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Rt Hon James Cleverly MP

Home Secretary

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7 May 2024

Dear Home Secretary

PEEL 2023–2025 An inspection of Cambridgeshire Constabulary

Under Section 55(5) of the Police Act 1996, as Police and Crime Commissioner I am pleased to provide my formal response to the report by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) entitled 'PEEL 2023–2025 Police effectiveness, efficiency and effectiveness. An inspection of Cambridgeshire Constabulary'.

Both the Chief Constable and I welcome the publication of the report into Cambridgeshire Constabulary's efficiency, effectiveness, and legitimacy. HMICFRS reports provide a vital source of information and allows me as the Commissioner to assess the performance of the Constabulary and hold the Chief Constable to account. This inspection assessed how good Cambridgeshire Constabulary was in nine areas of policing. HMICFRS made graded judgments in eight of these.

Included within the report is an acknowledgement by HMICFRS that *'it isn't possible to make direct comparisons between the grades awarded in this PEEL inspection and those from the previous cycle of PEEL inspections. This is because we have*

increased our focus on making sure forces are achieving appropriate outcomes for the public, and in some cases, we have changed the aspects of policing we inspect’.

I do recognise that the report includes areas where there is significant work to be done to improve how Cambridgeshire Constabulary respond to the public and manage offenders and suspects. There are other important areas for improvement identified with the report. I am also pleased to note that the report provides an outstanding graded judgment of the Constabulary’s use of police powers and public treatment. Ethical policing was a key theme in my Police and Crime Plan 2021-24 and it is pleasing to see that innovative practice has been highlighted by HMICFRS.

I have received a response to this report from the Chief Constable. It provides an explanation of what action is being taken or will be taken to address the areas for improvement identified. This is a comprehensive response and is provided at Appendix 1. My role is to hold the Chief Constable to account for the efficiency and effectiveness of Cambridgeshire Constabulary. I have noted the detail of the response from the Constabulary and the prioritisation of the actions and activity. I will monitor the progress of this activity through my existing governance arrangements.

I hope my response, and that of the Chief Constable, provides reassurance regarding the commitment of both myself and Cambridgeshire Constabulary in providing an effective response to ‘PEEL 2023–2025 Police effectiveness, efficiency and effectiveness. An inspection of Cambridgeshire Constabulary’.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Darryl Preston', written in a cursive style.

Darryl Preston

Police and Crime Commissioner for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

Enc - Appendix 1 – Cambridgeshire Constabulary’s response to HMICFRS report ‘PEEL 2023–2025 An inspection of Cambridgeshire Constabulary’

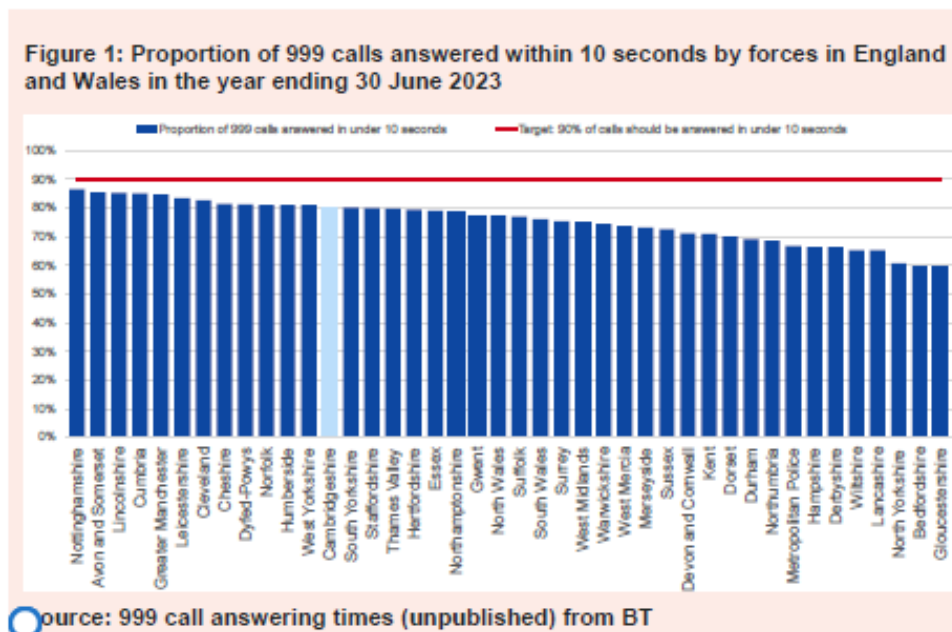
Appendix 1

Cambridgeshire Constabulary's response to HMICFRS report 'PEEL 2023–2025 An inspection of Cambridgeshire Constabulary'.

Cause of Concern 1

The Constabulary must improve how quickly it answers emergency and non-emergency calls.

In the year ending 30 June 2023, the Constabulary answered 80.1 percent of 999 calls within 10 seconds. This was lower than the 90 percent level expected of forces in England and Wales. But since then, the Constabulary's performance has got even worse. In September 2023, it only answered 71.2 percent within 10 seconds.



In the year ending September 2023, the Constabulary told us that callers abandoned 32 percent of calls to its non-emergency 101 line. This abandonment rate relates to 101 calls that the Constabulary has already answered, and risk assessed. It then determines if a call is an emergency and whether the caller is vulnerable. Lower-risk calls are then placed in a queue for call handlers to answer.

The Constabulary's messaging system asks people to hang up and report online. But the Constabulary can't measure if callers hang up because of the long waiting times or because they choose to report online instead. And it can't measure if people report online because they are following the system's advice. The Constabulary is actively working with its phone providers to make sure the phone system can start providing this data.

Every three months, senior leaders examine call handling data. They call back some people who hung up to find out why they abandoned their call. They also survey call handlers to check that they dealt with callers appropriately.

The Constabulary should use performance data to understand what is going wrong and improve how quickly it answers calls.

Recommendations

Cambridgeshire Constabulary should:

1. Improve its ability to answer public calls by placing enough police personnel with the right skills and experience in its demand hub.
2. Make sure it answers a higher percentage of emergency calls more quickly and make sure it answers a higher percentage of non-emergency calls, so callers abandon them as rarely as possible.

Force response:

A comprehensive plan has been developed to address the concerns. This has been broken down into those areas that can be addressed immediately, those that require a medium-term approach and then those that will be matured over time.

The short-term actions are those urgent areas to generate immediate performance improvements. The key change was an immediate variation to the Force's budget for 2024/25, adding an additional 10 posts to the Demand Hub. Recruitment does take time, so as an interim position, 50 Constables from across the organisation were provided with a two-day training course in call handling. These staff are now being utilised for 10% of their time to bolster

resilience within our call handling function. This is in the form of 5 officers being deployed every day during peak demand period (1500-2100hrs).

The improvements in performance have been immediate, with February, March, and April's call handling for both 101 and 999 exceeding our targets. In March we achieved a 999 Grade of Service of 91.9% with the average wait maintained at 4 seconds, compared to 7 in March 2023. 101 call volumes also remained stable month-on-month and lower than March 2023, with the 12-month total continuing to trend downwards. The Grade of Service continued to improve; to 94.3% for March up from 87.8% in February and compared to 76.4% in March 2023. The average wait time was, unusually, as rapid as that of 999 calls – at 4 seconds for March. This compares to 11 seconds in February or 24 seconds in March 2023.

In April 95% of 999 calls were answered within 10 seconds, with an average wait time 3 seconds. For our 101 calls, 93.4% answered within 30 seconds with an average wait time 5 seconds.

Secondary abandonment rates on the crime and public lines remain challenging however improvements have been made on the crime line and increases in staffing are anticipated to improve abandonment rates on the public line.

These performance improvements will be complemented by the medium-term approach of ensuring that all people recruited are offered start dates as soon as possible and their training schedule prioritised. The most recent staff recruitment campaign has been very successful with a total of 277 applications being received. As a result, in addition to the extra 10 posts created through budget increase, a further 10 vacancies have been filled. As a result, 20 new staff will join the organisation in June 2024. All these individuals have conditional job offers and are undergoing pre-employment checks. It is anticipated that the first intake from this group will commence training in late June to ensure improvements are sustainable.

The longer-term approach involves the procurement of a new telephony system, that has potential to offer efficiencies as well as promoting a channel

shift for the public, moving towards self-service through Single Online Home and away from traditional telephony methods.

Cause of concern 2

The Constabulary needs to improve how quickly it attends incidents. In our previous PEEL inspections in 2018/19 and 2021/22, we found the Constabulary wasn't meeting some published response targets.

The Constabulary still hasn't improved in this critical area. Our inspection audit found that of 46 cases we examined, only 23 met the required attendance time.

Extra information from the Constabulary shows that it can't currently meet its target times for callouts. These delays can lead to missed chances to protect victims or collect evidence.

The Constabulary should establish better oversight to improve its response to incidents. It should also develop its awareness of how well it answers calls and responds to incidents. This will help it identify improvements it can make.

The Constabulary knows it must improve. And it has tried to understand and deal with these issues, including with a project team responsible for making changes in line with a four-part plan. But it hasn't yet met its published targets.

Recommendation

Cambridgeshire Constabulary should:

1. Attend calls for service in line with the targets it publicly promises to meet.

Force response:

The Cause for Concern is due to the Constabulary not meeting its published targets. We should note that our targets are ambitious at 15 minutes for Immediate graded incidents and 60 minutes for Priority graded incidents. There is not consistency across the 43 Forces or England and Wales, with several having a target that is less demanding.

A similar approach of short, medium, and long-term initiatives have been developed to improve the speed at which the Constabulary attends incidents.

Immediate activity analysis was undertaken to ensure comprehensive understanding of why officers are taking the time they do to arrive at scenes. Over 11,000 operational hours have been scrutinised to understand demand pressure and opportunities to release capacity. A significant proportion of the Response policing team is not the actual “responding” to incidents. There is a large element involving static commitments (scene preservation, constant observations on vulnerable detainees and missing from home investigations). This analysis has helped with focus, ensuring supervisors are deploying staff most efficiently and effectively.

In addition, the Demand Hub has made some changes to the speed at which calls are sent to the dispatchers. The previous approach involved greater gathering of information from the call handlers before officers were sent which delayed the response. This position has now changed, with a greater focus on dispatching officers more quickly. Crucially, automated transfer of incidents from call-takers to dispatchers, ensuring dispatchers see incoming immediate grade incidents at the earliest opportunity, allowing for simultaneous dispatch while information is still being received.

The refreshed approach aims to maintain an excellent level of service at the scene, whilst increasing the speed of arrival. This is supported by greater examination of performance data now included daily at the Force Daily Management Meeting and a weekly performance management meeting covering both aspects of responding to the public chaired by the Assistant Chief Constable.

The benefits of the Police Uplift Programme are beginning to be realised. As officers gain experience, improved competence, extra skills, so too does their effectiveness in managing incidents.

The Constabulary has developed a nexus-points approach to help officers be at optimum places to respond to incidents and the work of Rapid Video Response is also being developed, looking at how a change in approach from physical to video can enhance speed of attendance whilst providing excellent care to victims.

The Constabulary has re-purposed existing estate to create a new response policing operating base (Cambourne) to support response times in the south of the county and a new response shift pattern is now live, which aligns response shifts with their Demand Hub colleagues, strengthening relationships and communication between dispatchers and officers and Force Duty Managers with the Force Control Room Inspectors.

Finally, the long-term approach involves reassessing the Constabulary response policing model through the Constabulary annual business planning process, CamSTRA.

Area for improvement 1

The Constabulary doesn't consistently achieve good outcomes for victims.

Cambridgeshire Constabulary doesn't always achieve acceptable outcomes for victims. It doesn't solve enough of the crimes it investigates. The constabulary needs to understand this issue and improve outcomes.

Figure 2: Percentage of victim-based crime recorded by Cambridgeshire Constabulary and all forces in England and Wales by selected outcome types in the year ending 30 June 2023

Outcome types	Cambridgeshire Constabulary outcome rate	England and Wales outcome rate
1 – Charged/ summonsed	6.1%	4.8%
2 and 3 – Caution – youths and adults	0.5%	0.7%
8 – Community resolutions	2.1%	1.4%
9 – Prosecution not in the public interest (Crown Prosecution Service decision)	0.0%	0.0%
10 and 21 – Prosecution not in the public interest (police decision) and further investigation to support formal action not in the public interest (police decision)	0.1%	0.9%
14 – Evidential difficulties (suspect not identified; victim doesn't support further action)	5.2%	5.7%
15 – Evidential difficulties (suspect identified; victim supports further action)	12.3%	12.2%
16 – Evidential difficulties (suspect identified; victim doesn't support further action)	21%	21.3%
17 – Prosecution time limit expired	0.5%	0.2%
18 – Investigation complete – no suspect identified	45%	42.1%
20 – Responsibility for further investigation passed to another body	0.7%	1.4%
22 – Diversionary, educational or intervention activity	0.9%	0.4%

Source: [Police recorded crime and outcomes open data tables](#) from the Home Office

In the year ending 30 June 2023, Cambridgeshire Constabulary recorded 59,919 victim-based crimes. It assigned 10.8 percent of these offences an 'offenders brought to justice' outcome, compared to 12.9 percent in the year ending 30 September 2022. This 10.8 percent figure is much higher than expected compared to other forces across England and Wales.

In the year ending 30 June 2023, the Constabulary assigned 6.1 percent of victim-based crimes a 'charged/summonsed' outcome. This is a decrease from 11.9 percent in the year ending 31 March 2015.

The Constabulary should improve its recording of victims' decisions, including why they stop supporting investigations. It should also make sure it records if personnel considered evidence-led prosecutions. These are cases the police continue with, even though victims don't support it.

The Constabulary usually doesn't consult victims before it decides which outcome to assign to a case. Our victim service assessment found that it only consulted victims about this in 39 out of 57 cases we reviewed.

We also found that the Constabulary tried to progress without the victim's support in only six of nine relevant cases. By not pursuing prosecution on behalf of victims, it may have missed chances to get results for them. The constabulary should improve in both areas. As of March 2023, the Constabulary's charge rate for rape is percent. This is lower than the average for England and Wales of 2.5 percent. It is seeking to improve this rate and recognises that this is vital to protecting victims from harm.

To help with this, the Constabulary's case file standards unit is working with the Crown Prosecution Service to improve the quality of evidence submissions in these investigations.

Force response:

In 2023 the Constabulary instituted a renewed investigative improvement plan, Project Sherlock, which is improving performance. Within this force-wide project there are four pillars that now gain specific focus and drive through a dedicated Crime Standards Delivery Group (CSDG). One of these pillars is 'Victim Focus', the others being Investigative Support and Supervision, Prevention and Coordination and Detective Recruitment and Development.

These combine to ensure a comprehensive, joined up strategy to improve every aspect of the Constabulary's investigative response.

The bedrock of improving delivery is the monthly tracking and auditing of performance through the additional review of crimes by a dedicated Standards and Assurance Team. Experienced investigators ensure all aspects of the Victims Codes of Practise (VCOP) are complied with, that victims' wishes are captured, that contact is frequent and appropriate, that supervision is robust and that the outcomes are clearly justified, recorded, and tracked.

CSDG brings scrutiny to a range of additional metrics to identify and swiftly remedy emerging patterns of investigative performance. The Constabulary Victim Service Assessment (VSA) review in 2023 showed that while the Constabulary still had improvements to make, there were significant improvements in victim provisions notably, 83% of cases showed victims wishes were taken into account, while the victim was informed of the outcome in 98% of cases. The Victim Service Assessment review also showed that the reason for victim withdrawal was documented in 86% of cases, ancillary orders were considered in 93% of cases and a clear rationale for the outcome was listed in 97% of cases. Overall, the Constabulary has increased victim contacts by around 2,000 a month compared to 18 months ago; this supports data that shows officers recorded appropriate victim needs assessments in over 92% of cases and almost 90% of cases were assessed to have a good level of victim service.

The Constabulary is focused on the need to bring about continued improvements with two thirds of victims being consulted prior to the outcome being decided upon and on ensuring through a revised Domestic Abuse delivery plan that Evidence Led Prosecutions will be considered wherever appropriate by investigators.

The Constabulary has introduced additional victim contact templates to ensure a culture of victim focus is embedded, especially within longer investigations. The force is introducing a victim feedback questionnaire hyperlink to increase user-experience learning to improve service delivery. This is something that was used to good effect within the adoption of Op

Soteria and the employment of an outside company to provide additional victim focus and trauma informed training and creation of sexual offence victim feedback panels.

Hate crime scrutiny panels are also now being implemented across the county to further understand from within local communities how investigative performance in this area can be strengthened. The Constabulary is also devising an additional Victim Focus campaign and have just redesigned its Domestic Abuse Strategy and Delivery Plan within the overarching Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategy with a view to fostering and continuing a long-term culture of prioritising victim outcomes.

Additionally, the Constabulary has incorporated the Out of Court Disposal Team into the newly created Prevention and Vulnerability Hubs to provide a more co-ordinated and prevention-focused response across the force.

To build in longer term capacity and capability among our investigators our People and Professionalism department are driving recruitment campaigns that are supported internally by enhanced training, welfare support and retention initiatives. Projections for the next 18 months show investigative numbers should increase by over 80 officers; taking into account attrition to address the detective variance. The Constabulary has increased detective numbers within key areas such as online sexual offending and with researchers within the Rape Investigation Team. The Case File Standards and Support Unit continue to provide expertise and guidance to ensure the Constabulary remains one of the best forces in the country in terms quality of case file submissions.

Finally, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC)-funded Victim and Witness Hub in Peterborough and our co-located Health and Police Sexual Assault Referral Centre in Huntingdon both continue to provide a vital and highly regarded service to the victims of crime across our county.

The improvements being made through this concerted strategy are demonstrated by the latest data analysis. The discrete month all crime prosecution possible outcome rate was 15.2% in March, higher than the 1, and 3 year averages for the 5th consecutive month. The 12-month rate continued to

increase, to 14.5% for 2023/24. The latest national data to the end of January 2024 ranking Cambridgeshire's all crime prosecution rate as 16th highest nationally (out of 43 forces). More specifically, national data places Cambridgeshire's prosecution possible outcome rate for all Serious Sexual Offences as 16th highest nationally; this compares to 21st in the 12 months to March 2023. The prosecution possible outcome rate for Rape is ranked 25th highest nationally; this compares to 34th in the 12 months to March 2023. In both cases, the improvement in Cambridgeshire was in line with, or higher, than the national increase.

Area for improvement 2

The Constabulary should make sure personnel involved in multi-agency work understand their roles and have the necessary skills and training to do them.

When we inspected the multi-agency safeguarding hub and the child exploitation hub, we found that some supervisors had limited experience in safeguarding.

The Constabulary had no formal safeguarding induction or training for people in these roles. This meant that some don't have the knowledge they need. These same staff attend important meetings about children at significant risk of harm.

In addition, this might mean these personnel don't understand their role or those of other agencies in multi-agency work. It could make it harder for them to assess risk and lead safeguarding activity.

To keep children and adults safe, personnel must have good working knowledge or experience of safeguarding. We told the constabulary about our findings. It is now creating a new training programme.

Force response:

The Constabulary have developed a dedicated training package for all staff who work within multi-agency safeguarding teams which covers core aspects of the role. All staff within multi-agency teams have now completed a one-week training event, delivered by a qualified trainer, which saw inputs from our

safeguarding partners as well as lived experience speakers to ensure the voice of the victim is at the heart of our responses. The training focussed on all aspects of the role from risk assessing referrals through to multi-agency decision-making around statutory thresholds. Working collaboratively with safeguarding partners has upskilled staff within the teams to understand the roles and responsibilities of all key agencies promoting professional relationships to holistically respond to risk and lead safeguarding activity. This training will be regularly delivered to ensure all new staff are upskilled alongside acting as a repository to disseminate new legislation and guidance. All staff working in multi-agency teams now have the requisite knowledge and skills to undertake their core role ensuring daily, they make decisions to achieve the best outcomes for children and vulnerable people.

Area for improvement 3

The Constabulary should make sure police personnel who chair multi-agency conferences are suitably trained and senior.

A multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC) is a meeting which discusses domestic abuse victims at high risk of serious harm or murder. Many partners attend these meetings. This includes the police, health and housing agencies, the Probation Service, independent domestic violence advocates and specialists from the voluntary sector. The UK charity Safe Lives produces guidance on MARACs. It says that chairs should have experience leading public protection meetings and the authority to hold other agencies to account. Chairs need to be senior enough to lead action that can reduce harm to vulnerable people.

In our inspection, we found that some police constables have been chairing MARACs. One police constable had done so for 18 months. This officer had no public protection background or formal MARAC chair training.

We also found examples of police constables who are the MARAC chair while also representing the police. This means they will be setting themselves actions which they will need to check with senior officers later on. Police constables aren't appropriate choices to serve as MARAC chairs.

Force response:

Working collaboratively with Safe Lives (UK lead on MARAC), the Constabulary has trained and upskilled 16 Inspectors and Chief Inspectors to act as chairperson within multi-agency conferences. Through a dedicated schedule of chairing, alongside IDVA colleagues, there is a suitably trained senior officer present to assess risk, make decisions and maximise safeguarding of domestic abuse survivors at every MARAC conference.

Cause of concern 3

The constabulary isn't managing risks posed by registered sex offenders in the community.

Our inspection found that police personnel regularly visit registered sex offenders on their own. This is contrary to authorised professional practice. This is because meeting registered sex offenders individually makes personnel vulnerable to grooming.

Senior leaders told us that visits like this only occurred after risk assessments and with oversight from supervisors. But more junior personnel told us this was common practice to deal with heavy workloads.

To provide effective oversight, the constabulary should hold regular meetings to examine its performance and the data available on it. This should set out the backlog's size, the risk posed by these cases and the most overdue visit.

We found that performance data is held at a local level and contains the total number of overdue visits at each risk level. But it doesn't show how overdue visits are or the specific risks in individual cases.

Senior leaders don't routinely see this data. This stops them taking good decisions to give staff the resources and support they need. Leaders must have clear oversight of performance information like this. This will make sure they can understand risks, backlogs and whether individual visits are taking place.

Recommendation

Within three months, Cambridgeshire Constabulary should develop a performance framework that helps it understand:

1. Whether visits by one individual to registered sex offenders are appropriate; and
2. What is included in its backlog of work, such as how overdue visits are and the risk level of the offenders involved.

Force response:

A detailed and comprehensive plan has been designed and implemented to manage the risk of registered sex offenders more effectively and robustly within the community. The Constabulary immediately introduced a double-crewing policy within Management of Sexual Offenders and Violent Offenders (MOSOVO) team utilising and upskilling officers from across the organisation leading to 100% compliance in this area. Key to effective management has been the design of an improved performance framework which dovetails into national Authorised Professional Practice (APP) guidelines. The Constabulary has introduced a daily data capture of the work undertaken by MOSOVO team which allows for ongoing demand analysis and cross referencing against VISOR and improved audit functions to holistically understand daily and thematic risks. This feeds into a corporate dashboard meaning performance management is more responsive enabling the Constabulary to measure and understand demand such as the number of outstanding visits based on risk and timeliness and therefore prioritise work to safeguard communities.

Daily, the workload, double crewed visits and planned activity of the MOSOVO team are reviewed by the Detective Inspector and Detective Chief Inspector utilising the performance data to prioritise based on threat and harm. At strategic level, the performance data is tracked and governed through monthly Protecting Vulnerable Persons (PVP) Senior Leadership Team Meeting, Force Performance Board and Prevention and Vulnerability Meeting by the Detective Superintendent and Detective Chief Superintendent. This enhanced understanding and governance has been evidenced in the latest performance analysis report which demonstrates improvements in visit compliance, a

reduction in unsuccessful and overdue visits and greater use of preventative opportunities to manage community-based risk. The medium to long-term plan is to use the data, alongside business planning processes, to develop a sustainable operating model that will be able to respond to emerging risk and demand.

The Constabulary has enhanced the level of supervision, leadership and welfare provisions. The workload of the team as a collective and individual officers is within national guidelines with no officer having a workload of high-risk cases exceeding 20% of their total. The Constabulary has undertaken a staff survey to understand welfare needs in high-risk roles. As a result, a series of enhanced wellbeing provisions have been introduced such as Pause Point and bespoke inputs from force leads working towards enabling a healthy and skilled workforce whose wellbeing and continuous professional development is prioritised.

The Constabulary has undertaken national benchmarking exercises to identify best practice and implemented a number of initiatives including a regional peer review process which adds a layer of independent scrutiny around the quality of risk assessments. The feedback for Cambridgeshire is positive with aspects of our feedback being deemed as outstanding against a nationally agreed assessment framework. The regional group meet quarterly and will develop into a regional professional network of expertise that will enhance the Constabulary response, build and share expertise and most importantly, make the communities we Police safer through continuous improvement.

Since the PEEL inspection the force has made an investment in Paedophile Online Investigation Team (POLIT) with the addition of a Detective Inspector, Detective Sergeant, 4 Detective Constables as well as further 4 additional posts, seconded to reduce the backlog of cases awaiting progression. The backlog has now been cleared, which affords greater understanding, oversight and management of the risk posed by suspected offenders.

Since the turn of the year Cambridgeshire has been proactive in utilising the Prioritisation Tool which is further means to understand, manage / mitigate

risk. The effectiveness of this tool is driving POLIT activity and as well as understanding any changes in demand.

This performance has effective governance through the Departmental Performance Meeting and via the Constabulary's Force Performance Board.

Area for improvement 4

The constabulary should improve how it manages individual performance so that it can effectively develop its people.

We found mixed views about how the constabulary manages individual performance. Police officers told us that, unless they want a promotion or move to a specialist role, they see little value in it.

Officers told us they only complete a performance review because it is linked to pay rises for the first seven years in the role. They also only complete the parts needed to get a pay rise. We heard this from constables and sergeants across the constabulary.

In January 2022, the constabulary presented findings from a review of its culture. This asked the workforce about leadership, fairness, well-being and whether the organisation supports them and trusts them to do their jobs.

A key finding was that leaders should be responsible for developing those they manage. But there was a consensus that personal development isn't a priority. Performance reviews and one-to-one meetings rarely took place. The review also found that supervisors often change roles. This meant that many personnel felt little interest from leaders in supporting their needs.

Our PEEL workforce survey ran from 12 June 2023 to 7 July 2023. It found that, of people who had a formal professional development review in the last year, only 149 of 316 said it was a good development tool. This is just 47.1 percent. And only 58.2 percent (184 of 316) said they valued the process. The constabulary should consider how to improve the value and benefits the professional development review system offers to police personnel. This will help it manage the performance and development of the workforce, including volunteers.

Force response:

In October 2023 the Constabulary launched a successful pilot of Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire Skills Strategy incorporated into the personal development review process. The process asks employees to describe their skills and career aspirations to better understand and manage its workforce through career reflection and development discussion between line managers and staff. This has now been implemented force wide and the results are subject of analysis to better understand the development of the workforce both strategically and individually.

In addition, a review of the tri-force Personal Development Review (PDR) has commenced. This work will review the ways in which the Constabulary manages individual performance so that it can more effectively develop its people. The provision is due for implementation by Spring 2025 in readiness for the next annual PDR process.

Area for improvement 5

The constabulary should make sure it can scrutinise poor performance in its demand hub, management of sexual offenders and violent offenders, and paedophile online investigation team.

In our inspection, we found that the constabulary is focused on improving performance. This was having positive results. However, we still found poor performance in some parts of the constabulary.

In the demand hub, we found that callers abandon one in three 101 calls. But personnel didn't have the information needed to understand why this figure was so high. The constabulary is looking to improve its telephone data to deal with this.

In July 2023, we found that the paedophile online investigation team had large backlogs. This meant it had many children in need of safeguarding. The paedophile online investigation team is now completing work to reduce backlogs. But after this work is complete, it must make sure it has a good sense of its current and future demand.

In the management of sexual offenders and violent offenders team, we found leaders didn't have the information they need to effectively review performance and risk. This meant they couldn't assess the risks created by missed visits to registered sex offenders.

The constabulary should make sure it has the information needed to scrutinise performance. And it should make sure it can respond to changes in performance. This will help it provide the best possible service to the public.

Force response:

Since 2023 a clear strategy and delivery plan have been in place to address backlogs in POLIT. These have encompassed an 'uplift' of a Detective Inspector and Detective Sergeant as well as four Constables to ensure longer term increased capacity to meet demand. With a further 4 officers on a rotating attachment to ensure even broader capacity, which has been supplemented by other performance management elements. Greater welfare provision for these officers has been achieved through the Pause Point and Emotional Support for Police Officers programmes; both of which ensure quicker identification, management and prevention of workplace stress. Greater management visibility and engagement has also been instituted to ensure a closer scrutiny and understanding of overall and individual officer performance. The Constabulary embarked on a rapid period of action in the autumn of 2023, supported by resources from across the force, to directly address the issue of children in need of safeguarding which has been sustained and resulted in a notable decrease in outstanding cases in preceding 6-month period.

Similarly, the review of MOSOVO data has improved data capture processes ensuring there is now contemporaneous and more reliable data to act upon, assisted by a new Power BI dashboard. This is verified and checked through regular line management engagement and results in a clear insight being given of attended, completed visits and of the residual risk of every case. Workloads are within accepted tolerance levels and our visits to Registered Sex Offenders are always now double crewed, per Authorised Professional Practice. Again, the Constabulary has improved performance through the

introduction of additional supervisory uplift which has resulted in a significant reduction in outstanding workloads and a clear, positive impact on morale. Additionally, staff engagement and welfare support has been enhanced to ensure an appropriate level of support is in place.

Area for improvement 6

The constabulary should make sure it is effective at managing demand and has the right resources, processes and plans to do so.

The constabulary should make sure it is set up well to tackle current and future demand in all areas. It should also make sure it can adapt to changing demand. Giving senior leaders access to good performance data will help with this.

The constabulary has a strategic threat and risk assessment process called CamSTRA. This helps it to do organisational planning. In addition, it has a corporate governance framework which helps it develop plans for dealing with short-term changes to demand. We found that people across the constabulary know about CamSTRA and understand what their role is in strategic planning.

But we still found some areas where personnel can't keep up with demand. For example, inexperienced officers in the serious crime team struggle to manage their workloads. And backlogs in the paedophile online investigation team have delayed safeguarding of children.

The constabulary must make sure it can respond to areas of high demand via CAMSTRA. To do this, the constabulary must also make sure it can identify areas of high demand across its work.

Force response:

Our CamSTRA annual business planning process is an iterative process which includes business days throughout the annual cycle. Whilst CamSTRA is designed to, and effectively delivers business planning and long-term strategic planning for the Constabulary, linked to the mid-term financial strategy it is not designed to provide short-term reflexive responses to

changing demand or pressures. The immediate response to this area for improvement is therefore being managed utilising the Constabulary Corporate Governance Frameworks in the specific business area to which this relates namely the Demand Hub and paedophile online investigation team (POLIT) as detailed above.

This includes the recent training and deployment of 50 resiliency constables to support the Demand Hub.

Within the POLIT, the Constabulary has enhanced scrutiny at Senior Leadership Team level around current and emerging demand and utilised internal governance processes to increase capacity and capability to respond to short term changes in demand.

A 23-point action plan is led by the Head of Local Policing to make sure that response demand is fully understood, and the necessary capacity and capability is in place to respond to this demand. This includes improved data, analysis and daily focus on performance, freeing up resources to meet peaks in demand. A fortnightly meeting is in place to ensure that progress against the plan is swift, with clear expectations set.