



NORTHAMPTONSHIRE POLICE, FIRE & CRIME PANEL

20th April 2023

Subject: Update on the implementation of the recommendations of the HMICFRS inspection of vetting, misconduct, and misogyny in the Police Service

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Following the murder of Sarah Everard by a serving police officer, the then Home Secretary commissioned HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) under section 54(2B) of the Police Act 1996 to assess current vetting and counter-corruption capacity and capability in policing across England and Wales. This was to include forces' ability to detect and deal with misogynistic and predatory behaviour.
- 1.2 HMICFRS were asked to consider current vetting (and re-vetting), arrangements for transferees, whistleblowing arrangements, the work of counter-corruption units and, where relevant, wider Professional Standards Departments.
- 1.3 The recent report by Baroness Casey, which looked at the culture and standards of behaviour within the Metropolitan Police, underlines the importance of ensuring that any officer who fails to uphold the highest standards are identified and dealt with appropriately to ensure we maintain the confidence of local residents.

2. Work Undertaken by Northamptonshire Police

- 2.1 Prior to the publication of the HMICFRS report Northamptonshire Police were already scoping how to implement a robust response to similar concerns published by Baroness Casey's initial review and report and the string of high-profile cases that were doing great harm to public trust and confidence. The Chief Constable announced the creation of a new team, led by a Detective Chief Inspector, to examine the issues in force, in the context of national reports and events and to ensure that as an organisation Northamptonshire Police were dealing effectively with misconduct and criminality.

- 2.2 This work is being undertaken under the name of Operation Admiral to provide a comprehensive response and to ensure the public, police officers and staff have trust and confidence in the force as an organisation.
- 2.3 In completing this work the team will ensure that the recommendations within the HMICFRS report are discharged to a high standard and that systems and processes are embedded throughout the force to take these systems and standards forwards as daily business.
- 2.4 Some of the concerns raised by the report have already been addressed to some degree by existing strands of work within Northants Police. The Domestic Abuse Investigation Unit (DAIU) have recently reviewed their processes with regards to complaints regarding police perpetrated domestic violence. The force vetting manager has reviewed some aspects of the Northants vetting processes and positive findings have been made in relation to timeliness among other areas.
- 2.5 All existing relevant strands of work will now be drawn together under Operation Admiral to ensure that all recommendations are addressed and provide a single pathway of governance and accountability.

3. Operation Admiral

- 3.1 Op Admiral aims to ensure that concerns raised are clearly addressed by Northamptonshire Police and that we as an organisation have the correct standards and procedures to ensure the safety of the public and our workforce, and to maintain public confidence.
- 3.2 On the 1st of November 2022 a stakeholder meeting was held in relation to work of Operation Admiral. Representatives from operational police teams, the Police Federation, Unison, the OFPCC's office and partner agencies from the victim support arena were invited and consulted on this work.
- 3.3 The HMICFRS report sets out 43 recommendations, 28 of these are for Chief Constables, (the others relate to College of Policing, Home Office and NPCC). All 28 Recommendations for the Chief Constable will come within the work of Operation Admiral. The recommendations and associated work will incorporate vetting, recruitment, criminal behaviour and misconduct by officers and staff, reporting routes and the support offered by complainants. Dates for completing the work on these recommendations will be in line with the report, ranging from March 2023 – December 2023
- 3.4 There is a detailed action plan which sits behind these terms of reference which sets clear objectives. Some specific workstreams to address the recommendations include:
 - Conducting a review of all allegations of criminal, improper and prejudicial behaviour by serving police officers and staff over the past three years in line with recommendation 28 of the HMICFRS report.

- Assessing how Northamptonshire Police identify, investigate and manage misconduct, corruption and criminal behaviour and allegations of such relating to its workforce from referral/report to outcome. To include best practice and compliance with other national reviews of relevance.
- To understand the prevalence of misogyny and improper conduct towards female officers and members of staff within the organisation in line with the HMICFRS AFI, assess how the Force deal with such and make proposals for best practice.
- Understanding the prevalence of discriminatory behaviour within the workforce and assess how they deal with such.
- Assessing effectiveness of reporting mechanisms available to those within the organisation and members of the public/those in personal relationships with serving Northamptonshire staff and officers.
- Assessing how the Force an organisation support those making allegations against serving officers/staff, both internal and external to the organisation.
- Examining the effectiveness of vetting arrangements in relation to recruits, transferees and serving Northamptonshire staff and officers.
- Assessing the Force's recruitment processes to ensure they are attracting appropriate applicants from the outset.
- Assessing the use of Regulation 13 within the organisation to ensure it is used appropriately to exit staff not meeting the required standards at the earliest stage possible.

3.5 In completing this work Operation Admiral will also take into account the wider policing context in terms of best practice, Authorised Professional Practice and also other relevant national issues such as the Police Perpetrated Domestic Abuse super complaint, and the National VAWG action plan. Operation Admiral will not only review past cases and current systems, it will also make recommendations in line with best practice as to changes required to ensure that in future all improvements become standard practice for our force.

3.6 Operation Admiral has assumed oversight and coordination for the Historic Data Wash (HDW) of PND in relation to officers, staff and custody contractor, agreed by the NPCC. A team has been established to sift and research all results. Any risk identified will be examined at the risk review panel described above to ensure appropriate, proportionate and consistent responses. Work is also ongoing with Voice with regards to the level of support provided to those making allegations regarding members of our workforce, or indeed members of our workforce that speak up in relation to police perpetrated crime/abuse.

3.7 Now that the misconduct reviews are complete, the team have now moved on to review criminal investigations into members of our workforce and counter corruption investigations. This ensures a holistic approach over and above that mandated by the HMICFRS report. At the conclusion of this work, the force we will be able to conduct a

review of teams and workloads to ensure that investigations are conducting by the people with the requisite skills and knowledge in a fair, thorough and timely manner.

4. Governance

4.1 The operational lead will head tasking and finish groups as appropriate with relevant business areas in order to complete the work. Regular updates will be provided to an oversight board chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable for scrutiny and accountability. The first of these boards took place in December 2022 to assess work streams commenced and progress. In addition to this, the steering group will be provided updates as and when progress has been made throughout 2023.

4.2 In addition I have ensured as Commissioner that updates are being provided to me on a regular basis via informal assurance processes led by senior staff in my office and more formally by way of Chief Constable report to my formal monthly accountability board meetings.

5. Recommendation

5.1 That the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel considers the content of the report.

Stephen Mold

Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner