document aims to provide an understanding of the content of the SPR and provide advice on how to fulfil PCCs statutory obligations.

A comprehensive analysis of each category of crime, identified as a national threat in the SPR, was undertaken by the APCC and the requirements for each are set out below:

#### Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG):

- Chief Constables should ensure that their force collaborates with all relevant partners to safeguard the well-being of victims and by having appropriately trained officers and staff to guarantee a comprehensive and efficient response to all forms of VAWG. This includes having regard to relevant multi-agency guidance as appropriate, and joint working.

#### Terrorism:

- Police forces should be able to demonstrate their capability to respond to terrorist threats in accordance with Counter Terrorism Strategy CONTEST, to deliver a response adhering to the four Ps (Pursue, Prevent, Protect and Prepare). Forces should collaborate with partners and work in support of Counter-Terrorism Policing.

- Chief Constables, in collaboration with the relevant NPCC threat lead, are required to assess their local capability and capacity to mitigate threats and risks at the national, regional, and local levels.
- Chief Constables should also consider how their force, when required, will contribute capabilities in support of a national policing response.

#### Serious and Organised Crime:

- Forces and PCCs recognise their responsibility to assist local delivery against the Combating Drugs Outcomes Framework and collaborating in accordance with the Drugs Strategy Guidance for Local Delivery Partner.
- Forces should implement the objectives of the 2021 (revised January 2023) Crime and Courts Act issued by Director General of the National Crime Agency (NCA).

#### A National Cyber Incident:

- While the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) directs the response to major cyber incidents, local forces, and Regional Organised Crime Units (ROCU)s will play a key role in the investigation, victim care, and mitigation of the incident's impact should it occur.
- Chief Constables are responsible for ensuring that their force maintains a fully operational Force Cybercrime Unit (FCCU).
- Chief Constables should also be assured that their force maintain the necessary public order capabilities, contingency arrangements, and state of preparedness to recover from cyber incidents.
- Additionally, Chief Constables should be assured that their force possesses the requisite contingency plans, public order capabilities, and be prepared to recover from cyber incidents.

#### Child Sexual Abuse

- The Government's ambition to strengthen the response to child sexual abuse from all forces and the measures which forces should take to support the mission are outlined in The Tackling Child Sexual Abuse Strategy.
- Forces should maintain child abuse investigation units and safeguarding teams and be prepared to collaborate with ROCUs to access specialist capabilities in severe or complex cases.

#### Public disorder

- In accordance with the National Mobilisation Plan, forces should be able to demonstrate their capacity to mobilise appropriately in response to a variety of public order policing operations at the force, regional, and national levels.
- In accordance with the standards established by the College of Policing (CoP), public order resources should be consistent throughout England and Wales.

#### Civil Emergencies

- PCCs should ensure the force has an operations unit that supports the contingency planning function and maintain appropriately qualified and trained commanders to effectively respond to civil emergencies in their area.
- To guarantee the forces sustained operation in the face of disruptive challenges a regional casualty bureau, business continuity plans, and Disaster Victim Identification (DVI) should be accessible to forces.

#### **PCC Statutory Responsibilities**

The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 stipulates that PCCs create Police and Crime Plans and publish Annual Reports. The SPR 2023 legislation requires PCCs to provide evidence of the requirement to pay due regard to the SPR and the threat types within both documents.

#### ***SPR compulsory requirements of Annual Reports***

PCCs are required under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 to provide an annual assurance statement within their Annual Reports on how they have had regard to

the SPR and how it has influenced their setting of the strategic direction and objectives for their force. The SPR states that PCCs should reference all threat types and outline how they have paid regard to each threat with details.

### ***SPR Compulsory Requirements of Police and Crime Plans***

The SPR must be referred to in PCC Police and Crime Plans, as well as the SPR's influence on the strategic direction and objectives of the force, and consequently, the force's ability to address threats of national importance. PCCs must have regard for the SPR while performing their duties and they must also hold their Chief Constables accountable for doing the same. It is important to acknowledge that any modifications to the SPR made by the Home Office necessitate a review to the Police and Crime Plans to reflect the change. PCCs should reference all threat types and outline how they have paid regard to each.

The SPR states that to evidence how they have had regard to the SPR in Police and Crime Plans the following should be included:

- a) The need to highlight the PCC's duty to have regard to the SPR in the Police and Crime Plans.
- b) An explanation of what the SPR is in the Police and Crime Plans.
- c) An explanation within the Police and Crime Plans of how the PCC has had regard to the SPR in setting the strategic direction and objectives for the force.

### ***Compliance advice***

The following checklists have been developed to help aid the inclusion of all required details of the SPR within the Annual Reports and Police and Crime Plans.

#### Police and crime plan SPR compliance checklist:

- Does the Police and Crime Plan explicitly emphasise the PCC's obligation to consider and address the requirements outlined in the SPR?
- Does the Police and Crime Plan provide a clear explanation of the SPR to ensure a comprehensive understanding?
- Is there a detailed explanation in the Police and Crime Plan outlining the specific ways in which the PCC has had regard to the SPR in setting the strategic direction and objectives for the force?
- Does the Police and Crime Plan encompass strategies and initiatives addressing all seven types of threats identified in the SPR?

#### Annual Report SPR compliance checklist:

- Does the Annual Report feature an assurance statement?
- Does the assurance statement encompass an explanation of how consideration has been given to the SPR?
- Does the assurance statement include a description of the impact of the SPR on the force's strategic directions and objectives?
- Does the Annual Report make explicit reference to all seven threat types?
- Does it demonstrate how attention has been given to each threat type?
- Does it provide evidence of the outcomes achieved by the Police and Crime Plan strategy in relation to each threat type?

#### **Areas of Focus – things to consider in the response may include information on the following, where applicable**

- **Current Status** (*what is the Force doing and why*)
- **Key Successes to Date** (*what is working well and why*)
- **Areas for Development** (*what is not working so well and why, what planned work is due to take place*)
- **Assurance from Force** (*where appropriate, what will be different and by when, which forum has oversight of this work*)

- **Performance Information** (*Linked to Force Performance and Quality Framework - Key performance indicators related to subject area, commentary on past performance, current performance and future target performance - what does good look like?*)
- **Risks** (*identified risks to future performance/delivery and how these will be mitigated against?*)
- **Resource implications** (*are there any resource implications in terms of finance, staff, estates, IT etc?*)
- **Timescales** (*what are the timescales for delivery?*)
- **Impact** (*Where change has taken place what difference has it made, is this activity considered business as usual*)

**NOTES - SCRUTINY MEETING (STRATEGIC POLICING REQUIREMENT) - 9 JULY 2024**

Question	Brief Summary of Evidence	Decision of PCC
<p>1. What is the Force's assessment of its ability and preparedness to fulfil the requirements of the SPR?</p> <p>To include details of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. the process to assess, plan, prepare and respond each threat type;</li> <li>ii. the governance and reporting mechanisms to ensure that the Force is fulfilling its responsibilities for tackling the seven threats; and</li> <li>iii. the threat types that have been identified as the most significant risks locally and the response required to fully combat these risks.</li> </ul>	<p>The information detailed below was presented to the Police and Crime Commissioner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Force has in place a Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR) Assessment Framework, which focuses on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capability (Force level and collaborative level);</li> <li>• Capacity (level of resources);</li> <li>• Consistency (inter-operability, achieving a cohesive and consistent response);</li> <li>• Collaboration (joint-working with multi-agency partners, including the National Crime Agency); and</li> <li>• Connectivity (being well connected with other local partners).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Previously, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Constabulary and Fire Rescue Services (HMICFRS), in its police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy (PEEL) inspections, had included the question 'How good is the Force at meeting the requirements of the SPR?'. As the question is now no longer asked by the Inspectorate, the Force is working to apply a 'RAG' rating for each of the 7 threats. This aims to ensure that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the SPR remains a key focus for the Force, in terms of its strategic direction and outcomes; and</li> <li>• information is routinely reviewed on an ongoing basis to plan, prepare and respond to the threats.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The Force has a SPR Delivery Model, which identifies the 7 threats and indicates whether a local, regional or national response is required: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Violence Against Women and Girls</u> requires a local response;</li> <li>2. <u>Terrorism</u> requires a regional and national response;</li> <li>3. <u>Serious and Organised Crime</u> requires a local and regional response;</li> <li>4. <u>National Cyber Event</u> requires a regional and national response;</li> <li>5. <u>Child Sexual Abuse</u> requires a local response;</li> <li>6. <u>Public Disorder</u> requires a local and national response; and</li> <li>7. <u>Civil Emergencies</u> require a local response.</li> </ol> </li> <li>• Whilst the SPR treats the national threats separately, many of the threats, and the capabilities required to respond, overlap.</li> <li>• Governance structures and reporting mechanisms are in place to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide oversight; and</li> <li>• ensure that the SPR is reviewed regularly by representatives from across the policing landscape.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are high levels of VAWG in Cleveland and this type of crime equates to 23% of all crimes.</li> <li>• VAWG refers to acts of violence or abuse that disproportionately affect women and girls.</li> </ul>	<p align="center">Assured</p>

- Crimes and behaviour covered by this term include rape and other sexual offences, domestic abuse, stalking, 'honour'-based abuse and includes offences committed online.
- There is a VAWG National Framework for Delivery, published by the National Police Chiefs' Council. This framework details activities that enable policing to tackle VAWG as a national threat and deliver the requirements of the SPR.
- In 2023, the Home Secretary announced VAWG as a national threat and included it within the SPR, reflecting the threat it presents to public safety and confidence.
- The Force's Strategic Threat Risk Assessment (STRA) includes VAWG and identifies offence types. The STRA aims to provide a better understanding of the influences and levers that contribute to VAWG being a national threat.
- VAWG is linked to other high risk offending, such as domestic abuse. There are high levels of domestic abuse in Cleveland.
- In terms of initial response, VAWG-focused training is provided to enable frontline police officers to identify vulnerabilities.
- Work is being undertaken by the Force to implement Operation Soteria, which aims to transform the approach to rape investigations and prosecutions. The Force is now in the process of working towards a transformation plan, which will subsequently be followed by an implementation plan.
- Operation Artemis and VAWG weeks of action have been launched to tackle the main contributory factors to VAWG offences, as well as raising public awareness and providing personal safety education to schools, colleges and businesses.
- More than 200 people attended Cleveland Police's first multi-agency conference, specifically aimed at tackling violence against women and girls.
- The Force received four nominations for national awards for helping to prevent VAWG.
- The Force has a Child Abuse and Vulnerable Adults (CAVA) Unit, a Sex Offender Management Unit and a dedicated Domestic Abuse Unit - all of which work to prevent VAWG.
- The Force has a Strategic Lead responsible for the development and delivery of a 6 point action plan to tackle VAWG. The Strategic Lead also sits on regional and national boards.
- Given its significant links to domestic abuse, sexual offending and high levels of misogyny in many local communities, VAWG features in the Force's Strategic Plan.
- The Force aims to protect women and girls by using its intelligence to identify and target harmful offenders of VAWG.

#### **Terrorism**

- The aim of CONTEST, the UK's counter-terrorism strategy, is to reduce the risk from terrorism to the UK.
- Counter Terrorism Policing North East (CTPNE) works within the national counter terrorism network to make sure that the police service in the UK is better equipped to:
  - prevent or respond to incidents of terrorism and domestic extremism; and
  - investigate and prosecute those involved.

- The regional unit brings together the skills and resources needed to respond swiftly to intelligence and incidents.
- Intelligence and analytical work is carried out by dedicated units in CTPNE.
- The operational response is driven by intelligence and managed by CTPNE using the 4P approach of Prevent, Pursue, Protect and Prepare.
- There is a Prevent Champions Network, involving police officers and staff in frontline roles across the Force.
- There is a Strategic Prevent Lead within the Force's Prevention Command.
- Monitoring online activities, to intervene early, is crucial.
- The Force's STRA categorised terrorism as high risk. The threat level for Cleveland is in line with the national threat level of SUBSTANTIAL.
- Work is undertaken by the Force to ensure robust, regularly exercised, terrorism response plans are in place.

#### **Serious Organised Crime (SOC)**

- In 2023, the Government published a Serious and Organised Crime (SOC) Strategy.
- There is a SOC local policing framework aimed at disrupting and dismantling organised crime groups operating locally.
- The collection of localised intelligence and data is crucial for organised crime group mapping and identification of priority individuals and vulnerable localities.
- The North East Regional Organised Crime Unit (NEROCU) operates across three police force areas (Northumbria, Cleveland and Durham) and regularly works with North East and national partners to tackle Serious and Organised Crime.
- NEROCU delivers an increased response to tackling serious and organised crime and provides additional specialist capacity through effective partnership working and collaboration.
- The Force has an Organised Crime Unit, which aims to disrupt and tackle serious and organised crime in Cleveland.
- The Force's MATRIX Team works to reduce and eradicate emerging threats of serious and organised crime to tackle more criminals and protect communities further.
- Locally, through the sharing information and intelligence, the Force understands the complexity and gravity of organised criminality in the area.
- In terms of capacity within the Force, staff are being trained in specialist tactics and skills.

#### **National Cyber Event**

- The NEROCU's cyber crime unit works proactively and reactively on significant cyber investigations, aiming to defend against evolving threats and identify and overcome future threats and challenges.
- The Force's Cyber Unit is committed to reducing the risk that Cleveland's communities face from cyber crime.
- The Force has employed a Digital Tactical Advisor to enhance existing digital capability and provide tactical advice and operational assistance.

- The Force works collaboratively with the National Cyber Security Centre.

#### **Child Sexual Abuse**

- To drive improvements for persons who are subject to abuse, neglect and exploitation, the Vulnerability Knowledge and Practice Programme (VKPP) provides a supportive Peer Review function.
- A Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Taskforce has been established to enhance the policing response to child sexual exploitation and abuse.
- The Police Online Investigation Team receives referrals of online child sexual abuse by the National Crime Agency (NCA).
- The Force's Child Abuse and Vulnerable Adults (CAVA) Unit specifically looks at child abuse, including child sexual abuse that is committed by persons who have or have had custody, care or control over a child.
- The Force has a Strategic Lead for Child Sexual Abuse.
- Missing children and the submission of Public Protection Notices are a key feature in local performance frameworks.
- The HMICFRS undertakes national child protection inspections to assess how effectively police forces safeguard children at risk.

#### **Public Disorder**

- An Annual Public Order and Public Safety Strategic Risk Assessment (POPS SRA) is undertaken, which sets out the aims, processes and governance by which the police service prevents and responds to pre-planned and spontaneous events and protests.
- The Force's capabilities to respond to public disorder are reviewed on a monthly basis.
- In response to (or in anticipation of) a major incident or event, mutual aid (policing assistance) may be required from one force to another.
- Resources are deployed by the Force, in accordance with the National Mobilisation Plan, whilst maintaining local resilience.

#### **Civil Emergencies**

- The Civil Contingencies Act sets out the legislative framework for preparing to respond to civil emergencies.
- A multi-agency response to civil emergencies is provided by the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP).
- The Emergency Planning Unit assesses the risk of emergencies occurring and uses this to inform contingency planning and put in place emergency plans and business continuity management arrangements.
- Joint-working with multi-agency partners ensures the response to local emergencies is as efficient and effective as possible.

**At the meeting, the PCC was provided with case study examples demonstrating the Force's ability to counter and tackle the national priority threats.**

## **Action**

1	That a copy of the Force's Strategic Threat and Risk Assessment (STRA) be received by the PCC/OPCC.
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