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| HMICFRS PEEL Inspection Report |
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| February 2024 |
| 1. PURPOSE AND RECOMMENDATION    1. Since the last report in November 2023, Gwent Police have had their cause of concern discharged by HMICFRS HMI Wendy Williams with four recommendations met.    2. As part of the Victim Service Assessment revisit in 2023, HMICFRS have deemed the force has met four further areas for improvement (AFI) in ‘Question 5: How good is the force at investigating crime?’    3. The findings of this revisit were published on 1st December 2023.    4. There are seven AFIs remaining from PEEL 2021-22 to which this report provides progress updates.    5. The remaining PEEL 2021-22 AFIs will not be reviewed by HMICFRS until the next PEEL inspection cycle 2023-25. AFIs are not given a timescale for completion but cannot be reviewed ahead of the next PEEL inspection    6. Nothing contained within the report can be submitted for change until next PEEL inspection, which commences May 2024. 2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND    1. Following the 2022 PEEL Inspection Gwent Police were assessed as follows:   Coloured table chart   * 1. The remaining areas for improvement are as follows: * The force should improve its recording or reasonable grounds for stop and search, in compliance with force policy and the authorised professional practice; * The force should make sure that its governance and scrutiny arrangements provide enough capacity and capability to effectively protect vulnerable people; * The force needs to improve how effectively it meets national standards in relation to the use of the domestic violence disclosure scheme; * The force should make sure it appropriately manages MARAC demand to reduce the risk of serious harm to high-risk victims of domestic abuse; * Gwent Police should demonstrate that it can use its understanding of factors contributing to sickness and absence to improve the well-being of the workforce; * The force should make sure that it has an effective strategic planning framework to tackle important issues; * The force should make sure it can effectively manage current demand, with the resources available to it.   1. The force has continued to review a number of processes, procedures, resourcing opportunities and business priorities in order to respond to the concerns identified whilst maintaining service provision across all levels of delivery.   2. The next section of this report will focus on the seven AFIs.  1. HOW GOOD IS THE FORCE AT ENGAGING WITH THE PEOPLE IT SERVES AND TREATING THEM FAIRLY, APPROPRIATELY AND RESPECTFULLY?    1. There is one AFI in relation to this question:   The force should improve its recording or reasonable grounds for stop and search, in compliance with force policy and the authorised professional practice;   * The force has conducted a deep dive into Stop and Search that has been reported in Force Improvement Board. * New training is being develop by the coercive powers tactical lead. The training will be underpinned by a refreshed strategy and a plan on a page to bring renewed focus to leads and frontline officers. * Training will run from February to April 2024 and the strategy and plan on a page will be completed by February 2024. * The training will coincide with the launch of a new Beat page where helpful guides and information will be found, along with the new stop search policy and procedure which will set out the responsibilities of management at every level in terms of dip sampling and accountability. * Scrutiny panels will be expanded to include a wider demographic of race and age and is to include persons with lived experience of stop search. * Progress will be tracked through the Coercive Powers meeting and Operational Performance Board, ensuring Chief Officer oversight.  1. HOW GOOD IS THE FORCE AT PROTECTING VULNERABLE PEOPLE?    1. There are three AFIs in relation to this question:   The force should make sure that its governance and scrutiny arrangements provide enough capacity and capability to effectively protect vulnerable people;   * The force governance structure continues to be reviewed and has increased its focus on vulnerability, utilising a whole system approach. It ensures oversight from first point of contact through to criminal justice and procedural justice. The Victim Service Assessment improvements published in December 2023 demonstrate the benefits of the approach. * The force is reviewing its approach to Strategic Workforce Planning to ensure a robust approach to the review and management of the forces capacity and capability in all roles with an increased focus on priority areas including vulnerability.   The force needs to improve how effectively it meets national standards in relation to the use of the domestic violence disclosure scheme;   * There has been an uplift in staff in the Domestic Abuse Safeguarding Team (DAST) who focus on the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS). The additional staff are now embedded within the department and have been supported by the use of Good Sam technology and streamlining research. This has led to a marked improvement and reduction in the delays in disclosure. * The force continues to review open cases to ensure we understand risks and timescales to ensure compliance with national standards. ‘Notify if’ flags are being utilised to manage open cases and ongoing risk assessments. This has led to more regular review of risk and additional prioritising of disclosures. * There are two significant milestones identified in DVDS guidance that need to be met. At 10 days with initial contact with the ‘requester’ and 28 days with the disclosure. The first timescale is consistently met within the current provision, but further improvements is needed to achieve the same level of consistency for the 28-day disclosure deadline. * As such its identified that there remains significant challenge in this area. Following the publication of Kent’s PEEL 2023-25 report, the force is reviewing their best practice and actively seeking opportunities to make improvements.   The force should make sure it appropriately manages MARAC demand to reduce the risk of serious harm to high-risk victims of domestic abuse;   * MARAC demand has reduced through work with partners regarding appropriate referrals. * Since 2019, MARAC referrals have increased on average by 18% each year. However, in the year 2022 – 2023 the increase was just 0.5%. We have significantly flattened this trend. * The force has obtained Home Office funding for a Multi-Agency Tasking and Coordination (MATAC) extension pilot and this has yielded additional MARAC Chairs to deal with demand more effectively. * The above will feed into the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) sustainability options paper as the wider MATAC work progresses. * The force also utilises perpetrator initiatives such as CARA. CARA domestic abuse conditional cautioning intervention went live from 21st November 2023 with perpetrator program developed by Hampton Trust which is being delivered by Phoenix Domestic Abuse Services.  1. HOW GOOD IS THE FORCE AT BUILDING, DEVELOPING AND LOOKING AFTER ITS WORKFORCE AND ENCOURAGING AN ETHICAL, LAWFUL AND INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE?    1. There is one AFI in relation to this question:    2. Gwent Police should demonstrate that it can use its understanding of factors contributing to sickness and absence to improve the well-being of the workforce;  * The force Wellbeing lead has utilised research findings and conducted focus groups with 23 departments and 160 officers and staff to understand the underlying reasons for sickness. * In support of this, the force has now implemented a sickness management framework. * The force also has a Wellbeing Strategy and Wellbeing Plan. Work includes:   + Visits to stations by the Wellbeing team   + Trauma Risk Management (TRiM)   + Vicarious trauma packages rolled out to some high-risk areas   + Emotion, contagion and fatigue packages rolled out   + Wellbeing events   + Supportive Leadership training rolled out East and West LPA. * Future plans include:   + Wellbeing for line managers day beginning in January 2024   + Trauma Incident briefing   + Private health care option starting in January 2024   + A review of the approach to annual psychological screening   + Reflective practice with mental health nurse for high-hrisk areas   + Wellbeing temperature checks   + Financial roadshows   + Mental health First Aid – rolled out to student officers and control room staff * Progress is monitored via the People and Culture.  1. HOW GOOD IS THE FORCE AT PLANNING AND MANAGING ITS ORGANISATION EFFICIENTLY, MAKING SURE IT ACHIEVES VALUE FOR MONEY, NOW AND IN THE FUTURE?    1. There are two AFIs in relation to this question:    2. The force should make sure that it has an effective strategic planning framework to tackle important issues;  * The force business planning cycle overlays force priorities, inspection preparation, internal audit, governance, business change and financial cycles. This ensures the force identifies concerns at an early stage and works to address the problem or escalate to the appropriate business lead where appropriate. * The force business planning cycle is now in the third cycle (4th quarter) of audit, with January – March 2024 reviewing responding to the public, investigating crime and workforce. Previous cycles have generated evidence-based action plans for improvement in areas such as custody, vulnerability and neighbourhood. Progress is reported into the Deputy Chief Constable chaired Force Improvement Board. * Through business planning, the force is developing a joint strategic governance board for VAWG, Serious Organised Crime and Vulnerability where the requirement was identified through inspection planning and internal audit. The force acknowledges the synergy between these areas in terms of our response to criminality and victims. * The force governance structure has been further reviewed and updated, ensuring the right information is discussed and shared at the appropriate strategic forum. For example, Assistant Chief Constable chaired People and Culture Board has been redesigned to monitor how we improve our response to our workforce, our communities and culture in Gwent Police. * Continued scrutiny of our risk management processes has meant the Corporate Risk Register has further evolved in the form of a Risks and Issues Register (a risk being something that could occur in the future, while an issue is something that has occurred or is currently happening). This format provides increased intrusiveness on those matters that are more critical and therefore require more focus.   1. The force should make sure it can effectively manage current demand, with the resources available to it. * The force continues to acknowledge and work through the financial pressures it faces through improving the quality and accuracy of our data, with improvements in our data warehouse and products available to the force in order to enhance decision making at all levels. * To ensure focus on the financial outlook for 2024, the force has raised a corporate risk regarding this area to ensure the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2024/5–2028/29 has been prepared for the Police and Crime Commissioner (the Commissioner) and consideration by the Police and Crime Panel meeting through January 2024. * With an embedded Business Change team who run demand modelling reviews of business areas, we currently have a broad programme of reviews ongoing: Learning and Development, People Services, Gwent Police Operational Facility (new custody unit), current Custody model, Operating Model, Neighbourhood, Force Contact and Control, Station Enquiry Officer, Roads Policing and Specialist Operations, CID/PPU, Information Services, Teams Telephony, M365/NEP, Right Care Right Person. * To emphasise the comprehensiveness of the above reviews, there are many projects within these areas too. For example, within the CID/PPU review there are post-implementation reviews ongoing for Cyber and Rape Investigation Team (RIT) and linked to this area we have work ongoing around Soteria, MARAC, MATAC, Missing Children team (MCT) and Intelligence. * The Force Management Statement planning is now threaded through the business planning cycle to ensure risks, issues and gaps are identified and planned for. Analysts are currently preparing data forecasts to support departmental narratives and plans moving forward. * The force continues to invest in technology to make the organisation more effective and efficient. An example is the roll-out of Co-pilot which is Artificial Intelligence software that reviews literature and data held within Gwent Police systems to produce internal highlight reports and thusly can review external information to produce scanning reports. This will dramatically reduce time spent on these tasks.  1. COLLABORATION    1. Not applicable as a standing item to this report however where appropriate   Collaborative needs will be considered as part of the actions taken to address the concerns.   1. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS    1. There are no financial considerations required for noting at this time. Changes made to address the cause for concerns have been done so within the staffing and financial parameters available. Should financial constraints or considerations be identified for the outstanding AFI’s these will be recorded in future reports. 2. PERSONNEL CONSIDERATIONS   9.1 There are no personnel considerations at this time.   1. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS    1. There are no legal considerations at this time. 2. EQUALITIES & HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS    1. This report has been considered against the general duty to promote equality, as stipulated under the Joint Strategic Equality Plan and has been assessed not to discriminate against any particular group.    2. In preparing this report, consideration has been given to requirements of the Articles contained in the European Convention on Human Rights and the Human Rights Act 1998. 3. RISK    1. If the force is unable to continue the progress in relation to the achievement of appropriate outcomes for victims of crime there is a potential impact for them. This will continue to be monitored through local and force performance meetings. 4. PUBLIC INTEREST    1. In producing this report, has consideration been given to ‘public confidence’? Yes    2. Are the contents of this report, observations and appendices necessary and suitable for the public domain? Yes    3. If you consider this report to be exempt from the public domain, please state the reasons: N/A 5. REPORT AUTHOR    1. Chief Inspector Steve O’Brien 6. LEAD CHIEF OFFICER    1. ACC Mark Hobrough 7. ANNEXES    1. None. 8. GOVERNANCE BOARD AND CHIEF OFFICER APPROVAL   This report has been presented to the following oversight board:  **Scrutiny Executive Board**    Meeting chaired by:  **DCC Rachel Williams**    Meeting date:  **06.02.2024**    Actions and amendments arising from meeting:  **N/A.**    I confirm this report has been discussed and approved at a formal Chief Officers’ meeting.  Meeting chaired by:  **CC Pam Kelly**  Meeting date:  **14.02.2024**  I confirm this report is suitable for the public domain.    **Signature:**Signature on white background **Date: 14.02.2024** | | |