

Performance and Resources Scrutiny Programme 2023

Report to: the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex

Title of Report:	Essex Police PEEL Inspection – Update on Areas for Improvement
Classification of Paper:	Official
Agenda Number:	7.0
Chief Officer:	ACO Fiona Henderson
Date Paper was Written:	20/05/2023
Version Number:	2
Report from:	Essex Police
Date of Meeting:	28/06/2023
Author on behalf of Chief Officer:	Claire Heath / Tim Bamforth-White, Continuous Improvement Team
Date of Approval by Chief Officer	14/06/2023 (COG)
COG meeting date / date of approval (Please indicate whether paper presented to COG or not)	14/06/2023 (COG)

1.0 Purpose of Report

The report provides an update on the previous report presented to the February PRSB. It provides an update on the actions taken and progress made by Essex Police against the 14 areas for improvement (AFI's)¹ identified by His Majesty's

¹ The previous report to P&RS in February 2023 reported on 12 PEEL AFI's. Since that time the PEEL Serious & Organised Crime Report was received, with a graded judgement of 'Good' overall and 1 AFI. We have also received the draft report for vetting and counter-corruption, also graded 'Good' overall with a further AFI. This report is expected on 16th June 2023.

Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMICFRS) during the force PEEL 2021/22 inspection and two outstanding elements of PEEL, SOC / Vetting and Counter corruption.

2.0 Recommendations

The Board is asked to note the report and progress made.

3.0 Executive Summary

HMICFRS published their PEEL inspection report and judgements of our force in October 2022. Subsequently, in May 2023, HMICFRS published the Serious & Organised Crime (SOC PEEL) inspection report which was undertaken separately to the main inspection activity for PEEL back in April 2022, the force has been graded 'Good' overall.

Key findings in the SOC Report concluded that the force has processes in place to help understand its SOC threat and that the force;

- has effective governance to manage the response to SOC;
- has sufficient resources to tackle SOC;
- makes sure that Lead Responsible Officers (LROs) have sufficient capacity to manage SOC;
- that relevant training to manage SOC is available;
- should improve how learning from SOC disruption activity is shared;
- has a lifetime management approach to high-risk SOC offenders; and finally;
- works with partners to disrupt SOC.

The 1 AFI in the report is that "The force should improve how it records disruptions on the national database".

In addition, the force has received the draft PEEL vetting and counter-corruption report for pre-publication checks from HMICFRS. This inspection was also undertaken separately to the main inspection activity for PEEL, this time in November 2022. The force again has been graded 'Good' overall and expects the final report to be published on 16th June 2023.

The 1 AFI in the draft report is that "The force should improve how it collects, assesses, develops, and investigates counter-corruption intelligence by ensuring that its counter-corruption unit has sufficient and suitably trained resources to meet demand and allow for proactive intelligence collection".

In making their main PEEL inspection judgements, HMICFRS reported that 'Essex Police has an ethos of early intervention to prevent crime. It uses analysis to identify crime hotspots and responds effectively with other organisations to tackle entrenched criminality and anti-social behaviour. It has developed a co-ordinated and forward-thinking approach to reducing crime.' In addition, His Majesty's Inspector commented that Essex Police is good at:

- Preventing crime and anti-social behaviour
- Treating people fairly and with respect

- Promoting an ethical and inclusive culture and supporting its workforce

Overall Performance

HMICFRS have now provided formal judgements for Essex Police in 10² areas of policing, grading the force good in 5 areas (treatment of the public; developing a positive workforce, use of resources, serious and organised crime and vetting and counter-corruption), adequate in 4 areas (investigating crime; preventing crime; protecting vulnerable people and managing offenders) and requiring improvement in just 1 area (responding to the public).

As stated earlier, the inspection reports identify 14 AFI's for the force; 4 under responding to the public, 2 each in preventing crime, investigating crime and managing offenders and 1 each in protecting vulnerable people, use of resources and now serious and organised crime and – albeit still a draft - vetting and counter-corruption.

These judgements reflect our own internal assessment, challenges identified in our Force Management Statement 2022 (FMS 22), strategic investment decisions and operational change programmes.

Essex Police has strong governance and oversight processes in place to monitor progress against each AFI, firstly through the ACC Lead's Governance Board, the DCC's Force Performance Board and the Chief Officer Group.

4.0 Introduction/Background

Since 2014, HMICFRS have assessed the performance of all 43 forces in England and Wales by the Police Efficiency, Effectiveness and Legitimacy (PEEL) programme. In 2021/22 HMICFRS made significant changes to the programme moving to a more intelligence-led, continual assessment approach rather than the annual PEEL inspections in previous years.

HMICFRS use inspection findings, analysis and professional judgment to assess how good forces are in ten areas of policing. For the first time in this round of PEEL inspections a new grade of 'adequate' was introduced moving from a four-tier grading system to a five-tier grading system of 'outstanding,' 'good', 'adequate', 'requires improvement' and 'inadequate'. It should be noted that the introduction of the new grade 'adequate' makes comparison of judgements with previous years more difficult. HMICFRS advised that a previous 'good' could be graded under the new system and assessment framework as 'adequate.'

In terms of overall performance across all 43 forces in England and Wales, HMICFRS are reporting that there were 31% Good and Adequate graded judgements, 23% Requires Improvement and circa 7% Outstanding and Inadequate. The lowest performance nationally was the graded judgement area of 'Responding to the public' (consistent with our own findings) with no outstanding grades and the highest number of inadequate and requires improvement grades.

²As mentioned earlier, the force expects the Vetting and CCU report to be published on 16th June 2023.

HMICFRS have now concluded inspection activity as part of PEEL 2020-22 for all 43 Forces in England and Wales. The inspection framework for the 2023-25 inspection cycle has been published by HMICFRS and inspections have re-commenced. Essex Police are expecting their next PEEL inspection to formally commence in June 2024 with fieldwork later in 2024.

5.0 Current Work and Performance

Appendix 1 provides an update against each of the 14 AFIs, but the table below provides an overview of the current status;

Red	Amber	Green	New/Draft
1	6	5	2
Unchanged	Previously 8	Previously 3	N/A

In terms of RAG status, 2 of the original 12 AFI's (AFI's 1 and 2) have changed from amber to green, with 9 of the 12 showing a change in or positive trajectory in terms of direction of travel and progress towards completion.

The one AFI RAG rated red (AFI 3) relates to our non-emergency call handling (101), which has seen some improvement in performance to see a change in trajectory (stabilising) but insufficient improvement to change the overall RAG status at this time. Significant work continues in Contact Management Command through the Operational Change Programme, FTE investment and new targeted operating model in line with the project implementation plans. The DCC Public Contact Gold Group is also driving force wide improvements in both the timeliness and quality of responses to non-emergency callers.

With regard to AFI 10, the Home Secretary appointed former Chief Constable Mick Creedon to conduct an independent review of police-led sex offender management. This report, published in April, makes 6 recommendations (see Appendix 2) for Chief Constables. Whilst they are neither HMICFRS or PEEL related, those recommendations are being tracked and actioned by the force and are being progressed through the ACC led Strategic Vulnerability Board.

6.0 Implications (Issues)

There are no current risks recorded on the force strategic risk register relating to the 14 AFI's. Instead, they are recorded and tracked on the Force Action Tracker and HMICFRS Monitoring Portal. The AFIs will remain open and internally monitored until they are formally closed by HMICFRS during our next PEEL inspection.

6.1 Links to Police and Crime Plan Priorities

The PEEL performance assessment framework links to all priorities set out in the Police and Crime Plan. Action to meet the AFI's makes a positive impact and contributes to one or more of the priorities with an emphasis on the six priorities below:

- Further investment in crime prevention

- Protecting vulnerable people and breaking the cycle of domestic abuse
- Reducing violence against women and girls
- Improving support for victims of crime
- Supporting our officers and staff
- Increasing collaboration

6.2 Demand

The DCC led Strategic Demand Board reviews how effectively the force is working internally and with our partners to make sure officers and staff are given the time, space and support to focus on our priorities of preventing crime and catching criminals.

This will include any impact on the force in delivering against one or more of the 14 AFIs.

6.3 Risks/Mitigation

If areas for improvement are not delivered there is potential risk of HMICFRS issuing a cause for concern about the force's performance, which in turn poses potential risk to members of the public and the levels of public confidence in our force. As described under section three, there are strong internal governance processes overseeing the progress of each AFI to ensure appropriate action takes place to identify and mitigate any risk.

6.4 Equality and/or Human Rights Implications

There are no protected characteristics adversely affected by the PEEL assessment. Whilst there are no specific equality and/or human rights implications identified in providing progress updates against the PEEL AFIs, any activity or changes required will take account of such matters, ensuring compliance with relevant legislation and the force Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Strategy. This includes the completion of an Equality Impact Statement for any amendments to existing or development of new policy and procedures.

6.5 Health and Safety Implications

No Health and Safety implications have been identified in the provision of progress updates. Any activity or changes required will take account of health and safety implications and ensure compliance with relevant legislation.

7.0 Consultation/Engagement

Chief Constable
DCC Prophet
ACC Nolan
ACC Pavelin
ACC Baldwin
DCC Prophet
ACO Richard Leicester

Claire Heath – Head of Continuous Improvement / Force HMICFRS Lead

8.0 Actions for Improvement

The report provides detailed updates against each of the 14 AFI's from the PEEL Inspection Report. Progress is monitored through the internal governance arrangements described in section three.

9.0 Future Work/Development and Expected Outcome

Regular update meetings are held between the HMICFRS Force Liaison Officer (Claire Heath) and the HMICFRS Force Lead Inspector (Lee Presland). Any areas of concern in our progress against the AFIs will be reported to the Chief Officer team through the monthly HMICFRS update paper presented at the Chief Officer Group. The force expects to achieve all AFIs. These will be formally reviewed and closed in our next PEEL Inspection.

A progress report on Public Contact is due to be presented to PRSB in November 23. This will provide and update on the Public Contac report discussed at the May PRSB.

Internal audit meetings with Chief Officers have taken place to inform the internal audit programme for 2023/24. Each meeting has considered the PEEL AFIs for areas of potential agreement for internal audit activity and mechanisms for independent assurance of the force progress.

Proposals for the 2023/24 internal programme were presented to COG on 8th February 2023 and at the Joint Audit Committee meeting on 24th March 2023.

Appendix 1 – Separate attachment**Appendix 2 - Independent Review of Police-led Sex Offender Management**

Recommendation	Details
1	That all forces put in place processes to allow investigative teams to engage with sex offender managers prior to and during the application process for Sexual Harm Prevention Orders issued at the point of conviction to ensure the application seeks only the appropriate and necessary measures.
2	That all cases where indefinite notification requirements have been in place for 15 years or more should be reviewed with the aim of discharging notification requirements which are found to be no longer necessary.
3	That all forces should review and where appropriate seek to discharge all indefinite Sexual Harm Prevention Orders, starting with all those in place for offenders subject to reactive management.
4	That all forces should review and where necessary seek to amend or discharge remaining Sexual Harm Prevention Orders to ensure they remain necessary, enforceable and compliant with relevant case law, including ensuring they align with and do not exceed notification periods. This process should start with all those in place for offenders subject to reactive management
5	When the police become the lead agency, police engagement with victims and survivors should be facilitated where appropriate, applicable, and desired. This should be reflected in the necessary guidance and College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice.
6	That steps are taken to improve information-sharing between courts and Sex Offender Management units, both with regards convictions and sentencing as well as documentation such as judges' summaries and victim impact statements.