



**To:** Business Coordination Board

**From:** Chief Constable

**Date:** 25 February 2016

## **HER MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY – 'THE DEPTHS OF DISHONOUR: HIDDEN VOICES AND SHAMEFUL CRIMES' REPORT**

### **1. Purpose**

1.1 The purpose of this paper is to update the Business Coordination Board ("the Board") with the findings of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary's (HMIC) Report 'The Depths of Dishonour: Hidden Voices and Shameful Crimes – An Inspection of the Police Response to Honour-Based Violence, Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation'. This report will enable the Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Commissioner ("the Commissioner") to fulfil his statutory duty under Section 55 of the Police Act 1996 to comment on the HMIC report and send published comments to the Home Secretary, with a copy to HMIC.

### **2. Recommendation**

2.1 The Board is invited to note the contents of the report.

### **3. Background**

3.1 Honour-based violence (HBV) is the term used to refer to a collection of practices used predominantly to control the behaviour of women and girls within families or other social groups in order to protect supposed cultural and religious beliefs, values and social norms in the name of 'honour'. HBV incidents and crimes include specific types of offence, such as forced marriage (FM) and female genital mutilation (FGM), and acts which have long been criminalised, such as assault, rape and murder.

3.2 HMIC undertook their inspection of HBV across England and Wales between March and August 2015, and HMIC's report 'The Depths of Dishonour: Hidden Voices and

Shameful Crimes – An Inspection of the Police Response to Honour-Based Violence, Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation’ was published on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2015.

3.3 This inspection comprised two-phases:

- In Phase 1, all 43 police forces in England and Wales (including Cambridgeshire Constabulary) completed a self-assessment of their preparedness to protect and support victims of HBV. At the same time, HMIC completed a review of relevant documents and data provided by the Constabulary, and an analysis of information available to the public through the Constabulary and PCC websites. This phase of the inspection was designed to provide a point of comparison to inform activity in both police forces and inspection in future years.
- In Phase 2, HMIC conducted fieldwork in eight police forces – which did not include Cambridgeshire Constabulary.

3.4 HMIC acknowledged that:

*“As this was the first inspection by HMIC of the Police to focus on HBV, and this is a relatively under-developed area of policing, we anticipated that few forces would have the necessary systems in place to ensure that HBV incidents and crimes were prevented, that victims of HBV were protected effectively, that officers and staff were confident in what to look for and how to handle HBV cases, or that necessary and useful data was being collected by the forces. Our inspection findings found this to be correct.”*

## 4. Inspection Findings

4.1 The HMIC inspections found that – notwithstanding pockets of good practice – there were inconsistencies in the approach of the Police at most stages of the handling of a victim’s case. The clearest areas for improvement were in:

- increasing knowledge and awareness of HBV in all its forms, and addressing associated gaps in understanding of what works to protect victims;
- increasing awareness and understanding of officers and staff to ensure more effective first responses;
- ensuring a consistent approach to risk assessment, the protection of victims, and investigation and supervision of HBV crimes;
- improving the collection and handling of data and intelligence on risks to victims within police force areas and nationally;
- engaging more effectively with communities in order to increase the intelligence the police receive, and to promote public confidence that the service is learning from past cases of HBV; and
- ensuring consistent approaches to partnership working (particularly with health, social care and education professionals). HMIC’s inspection found that ROCUs have evolved in a piecemeal way and continue to develop inconsistently and range from highly ambitious and effective cross-force collaborative units to smaller and less effective units. This inconsistency can compromise effectiveness or duplicate capabilities unnecessarily. As a

result, opportunities to build and strengthen a consistent national approach to tackling serious and organised crime are being missed.

## **5. HMIC Recommendations**

- 5.1 As a result of the inspection, HMIC made 14 recommendations to the Home Office, the National Police Chiefs' Council, Chief Constables and the College of Policing.
- 5.2 The three force level recommendation in the report are that:
- By June 2016, Chief Constables in consultation with partner agencies should undertake research and analysis using diverse sources to understand better the nature and scale of HBV, FM and FGM in their force areas, and use this information to raise awareness and understanding of HBV, FM and FGM on the parts of their police officers and staff;
  - By June 2016, Chief Constables should ensure that information management processes are in place to record and flag HBV, FM and FGM information in an efficient, effective and systematic way so that the risk to individual victims is identified at an early stage and properly assessed and managed throughout the progression of victim's case
  - By June 2016, Chief Constables together with partner agencies should ensure they have clear policies and joint working structures in place to ensure an integrated approach to HBV, FM and FGM between police forces and other agencies.

## **6. Response to the HMIC Report**

- 6.1 The report, and the force level recommendations within the report, have been noted by the Constabulary.
- 6.2 The force level recommendations made by HMIC have been accepted by the Constabulary, and these are being progressed by the Head of the Public Protection Department.

## **7. Recommendation**

- 7.1 The Board is invited to note the contents of the report.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

<b>Source Document</b>	HMIC Report <i>'The Depths of Dishonour: Hidden Voices and Shameful Crimes – An Inspection of the Police Response to Honour-Based Violence, Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation'</i> <a href="https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/the-depths-of-dishonour.pdf">https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/the-depths-of-dishonour.pdf</a>
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