

PEEL 2021/22

Police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy

An inspection of Derbyshire Constabulary

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Overall summary

Our judgments

Our inspection assessed how good Derbyshire Constabulary is in ten areas of policing. We make graded judgments in nine of these ten as follows:

Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires improvement	Inadequate
		Preventing crime	Investigating crime	
		Recording data about crime	Responding to the public	
		Treatment of the public	Protecting vulnerable people	
		Managing offenders	Developing a positive workplace	
			Good use of resources	

We also inspected how effective a service Derbyshire Constabulary gives to victims of crime. We don't make a graded judgment in this overall area.

We set out our detailed findings about things the force is doing well and where the force should improve in the rest of this report.

Data in this report

For more information, please [view this report on our website](#) and select the 'About the data' section.

Important changes to PEEL

In 2014, we introduced our police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy (PEEL) inspections, which assess the performance of all 43 police forces in England and Wales. Since then, we have been continuously adapting our approach and this year has seen the most significant changes yet.

We are moving to a more intelligence-led, continual assessment approach, rather than the annual [PEEL inspections](#) we used in previous years. For instance, we have integrated our rolling crime data integrity inspections into these PEEL assessments. Our PEEL victim service assessment will now include a crime data integrity element in at least every other assessment. We have also changed our approach to graded judgments. We now assess forces against the characteristics of good performance, set out in the [PEEL Assessment Framework 2021/22](#), and we more clearly link our judgments to causes of concern and areas for improvement. We have also expanded our previous four-tier system of judgments to five tiers. As a result, we can state more precisely where we consider improvement is needed and highlight more effectively the best ways of doing things.

However, these changes mean that it isn't possible to make direct comparisons between the grades awarded this year with those from previous PEEL inspections. A reduction in grade, particularly from good to adequate, doesn't necessarily mean that there has been a reduction in performance, unless we say so in the report.

HM Inspector's observations

I recognise the current leadership's work on improvement, but I have some concerns with aspects of the performance of Derbyshire Constabulary in keeping people safe and reducing crime.

I don't underestimate the difficulty caused by the constabulary's legacy issues, such as a lack of policy, governance and performance scrutiny. But there are areas where the force still needs to improve.

These are the findings I consider most important from our assessments of the force over the past year.

The constabulary's governance structure needs to better support management of performance and deliver the force strategy effectively

We found a lack of clarity regarding responsibility within the constabulary's governance. We also found the governance doesn't always guide local performance management.

This leads to different local practices across the constabulary. Differing performance goals are then set locally. This means the constabulary isn't always able to measure performance force-wide and whether it is making progress against force priorities. It isn't always clear how the many governance and improvement boards are working together.

The constabulary needs to improve the way it builds, supports and protects its workforce

We spoke to many staff who said they felt disconnected from the organisation. The constabulary hasn't given the workforce inclusion training for many years, although now it has plans to do so. Staff need to know what is expected of them, to feel included and make sure the public are treated fairly.

We found the constabulary lacks proactive wellbeing activity and support for its staff. Supervisors lack training, and staff don't always feel supported. This needs to be addressed to improve the wellbeing of the workforce.

Training structures are complex and aren't as effective as they should be. Force-wide training isn't always well attended. The constabulary has started work to address this. But it needs to do more to prevent disparity in its workforce skills and meet its training needs.

The constabulary has shown it can make improvements successfully

We have seen improvements from the constabulary in reaction to our findings.

The constabulary has made improvements in recording crime, protecting children online and investigating [missing people](#).

These improvements were made following our observations about these critical areas.

I note that areas for improvement (AFIs) in our previous PEEL assessment of Derbyshire Constabulary weren't always addressed in a timely manner. The constabulary needs to work hard in response to this report, so that it can continue to improve the service it provides the public.

My report sets out the detailed findings of this inspection. While I acknowledge the good work officers and [staff](#) have already carried out in other areas to keep the public safe, I look forward to monitoring the force's progress towards addressing the areas I have identified where it needs to improve.



Roy Wilsher

HM Inspector of Constabulary

Reducing crime assessment

We have identified seven themes underpinning a force's ability to reduce crime effectively which, taken together, allow an assessment of the extent to which the force is doing all it can to reduce crime. This is a narrative assessment, as police recorded crime figures can be affected by variations and changes in recording policy and practice, making it difficult to make comparisons over time.

Derbyshire Constabulary doesn't always conduct thorough investigations. This means investigation outcomes may not always be appropriate and opportunities to bring offenders to justice may be missed.

The constabulary has a new framework to manage outstanding offenders. But this needs embedding to make sure officers promptly arrest offenders and prevent them from committing further crimes.

The constabulary misses opportunities to record whether victims are repeatedly targeted by criminals. This means it isn't always reducing repeat victimisation.

The constabulary has a problem-solving culture at a local level. This does help reduce crime. But it is undermined by vacancies in its [neighbourhood policing teams](#). The constabulary has plans to fill these vacancies.

There are some good crime-prevention initiatives, but these are ad hoc and sometimes delivered in isolation.

The constabulary has made other improvements that should help reduce crime. These are:

- improvements in identifying and recording crime, meaning more accurate data to help prioritise crime reduction;
- force-wide problem-solving training, meaning the workforce can apply evidence-based crime-prevention techniques to reduce crime; and
- a pilot scheme for diverting children and young people away from crime; preventing the commission of offences.

I am pleased that the constabulary is addressing the right areas of policing to help reduce crime.

But the following areas may negatively affect the force's ability to reduce crime:

- call handlers don't consistently use a risk assessment process to help prioritise reported incidents, or routinely record repeat victims;
- there is a lack of detailed understanding of current demand;
- there isn't an effective performance framework to help the constabulary understand how well it prevents crime, [anti-social behaviour](#) and [vulnerability](#); and
- a reduced capacity to engage its communities.

Until the constabulary improves its supervision of investigations, management of outstanding offenders and risk at initial contact, it won't be able to effectively reduce crime.

Providing a service to the victims of crime

Victim service assessment

This section describes our assessment of the service Derbyshire Constabulary provides to victims. This is from the point of reporting a crime through to the end result. As part of this assessment, we reviewed 90 case files.

When the police close a case of a reported crime, it will be assigned what is referred to as an 'outcome type'. This describes the reason for closing it.

We also reviewed 20 cases each when the following outcome types were used:

- A suspect was identified and the victim supported police action, but evidential difficulties prevented further action (['outcome 15'](#)).
- A suspect was identified, but there were evidential difficulties and the victim didn't support or withdrew their support for police action (['outcome 16'](#)).
- A suspect had been identified but the time limit for prosecution had expired ('outcome 17').

While this assessment is ungraded, it influences graded judgments in the other areas we have inspected.

The constabulary needs to improve the time it takes to answer emergency calls from the public and make sure that repeat victims are recorded

When a victim contacts the police, it is important that their call is answered quickly and that the right information is recorded accurately on police systems. The caller should be spoken to in a professional manner. The information should be assessed, taking into consideration threat, harm, risk and vulnerability. And the victim should get appropriate [safeguarding](#) advice.

The constabulary needs to improve the time it takes to answer emergency calls as it isn't meeting national standards. When calls are answered, the victim's vulnerability isn't always assessed using a structured process. Repeat victims aren't always recorded, which means this information may not be taken into account when considering the response the victim should have. Some victims aren't being given advice on crime prevention or on the preservation of evidence. This potentially leads to the loss of evidence that would support an investigation and the opportunity to prevent further crimes against the victim.

The constabulary doesn't always respond to calls for service promptly

A force should aim to respond to calls for service within its published time frames, based on the prioritisation given to the call. It should change call priority only if the original prioritisation is deemed inappropriate, or if further information suggests a change is needed. The response should take into consideration risk and victim vulnerability, including information obtained after the call.

Attendance was often outside recognised constabulary timescales. Victims weren't always told about the delay, and their expectations weren't met. This may cause victims to lose confidence and disengage. When call priorities were changed it wasn't always appropriate.

The constabulary's crime recording can be trusted

The force's crime recording should be trustworthy. It should be effective at recording reported crime in line with national standards and have effective systems and processes, supported by the necessary leadership and culture.

In December 2018, during our full [Derbyshire Constabulary Crime Data Integrity inspection](#), we identified a [cause of concern](#) about crime recording arrangements. We completed a revisit to the constabulary in October 2019 to audit incident records, and inspectors found significant improvements.

In this full inspection, we found that the constabulary continues to make progress. However, it needs to improve further to make sure all crimes reported are recorded correctly and without delay.

We set out more details about the force's crime recording in the crime data integrity section below.

The constabulary allocates crimes to appropriate staff

Police forces should have a policy to make sure crimes are allocated to appropriately trained officers or staff for investigation or, if appropriate, not investigated further. The policy should be applied consistently. The victim of the crime should be kept informed of the allocation and whether the crime is to be investigated further.

The arrangements for allocating recorded crimes for investigation were in accordance with the force policy. In all the cases we reviewed, the crimes were allocated to the most appropriate department for investigation.

The constabulary isn't always carrying out thorough investigations

Police forces should investigate reported crimes quickly, proportionately and thoroughly. Victims should be kept updated about the investigation, and the force should have effective governance arrangements to make sure investigation standards are high.

Investigations were completed in a timely manner, but frequently lacked effective supervision. As a result, some investigations weren't thorough. This means victims are potentially being let down and offenders aren't being brought to justice.

Victims were updated throughout investigations. However, victim personal statements weren't always taken, which means victims weren't given the opportunity to describe the impact that crime had on their lives. When victims withdrew support for an investigation, the constabulary didn't always consider progressing the case without the victim's support. This can be an important method of safeguarding the victim and preventing further offences being committed. The constabulary didn't always consider the use of orders designed to protect victims, such as a domestic violence protection order ([DVPO](#)) or notice ([DVPN](#)).

Under the [Code of Practice for Victims of Crime \(VCOP\)](#) there is a requirement to conduct a needs assessment at an early stage to decide whether victims require additional support. The outcome of the assessment and the request for additional support should be recorded. The constabulary isn't always completing the victim needs assessment, which means not all victims will get the appropriate level of service.

The constabulary isn't always using the appropriate outcome or obtaining an auditable record of the victim's wishes

The constabulary should make sure it follows national guidance and rules for deciding the outcome of each report of crime. In deciding the outcome, it should consider the nature of the crime, the offender and the victim. And it should show the necessary leadership and culture to make sure the use of outcomes is appropriate.

When a suspect has been identified but evidential difficulties prevent further action, the victim should be informed of the decision to close the investigation. Although victims were informed of the decision to take no further action and close the investigation, the constabulary used this outcome incorrectly on a number of occasions.

When a suspect has been identified but the victim doesn't support or withdraws their support for police action, an auditable record from the victim should be held confirming their decision. This will allow the investigation to be closed if appropriate. There was no evidence of the victim's decision in some cases we reviewed. This means that victims' wishes may not always be fully represented and considered before the investigation is closed.

For crimes that can only be prosecuted at magistrates' courts, prosecution must start within six months of the offence being committed. A crime can be closed if a suspect has been identified but the time limit has expired. The constabulary used this outcome correctly.

Crime data integrity

Adequate

Derbyshire Constabulary is adequate at recording crime.

We estimate that Derbyshire Constabulary is recording:

- 92.5 percent (with a confidence interval of +/- 2.5 percent) of all reported crime (excluding fraud);
- 89.6 percent (with a confidence interval of +/- 4.3 percent) of violent offences; and
- 94.6 percent (with a confidence interval of +/- 3.8 percent) of sexual offences.

These figures are broadly unchanged compared with the findings from our 2019 re-inspection, but significantly improved from our 2018 full inspection.

We estimate that the constabulary failed to record 6,700 crimes for the year covered by this inspection.

Areas for improvement

The constabulary is poor at recording crime when anti-social behaviour is reported

The constabulary is failing to record all crimes and tackle problems when victims report [anti-social behaviour \(ASB\)](#). Victims of ASB are often subjected to abuse and torment for substantial periods, and crime is often committed by neighbours. Failing to record crimes and provide an effective service to tackle ASB can mean victims live in fear in their own homes while being subjected to long-term abuse and torment by people living next door or in the local community.

The constabulary needs to improve the recording of equality data

The constabulary's data for victims of crime shows that age and gender are well recorded, ethnicity is less well recorded and other [protected characteristics](#) are hardly ever recorded. The constabulary should be collecting this information to understand the extent to which each protected group is affected by crime, how this differs from those without the protected characteristics, and whether a different response is needed for these victims.

Main findings

In this section, we set out our main findings that relate to how well the constabulary provides a service to the victims of crime.

The constabulary is good at recording crimes of rape and reported incidents of rape

The constabulary records crimes of rape and reported incidents of rape well. Rape is one of the most serious crimes a victim can experience. Therefore, it is especially important that crimes and reports of rape are recorded accurately to make sure victims receive the service and support they expect and deserve.

Engaging with and treating the public with fairness and respect

Adequate

Derbyshire Constabulary is adequate at treating people fairly and with respect.

Area for improvement

The constabulary should improve its engagement with all its diverse communities

Forces need to understand the diverse needs of their communities. The constabulary isn't effective at maintaining an up-to-date knowledge of the communities it serves.

The constabulary has introduced some initiatives to improve, but there hasn't been significant progress. This is because there are many vacancies in neighbourhood teams. The remaining staff are often covering response team functions rather than maintaining contact with their communities. Also, the constabulary is unable to capture good practice because of the disparate working approaches of the local policing teams.

The constabulary has produced an 'engagement minimum standards' document for neighbourhood teams. This is unlikely to improve its understanding of communities while staff are used to cover response policing and staff vacancies remain.

Main findings

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to treating people fairly and with respect.

The workforce treats the public with fairness and respect

We reviewed a sample of [body-worn video \(BWV\)](#) recordings. We also watched BWV extracts the constabulary was sharing with external scrutiny groups. Officers were calm, respectful and sensitive to the differing needs of the people they encountered. Staff told us they understood the importance of showing respect to the public.

The constabulary understands and continues to improve the way its officers use stop and search fairly and respectfully

The constabulary has a comprehensive approach to improving the use of stop and search. This comprises:

- effective training;
- regular monitoring and analysis of data;
- strong internal scrutiny processes focused on reducing any disproportionality;
- appropriate support for external scrutiny panels;
- clear communication about required standards;
- good use of BWV footage;
- a stop and search strategy for all police operations; and
- an easy-to-access webpage for anyone who has been searched to submit feedback.

There is strong leadership in this area. We are confident that officers will continue to improve how they use this power.

The constabulary is focused on improving its recording of the reasonable grounds leading to a stop and search

A stop and search record is important because it is the only information a person stopped is entitled to see about the interaction. If this doesn't contain enough information, they won't have a sound basis for understanding whether the action taken was appropriate or not.

Despite the efforts the constabulary is taking to improve the use of this power, the details that officers record remain insufficient.

During our inspection, we reviewed a sample of 152 stop and search records from 1 January to 31 December 2021. On the basis of this sample, we estimate that 85.5 percent (with a confidence interval of +/- 5.4 percent) of all stop and searches by the constabulary during this period had reasonable grounds recorded. This is broadly unchanged compared with the findings of our previous review of records from 2019, where we found 89.4 percent (with a confidence interval of +/- 4.0 percent) of stop and searches had reasonable grounds recorded. Of the records we reviewed for stop and searches on people from ethnic minorities, 26 of 27 had reasonable grounds recorded.

The external stop and search scrutiny panel we observed also noted that officers sometimes don't record reasonable grounds well enough. The constabulary acknowledges this issue, and we are confident that it has the leadership and processes in place to address this.

The constabulary supports effective external scrutiny of how its officers use police powers

The constabulary supports several effective external panels. These scrutinise how well officers carry out stop and search, use force and deploy [Tasers](#).

The panels are independently chaired with diverse membership. Training is good and the panels are given enough documentation supported by BWV to be able to scrutinise decisions effectively and challenge them confidently.

The panels give excellent feedback to the constabulary on general themes and individual officers' performance. The constabulary uses this information to improve the way officers use their powers. Constabulary leaders give individual officers specific guidance. General themes are included within training and force-wide communication.

The constabulary has developed its understanding of its officers' use of force

When officers use force, they should complete a form. This form contains the details of why, how, when and against whom force was used. Many forms are checked by supervisory officers and other internal scrutiny processes. Feedback is given to the individual officer that acknowledges good practice and advises on how to improve any poor practices.

All the information from these forms is entered into a police IT system. The data is analysed and then scrutinised at a constabulary strategic meeting. This gives the constabulary a detailed understanding of how force is used. For example, we saw that proportionality issues were displayed in performance databases under useful headings such as location, offence type and at what stage of the interaction they occurred. Leaders are then given further work to look at specific incidents.

Learning from these practices influences training design and informs officer guidance. It should also improve the constabulary's use of force.

Preventing crime and anti-social behaviour

Adequate

Derbyshire Constabulary is adequate at prevention and deterrence.

Areas for improvement

The constabulary needs to appropriately staff its neighbourhood policing model to meet demand

We found the constabulary has significant vacancies within its neighbourhood policing teams. The constabulary told us that 58 percent of community support officer and 75 percent of neighbourhood constable posts were filled.

Neighbourhood staff were often taken away by supervisors at short notice (known as abstraction) to help cover response policing incidents.

Staff have less time to focus on preventing crime and are becoming less proactive as they try to manage higher workloads. This also affects engagement, as described in the previous chapter.

Appropriately resourced neighbourhood policing is vital to preventing crime and anti-social behaviour. It also helps establish legitimacy and policing by consent.

If the constabulary doesn't improve staffing and abstraction rates, it will continue to have limits to its preventative activity.

The constabulary needs to provide structured training for neighbourhood policing staff, so that staff have the right skills to do their job

Many neighbourhood policing staff had software that could help them do their job but lacked training to use it. We found staff had developed their own ways of using IT to help prevent crime, which isn't efficient.

The constabulary has no formal safer neighbourhood training and relies on experienced staff passing on knowledge.

There is limited structured continuous professional development. This means staff aren't always up to date with the best ways to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour.

The constabulary has future training plans for neighbourhood officers and staff. This will provide the necessary knowledge and skills required to carry out this specialist role.

Main findings

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to prevention and deterrence.

The constabulary lacks an effective performance framework to help it understand how well it prevents crime, anti-social behaviour and vulnerability

We found no effective performance framework that directed activity and monitored outcomes. We also found there is a lack of strategic understanding of community threats, risk and harm.

Local managers define performance in different ways. This means the constabulary has no single means of understanding how effective it is at preventing crime, anti-social behaviour and vulnerability.

Without this understanding, the constabulary can't prioritise issues and increase support to departments focused on prevention.

The constabulary uses problem-management plans that prevent crime and anti-social behaviour

We found the constabulary has provided good problem-solving training to all operational staff.

We reviewed problem-management plans and there was effective use of a problem-solving system ([SARA](#)). We saw specialist investigation teams using problem-management plans.

'Problem-solving sergeants' review and quality assure all plans. These sergeants also provide links to best practice and useful information.

The constabulary holds staff awards which recognise innovative problem solving.

The constabulary carries out some early intervention approaches that result in positive outcomes

The constabulary has a youth engagement team that holds weekly meetings with young people who have committed criminal offences for the first time. It calls these meetings 'consequence workshops'. The workshops aim to prevent those attending from reoffending in the future.

The constabulary told us that 87 percent of young people attending these workshops didn't go on to commit further crimes. Feedback from young people attending showed that the workshop directly affected their decision not to reoffend.

This is good work to prevent crime by working with young people. To improve further, the constabulary needs to appropriately staff the team (as outlined in the AFI above), and create an organisation-wide early intervention strategy.

Responding to the public

Requires
improvement

Derbyshire Constabulary requires improvement at responding to the public.

Areas for improvement

The constabulary needs to attend calls for service within its published attendance times, and fully update victims when this doesn't happen

In 21 of 51 cases reviewed, our victim service assessment found the constabulary failed to meet its own incident response targets. And in 13 of 21 cases reviewed, victims weren't updated about delays.

This results in a lack of public confidence in the constabulary's ability to respond to calls for service.

The constabulary needs to improve how it conducts and records risk assessments to better safeguard victims and preserve evidence

We identified inconsistencies in the way the constabulary uses its structured approach to risk assessment ([THRIVE](#)), with THRIVE not being evident in 16 of 75 cases reviewed. We also found no effective triage at first contact for non-emergency calls, and transferred calls had no information recorded.

In 8 of the 35 cases we reviewed, call takers didn't give appropriate advice on the preservation of evidence, and in 6 of 17 cases they didn't record if callers were repeat victims.

This means the constabulary doesn't always understand the risks involved in a call and is sometimes unable to appropriately safeguard victims. Victims of crime may not receive an appropriate response, and the constabulary may miss opportunities to reduce repeat victimisation.

The constabulary needs to work with other organisations to make sure that the most appropriate agencies take ownership of or provide the right support for some types of demand

We found that some incidents being managed by the constabulary were more suitable for other organisations. We also found that to access mental health expertise, the constabulary had to telephone other organisations for advice.

This means that officers at incidents often spend time supporting people in a mental health crisis or attempting to resolve issues that other organisations are better placed to do.

The constabulary has now introduced a most appropriate agency policy, which may support improvement in this area.

Main findings

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to how well the constabulary responds to the public.

The constabulary needs to reduce the non-emergency abandonment rate

The number of abandoned calls to the constabulary switchboard and [101](#) service is above national guidelines.

Constabulary data shows that between January and June 2022, 18 percent of calls transferred from the switchboard to the 101 service were abandoned. For the same period, 4.8 percent of calls to the switchboard were abandoned. The national standard for abandonment of non-emergency calls into a force is 5 percent. The constabulary has introduced a switchboard to reduce call wait times and abandonment, but this hasn't yet seen a big enough reduction in rates.

High abandonment for non-emergencies may mean callers go on to make inappropriate calls to the 999 system. It also means the constabulary has a measure of unknown risk that it doesn't address.

The constabulary has also introduced an improvement programme to address this and other issues. We will assess the impact of this programme and whether it makes the improvements required.

The constabulary sometimes changes its response to incidents inappropriately

We found that the constabulary inappropriately downgraded four of eight relevant cases we reviewed. Supervisors had reviewed all these eight cases, but this doesn't prevent inappropriate downgrades occurring, and victims weren't informed of delays.

This means some victims don't receive the quick response they need from the constabulary. It also means the constabulary's response isn't always suitable for the level of risk the victim faces.

The force should improve the time it takes to answer emergency calls for service

Our victim service assessment identified that emergency calls aren't answered quickly enough.

The time the constabulary takes to answer emergency calls is above the national standard of answering 90 percent of 999 calls within 10 seconds. The data the constabulary provided us shows that it answered 79.14 percent of 999 calls in under 10 seconds.

The constabulary is improving morale and wellbeing within its [control room](#)

The constabulary communicates with its staff in a way that promotes conversation and feedback. Staff are listened to and there was evidence of staff suggestions being used to make improvements.

Some senior managers are very visible. This has built rapport, trust and greater understanding of organisational change.

Staff are now more positive about their workplace and feel listened to. They are also able to better influence changes that increase morale and wellbeing.

Call handlers are ethical, polite and communicate clearly

In 66 of 68 cases reviewed, call handlers acted politely, appropriately and ethically, using clear, unambiguous language without apparent bias. In 2 cases, there was an inappropriate level of questioning, which led to a lack of understanding of the risk victims faced.

When staff treat the public fairly, this increases confidence in the constabulary and promotes an ethical, inclusive culture.

Investigating crime

Requires
improvement

Derbyshire Constabulary requires improvement at investigating crime.

Areas for improvement

The constabulary should make sure investigation plans are created where applicable, with supervisory oversight ensuring that all investigative opportunities are taken

In 17 of 68 cases reviewed, we found supervisors didn't provide effective oversight of investigations. This resulted in some investigations not being thorough enough.

We also found that investigative opportunities to progress cases were taken in only 2 of 12 cases reviewed.

This means that victims are potentially being let down and offenders aren't being brought to justice.

The constabulary needs to make sure it complies with the requirements of the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime. This includes offering the opportunity to give victim personal statements and completing a victim needs assessment

In 12 of 23 cases reviewed, officers didn't take victim personal statements. This deprives victims of the opportunity to describe the impact that crime has had on their lives. There is also a requirement to conduct a needs assessment at an early stage to decide whether victims need more support. The outcome of the assessment and the request for extra support should be recorded. In 23 of 72 cases reviewed, the constabulary didn't complete a victim needs assessment. This means not all victims will get the appropriate level of service.

The constabulary should make sure that there is an auditable record of the decision of the victim and their reasons for withdrawal of support from the investigation. The constabulary should make sure it documents whether evidence-led prosecutions have been considered in all such cases

Sometimes officers identify a suspect, but the victim doesn't support or withdraws their support for police action. Officers should create an auditable record from the victim confirming their decision. This will allow the investigation to be closed if appropriate. In 12 of the 20 cases we reviewed, there was no evidence of the victim's decision. This means officers may have closed investigations without victims' wishes being represented or considered.

Main findings

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to how well the constabulary investigates crime.

The constabulary doesn't provide a consistent standard of investigation to all victims of crime

Our victim service assessment found that 87 of 90 crimes we reviewed were allocated to the appropriate department. But victims receive a different service depending on which policing area of the constabulary deals with them.

We found a lack of consistency in who investigated specific types of crime. Some local neighbourhood policing teams investigated a significant number of crimes, while others didn't. We found some police community support officers (PCSOs) responsible for investigating crimes. We also found a response officer investigating a serious historical sexual assault.

This approach means the constabulary doesn't always use staff in their proper role or have the most appropriately skilled staff, with the necessary support, dealing with investigations. Standards of investigation are inconsistent. The constabulary doesn't have a strategic overview of demand within every team. And it is missing opportunities to identify and roll out good practice across the organisation.

However, the constabulary has a good governance structure and strong leadership, which should help it make improvements in this area. In July 2022, the constabulary also introduced a new 'crime directorate', supported by a new crime allocation policy, to provide clarity, consistency and a better service for all victims. We look forward to seeing the results of this.

Victims receive regular updates on the progress of investigations

In 54 of the 57 cases we reviewed, we found that victims were regularly updated throughout investigations. This means victims should feel supported.

The constabulary has improved its understanding of the crime demand it faces

Since our last full inspection for 2018/19, the constabulary is recording crime much more effectively. The constabulary's crime recording is now trustworthy. More victims should receive the service and support they need.

The constabulary can now change its operating model, or allocation of resources, based on a better picture of its crime demand.

The constabulary is improving support for operational officers preparing files for the Crown Prosecution Service

Recent initiatives have helped officers to be more efficient in case file preparation. These include:

- apps on their mobile devices and computers to guide officers through investigations and case building; and
- a prosecution support team available for advice and helping with redaction.

Officers told us this support was helpful. It improves file standards, consistency and results for victims. It also increases the time operational officers can spend responding and patrolling.

Protecting vulnerable people

Requires
improvement

Derbyshire Constabulary requires improvement at [protecting vulnerable people](#).

Areas for improvement

The constabulary needs to improve the appropriateness and quality of its public protection notices. It needs to do this to reduce unnecessary demand which causes delays

We found that staff sometimes submit [public protection notices \(PPNs\)](#) when these aren't required. We also found some submissions to be of poor quality. Staff perceive they must submit PPNs for all incidents due to constabulary policy, but this isn't the case.

Two centralised teams receive these PPNs and make sure officers have completed them properly. This checking process creates work and causes delays. These delays limit the constabulary's ability to act quickly to keep children and vulnerable people safe.

The constabulary needs to improve the effectiveness of its multi-agency working arrangements

The constabulary has some limited meeting structures with other agencies. These meetings sometimes lack clear goals. And staff from other agencies aren't always involved in finding solutions to safeguarding issues.

We found the constabulary's risk and referral unit (RARU) wasn't always available to attend important multi-agency meetings. There was also a lack of joint training with partners.

The constabulary's decisions about vulnerable people aren't as effective as they could be. This is due to decisions being made in isolation and without involving other agencies.

The constabulary should improve its understanding of vulnerability demand and make sure it has the right resources to safeguard the public

The constabulary isn't managing workloads well enough within its adult and child protection teams. There are shortages of qualified staff and workloads are increasing.

Staff believe they have unmanageable workloads. And [senior officers](#) aren't visible or communicating with staff to understand the scale of the issues. This limits the capacity of the constabulary to manage demand and protect vulnerable people.

Main findings

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to how well the constabulary protects vulnerable people.

The constabulary misses opportunities to prevent domestic violence offending by using ancillary orders

As part of our victim service assessment, we found that in the cases we reviewed where an ancillary order such as a domestic violence protection notice (DVPN) or order (DVPO) or [stalking protection order](#) needed consideration, this happened in only 9 out of 14 cases.

Some staff also believed the threshold to gain a DVPN was higher than it actually is.

The constabulary needs to make sure its staff understand when DVPNs are appropriate. This will make sure victims are better protected on every occasion.

The constabulary doesn't always seek feedback from vulnerable victims to improve services

The constabulary obtains feedback from generic victim telephone surveys. But it doesn't always actively seek out vulnerable victims to gather feedback. This means it may be missing opportunities to improve its services for those with vulnerabilities.

The constabulary has made vulnerability a priority and is changing the culture of the organisation, improving its ability to safeguard

The deputy chief constable chairs a vulnerability board. Six further meetings report into this. The constabulary also has a vulnerability action plan. These measures seek to improve service to the most vulnerable.

We found most frontline staff were knowledgeable about different types of vulnerability. They were able to explain how they can protect vulnerable people from crime and provided examples of this.

The constabulary has made improvements to the way it responds to missing people

The constabulary has created a centralised team that investigates missing people. This team works with a new child exploitation team.

We found clear, detailed policy was in place, which guided staff across the organisation. Staff have access to toolkits that should promote quality missing person investigations.

The centralised team and new policy has resulted in consistency in some areas and better data. The constabulary is now able to better manage performance in this area.

Managing offenders and suspects

Adequate

Derbyshire Constabulary is adequate at managing offenders and suspects.

Areas for improvement

The constabulary should improve the management of apprehending outstanding suspects and offenders

This was a recommendation identified during our 2018/19 inspection. Progress has been slow, although the constabulary has made some improvements and the governance structure is now clear.

There is still no effective force-wide performance information for leaders to use. Different parts of the constabulary continue to manage outstanding suspects in different ways. Work to improve performance is generally devolved to inspectors and sergeants. Suspects often remain outstanding because of the lack of quality supervisory reviews.

We reviewed 32 cases in our victim service assessment. We found that in all cases officers arrested suspects as soon as possible. But the subsequent national child protection inspection, and our later fieldwork, found that high-risk offenders were often not apprehended promptly.

The constabulary should review its sex offender management process to make sure that deviation from national guidance clearly articulates any resulting risk and how risk will be mitigated

The constabulary doesn't follow [Authorised Professional Practice \(APP\)](#) about sex offender management. This is evident from officers conducting visits alone and the habitual use of announced visits. Both practices limit the constabulary's ability to manage risk and detect further offences.

This deviation from national guidance is due to the high levels of demand on the constabulary in this area. The constabulary must be clear on what it expects from staff managing offenders. It has introduced a new policy which requires that for any future work that doesn't follow APP, officers must record the rationale and how risk will be managed.

Main findings

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to how well the constabulary manages offenders and suspects.

The constabulary has an effective integrated offender management programme

The constabulary operates an [integrated offender management \(IOM\)](#) programme that is based on the offenders who pose the greatest risk of further offending under the new ['fixed, flex and free' national strategy](#).

We found good practice in the constabulary and a reduction in offending as a result. The IOM team had enough staff to be proactive in managing offenders, including those due for release from prison. They worked with partners and local neighbourhood teams to track those on the scheme. The team had delivered IOM training to some neighbourhood officers. This IOM partnership work and training is effective across some, but not all, parts of the constabulary. This should improve when a planned new organisational model is in place.

The constabulary identifies and takes action against people sharing [indecent images of children](#)

The constabulary has a specialist team called the 'protection of children online team' (PCOT). PCOT effectively deals with information about suspects and shares suspects' details by putting warning flags on intelligence systems. Officers arrest offenders and make sure they are given [bail](#) conditions that protect children. Supervisory reviews are good and give officers clear direction.

The team has new digital equipment that officers take to suspects' premises. Officers can now interrogate phones and computers at scenes. This gives them early access to important evidence which improves how they can manage the suspect.

At the May 2022 National Child Protection Inspection (NCPI) debrief we told the constabulary where further improvements should be made. This detail will be in the forthcoming NCPI report.

Disrupting serious organised crime

We now inspect [serious and organised crime \(SOC\)](#) on a regional basis, rather than inspecting each force individually in this area. This is so we can be more effective and efficient in how we inspect the whole SOC system, as set out in HM Government's SOC strategy.

SOC is tackled by each force working with [regional organised crime units \(ROCU\)](#). These units lead the regional response to SOC by providing access to specialist resources and assets to disrupt [organised crime groups](#) that pose the highest harm.

Through our new inspections we seek to understand how well forces and ROCUs work in partnership. As a result, we now inspect ROCUs and their forces together and report on regional performance. Forces and ROCUs are now graded and reported on in regional SOC reports.

Our SOC inspection of Derbyshire Constabulary hasn't yet been completed. We will update our website with our findings (including the force's grade) and a link to the regional report once the inspection is complete.

Building, supporting and protecting the workforce

Requires improvement

Derbyshire Constabulary requires improvement at building and developing its workforce.

Areas for improvement

The constabulary should make sure that a fair, ethical and inclusive culture is embedded throughout the organisation

We spoke to many officers and staff who said they felt a lack of connection with the organisation. Some also had a negative attitude towards change and senior leaders. We were also told that working environments in some locations weren't felt to be positive. Senior officers acknowledge these issues. On one occasion, we witnessed a police officer using inappropriate language. This went unchallenged by colleagues who were in the vicinity, but senior officers dealt with the issue promptly when we raised it with them.

The constabulary hasn't given the workforce inclusion training for many years. And current training doesn't cover ethics, culture and standards effectively. The constabulary has now scheduled future mandatory training in these areas.

This improvement is necessary to make sure all staff know what is expected of them and feel included, and the public are treated fairly.

The constabulary should improve its provision of preventative wellbeing measures for its staff

The constabulary introduced an 'Our People Board' to oversee wellbeing work. It works to a strategy and action plan. Tasks coming from this board haven't been rolled out across the constabulary, and progress to achieve them is slow. We found little proactive wellbeing activity. Supervisors don't have the training, support or capacity to recognise early warning signs, or provide early action, to manage staff wellbeing. Some roles that have a higher risk to wellbeing have some proactive provision, but many in these roles don't feel well supported.

The constabulary has plans to address this, and the chief constable now leads this area. It is important these plans are implemented to improve the wellbeing of the workforce.

The constabulary should improve how it manages staff training and development

The constabulary has complex training structures, which aren't as effective as they should be. For example, the constabulary designs force-wide training events aligned to its priorities. Staff attendance is low at these because divisions don't release staff to attend. Conversely, divisional training days are well attended but don't always reflect constabulary priorities. Staff trainers aren't always used efficiently across the whole organisation.

The constabulary has introduced a force training commissioning group which needs to focus on leading this work. This should help the constabulary meet its learning and development needs in a more consistent and effective way.

Main findings

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to how well the constabulary builds and develops its workforce.

The constabulary uses a variety of ways to promote acceptable standards in how staff perform their roles

For some years, the constabulary hasn't given the workforce consistent guidance on how to perform their roles. This lack of policy and direction has resulted in a variety of problems, including differing investigation standards, informal promotion processes and varying standards of behaviour. All these affect how the constabulary treats the public. The leadership has acknowledged these issues and has:

- reintroduced policies to guide staff on consistent ways of working;

- reinstated the term '[professional standards department](#)' for the team dealing with complaints (previously named '[organisational learning](#) department') to promote the required standards of behaviour;
- introduced open and transparent promotion processes;
- circulated internal video messages to staff on required standards when investigating and safeguarding; and
- issued external media statements clarifying to the public the improvements the constabulary needs to make.

Some of the above hasn't been well received by staff, and the executive should focus on how to communicate more effectively. This work must continue to support the improvements this report highlights.

The constabulary has introduced a force-wide operation to respond to workforce survey results

Force and nationally run surveys have highlighted low workforce morale. In response, the deputy chief constable introduced and leads Operation Resolve. This focuses on:

- frontline demand management;
- welfare and working environment;
- capability and equipment; and
- communication.

It aims to quickly reduce the demand on officers and improve their working conditions. Officers attend local Operation Resolve meetings to explain what needs fixing. The force level meeting considers the issues raised, prioritising areas for action. Those issues prioritised are promptly dealt with.

Early achievements include more patrol equipment, and the reduction in the need for officers to guard scenes of crimes and suspects. Frontline officers told us that Operation Resolve was helping to improve their working conditions.

The constabulary is on track to achieve the Police Uplift Programme target

The constabulary has used national best practice to improve its recruitment processes. This is incorporated in its uplift strategy. Actions are driven by the attraction recruitment and retention board, chaired by the chief constable.

The constabulary had been consistently above its allocation target at the start of the programme. However, during the year ending 31 March 2022, the constabulary held several unsuccessful recruitment campaigns. This meant it didn't recruit enough officers and fell short of its target. However, since our inspection, the constabulary is back on target for this year.

Vetting and counter corruption

We now inspect how forces deal with vetting and counter corruption differently. This is so we can be more effective and efficient in how we inspect this high-risk area of police business.

Corruption in forces is tackled by specialist units, designed to proactively target corruption threats. Police corruption is corrosive and poses a significant risk to public trust and confidence. There is a national expectation of standards and how they should use specialist resources and assets to target and arrest those that pose the highest threat.

Through our new inspections, we seek to understand how well forces apply these standards. As a result, we now inspect forces and report on national risks and performance in this area. We now grade and report on forces' performance separately.

Derbyshire Constabulary's vetting and counter corruption inspection hasn't yet been completed. We will update our website with our findings and the separate report once the inspection is complete.

Strategic planning, organisational management and value for money

Requires improvement

Derbyshire Constabulary requires improvement at operating efficiently.

Areas for improvement

The constabulary should review its governance structure to make sure that each meeting has a purpose and is aligned to performance, and that the current operating model can deliver the force strategy effectively

The constabulary lacked an effective governance and performance structure. The chief constable introduced new force-level meeting and board structures to replace the previous ineffective arrangements. These are now under review. However, we found a lack of clarity of responsibility remained in some areas.

The arrangements don't always help improve performance across the constabulary. Problems raised by local managers don't always reach these meetings. Actions are sometimes returned to staff to resolve. This results in an inconsistent approach at a local level. When staff have attempted to resolve problems, the solutions aren't always widely understood, and it isn't clear whether they provided value for money.

The constabulary is operating a 'north and south' model that means the service provided isn't always consistent. And the constabulary's supporting services aren't working effectively. A board has been set up to improve how they work together, but it has lacked accountability that could drive improvements.

The new crime directorate may not bring about the anticipated improvements if this AFI isn't achieved.

The constabulary should use data more effectively to better understand current demand

The constabulary has invested in new information technology that provides a detailed view of demand in some areas.

But there was a lack of understanding across the constabulary about how data can be accessed and used to improve demand and resource management.

The constabulary needs to do more to make itself more efficient and better understand its current demand.

The organisation lacks an understanding of the demand on its staff and the pressures its workforce experiences. It should also take opportunities to embed a positive culture for using management information. It needs to do this to meet the demand challenges it faces.

The constabulary should make sure it understands its own capability and capacity and makes best use of its resources

The constabulary has a focus on managing current demand and is developing its data picture. But we found that it needs to develop a better understanding of its capability and its capacity to improve performance.

The constabulary has been slow to produce the human resources (HR) product that details the skills of its workforce. And it isn't clear when it will be ready for managers to use. This means that the constabulary can't easily place the right resource in the right place to manage its demand.

The force has several departments leading change projects. As no single team has capacity to oversee all change programmes, it is important that the force has an overview to make sure all interdependencies are identified.

We found a lack of investment in some supporting services. Relevant staff stated that they weren't resourced well enough to provide what was being asked. This meant they were unable to meet the constabulary's requirements.

The estate is flagged as a 'red critical' area in recognition of the fact it needs significant investment. Some improvements have been made, such as the introduction of new buildings. The vehicle fleet isn't supported by effective data to improve deployment, serviceability and use. While some plans are in place, there is a lack of understanding on how making services more efficient can improve capacity.

Improvements to performance will continue to be slow if the constabulary doesn't start to understand its available capability and capacity, and the interdependencies of all its projects.

Main findings

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to how well the constabulary operates efficiently.

The constabulary understands future demand and is planning to make sure it has the resources in place to meet future needs

The constabulary has sought out national best practice to inform how it will respond to anticipated future demand. At a strategic level, it is increasingly using data to support the required performance. The constabulary is investing in agile working. And it is supporting the workforce with more technology to improve efficiencies.

There is a detailed constabulary corporate change plan, with programmes of work scheduled until 2024. But some of the good work we saw is at risk of being undermined by its current structure and the focus that departments have on their own performance. Each policing unit can demonstrate performance, but there is little consistency. This doesn't support a whole vision for the force, restricts the effective movement of resource, and limits innovation.

The chief constable has a clear vision. All business areas must be more aligned to support that vision, to make sure the constabulary is fit for the future.

The constabulary makes the best use of the finance it has available

The constabulary presents a balanced medium term financial strategy (MTFS) and is confident that it can achieve the savings and investment required. But it is facing significant financial pressure with a need to update estate and IT.

The estate requires an investment of £70m over the next three years, which will be met by borrowing. This is within the parameters of what is affordable for the constabulary. There is a reliance on [reserves](#), which are low by comparison to other constabularies. But we found a good review process and awareness of the challenge this presents to the constabulary.

The constabulary is forecasting a budget deficit of £10m by 2024/25. It has an established savings programme called the cost of policing (COP). This has identified potential savings of £2m per year, with options that could save a further £12m.

The constabulary seeks opportunities to improve services through working collaboratively

The constabulary has a good track record for supporting collaboration. It works with Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire and Nottinghamshire.

These agreements include shared services for:

- HR functions;
- [occupational health](#);
- regional specialist learning and development; and
- legal services.

The constabulary also collaborates with Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service to make better use of finances and estates.

[Chief officers](#) consider and seek out the wider opportunities of collaboration.

They understand the benefits and how working collaboratively can improve services to the public.

The constabulary can demonstrate it is continuing to achieve efficiency savings and some improved productivity

The constabulary has invested in its IT infrastructure. There is a new digital strategy that outlines where it intends to invest further. But there is a lack of clarity on how this investment will improve efficiencies, and a lack of a review process for IT already introduced.

The constabulary has invested in new laptops for all frontline constables and sergeants, and it has a good understanding of the value these will add.

However, there is no detailed plan for how the replacement of its [mobile data terminals](#) or its investment in IT will drive efficiencies. We found that some departments are still using manual processes and systems, which is causing a duplication of effort. This needs to be improved.

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