

JOINT INDEPENDENT AUDIT COMMITTEE (JIAC)

Monday 10 December 2018

VOLUME CRIME AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT

1. BACKGROUND

At the JIAC held on Monday 18 September 2018, the JIAC requested a Progress Report on the Volume Crime Audit. The following paper provides the update requested.

2. ADDITIONAL DETAIL

In September 2018 Humberside received the final report of the audit work that had been undertaken considering the area of volume crime investigations. Having been initially commissioned in Spring 2018 there was a request to delay elements of the audit to allow for ongoing improvement activity to become embedded which had recently been introduced including a new allocation policy, splitting of workbooks to align first line supervisors with investigators across all pillars and a learning and development initiative with supervisors with regard quality of investigations.

The scope of the audit was to establish:

- How effective the force is at investigation of crime and reducing re-offending:
 - Quality and supervision of investigation
 - Initial investigation including securing of evidence
 - Understand and address reasons for high percentage of 'evidential difficulties; victim does not support police action'.

- How effective the force is at protecting those that are vulnerable from harm and supporting victims:
 - Initial assessment and response to vulnerable people
 - Response determined by initial assessment of risk
 - Response and investigation of domestic abuse

Overall the conclusion was that "whilst recognising that there is evidence of improvement, there is limited assurance at this time that the Force has effective processes in place to ensure that investigations are managed effectively, particularly where vulnerabilities are identified. It is acknowledged that the availability of detective resource is a national issue, combined with a consistent increase in demand, which is impacting on the quality and timeliness of investigations across all Forces. However, following two previous critical HMICFRS inspection opinions in this area, it is vital that the Force continues to make progress in order to demonstrate significant improvement.

During and since the audit a significant amount of work continued across the force in terms of embedding Crime Management Units back within Local Policing Command, Quality Assurance reviews of hundreds of crime records considering a range of issues previously identified as areas of concern intended to assure improvement or signpost to areas of continued need. What has been reassuring since the Audit is the fact that HMICFRS have been back in force and whilst the formal outcome of the inspection will not be published until Spring 2019; we were provided very positive feedback about the progress made in the quality of our investigations and of the attitude of our staff towards recognising and responding positively to vulnerability.

However, we are not complacent about that and continue to strive towards improving the quality of investigations, the identification and management of vulnerability and in seeking out the best victim based outcomes. In that regard, the audit identified nine recommendations for improvement of which one was defined as meriting attention and the remainder were significant. Responding immediately to the recommendations four of those recommendations were addressed and were included in our response which was agreed by the auditors as having mitigated the risk identified.

The remaining five, significant recommendations were all committed to an action plan consisting of four actions and the progress against those actions is detailed below.

- 1) **Dip sampling of investigations by Inspectors** – In the spring one of the measures put in place were routine Inspector audits of crimes on their team workbook. Randomly selected crimes were identified and a spreadsheet was devised to capture some critical components of quality investigations to monitor the impact of our initiatives to improve investigation quality. The audit reflected upon those audits as sufficiently valuable to continue but that the further detail to support analysis to identify trends by geography, crime type, and victim type and to identify areas of good practice or themes in areas of weakness.

The dip sample spreadsheet has been enhanced and incorporates all elements of the recent QATT audits recognised as good practice together with opportunity for comments against each measure. We are in the process of analysing the first months response to this revised approach and whilst we can track performance for some values since its inception (April 2018) other areas require refinement to provide the degree of sophistication sought by Crime SLT leads. There is also recognition that the demand placed upon inspectors has increased in the advent of this revised template and they now take significantly longer to undertake which also remains under review. Overall though there is good progress against this recommendation.

- 2) **Dip sampling feedback loop** – The audit team also reflected that with regard the Inspector dip sampling clarity over the remedial action and feedback mechanisms should be developed.

The Assurance and Performance Team now coordinate the dip sampling and provide monthly returns on the relative month by month performance as well as data related to officers and supervisors who are repeatedly identified as falling below the required standard across a range of measures subject of the audit. This is somewhat embryonic having only been analysed in the last months data return and there is some concern about the unintended consequences of using this data and the repeat failures may lead to unintended consequences masking issues, particularly given the current arrangement is that Inspectors audit their own teams work (currently under review with recommendation for change). More broadly this information is used by SLT at TAM and local LAM to drive up performance improvements and is subject of a standing agenda item at the Improving Investigations Group chaired by DCS Atkinson.

- 3) **Allocation and investigation of crime** – The audit team expressed concern regarding the timeliness of appropriately triaged crimes being allocated and that there was an ongoing THRIVE assessment of any identified vulnerabilities. It was noted that at the time of the audit the Crime Management Unit (CMU) was managed within the Force Control Room and that this was achieving sub-optimal performance and this certainly affected those crimes subject of the audit. Furthermore, the ongoing assessment of vulnerability was not clearly identifiable without consistent evidence of meaningful supervisor review and the vulnerability flags and subsequent activity weren't routinely recorded.

The responsibility for the CMU has now transferred to Local Policing Command and the timeliness of allocation and triage function is subject of daily scrutiny locally and broadly performing much better than previously. There are now dip sampling regimes referenced above together with monthly performance reporting on both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of supervisor reviews, victim contact, investigation plans and the identification and management of vulnerability. It is recognised that there is still more to do here, in particular with the local practices in the CMU and the ongoing management of vulnerability. This will be subject of the Investigation Review being led by DCS Atkinson in terms of reducing inefficiency and improving our effectiveness and is due to report in spring 2019. In the meantime, local SLT's routinely monitor CMU performance alongside the quality and timeliness of supervisor reviews to mitigate any risk and provide appropriate feedback where shortcomings are identified.

- 4) **Outcome 16 outlier status** – It was noted on the audit that the force is an outlier in its use of Outcome 16 and had seen an increase of around 12% of recording since the CDI Inspection in

March. Many other forces including similar sized forces have, post inspection also seen rises some much more significant than Humberside. Our response to the audit detailed the fact that outcome 16 data and particularly the outcome usage report is now shared and embedded in NB & SB Local Policing. With the Divisional Commanders holding their inspectors to account through their local assurance meeting along with the wider performance frameworks used by leaders at all levels.

Whilst the use of the outcome reporter needs to increase, there are signs of leaders using this information to offer high support and high challenge with officers on supportive management action to address the issues. In particular it is used to identify those officers who disproportionately utilise outcome 16 to initiate intervention is having an impact along with improvements anecdotally reported as a consequence of the availability of Body Worn Video. A paper has been submitted to COG pertaining to mechanisms to improve all outcomes with specific reference to outcome 16. An action plan has been developed with action owners allocated and timescales for delivery set to January 2019.