Cumbria Office of Police and Crime Commissioner

**Cumbria Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) response to inspections of Cumbria Constabulary published by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS)**

*Section 33 of the Police Act 1996 (as amended by section 37 of the Policing and Crime Act 2017) requires local policing bodies to respond to recommendations in inspectors reports within 56 days.*

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| **Inspection Title:** | A Call for Help – Police Contact Management through Call Handling and Control Rooms in 2018-2019 |
| **Date Published:** | July 2020 |
| **Type of Inspection:** | National Inspection |
| **Key Findings** | |
| The control room is one of the engine rooms of a police force. If it does not have the right systems and processes in place, the force is unable to have an accurate picture of demand, thus affecting its ability to respond to calls and investigate crimes effectively. The findings of this inspection highlight the challenges the police service face in handling calls with smaller budgets and fewer people. It finds that as the demand on control rooms increases, careful management is needed to make sure that the police service does not become overwhelmed.  A number of areas for improvement where made. HMICFRS will assess the progress towards achieving these in their Integrated PEEL 2020-2021 Inspections. | |
| **Areas for Improvement:** | |
| * Each force must be sure it effectively assesses risk at all points of contact with the public and the community. It should use this assessment to provide the best response to vulnerability. * Each force where there is a vulnerability desk should make sure it makes a positive contribution to initial safeguarding. * Each force should make sure its staff are trained, supervised and supported to be effective in their control room roles; this should include assessing the effect of better terms and conditions and career development for control room staff. * We expect forces to invest in technology and work with each other to use it to inform and improve their risk assessments, their responses and their investigations to keep the public safe. * We expect all forces to make sure the service they provide to their communities meets the new national contact management strategy. We will assess how well forces adopt the contact management principles and practice as well as the learning standards during PEEL 2020/21. * We expect to see all 43 forces get involved in the single online home and the social media projects. * We expect the police service during 2020 to make sure it has effective national guidelines, quality assurance and assessment in place for resolution without deployment. * We expect the police service during 2020 to make sure that it has agreed a standard for how quickly forces must respond to 999 calls. The absence of a national set of agreed response times for emergency calls means it is hard to make meaningful comparisons. | |
| **PCC & Chief Constable Response to Report and Recommendation:** | |
| The Cumbria Police & Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable both fully support the recommendations made in this national report. The Chief Constable: “It is vital that we ensure we have the right investment and support in place to be able to respond to the public when they contact us and need help. With demands on the police service changing rapidly, especially in addressing vulnerability, it is important that we continue to assess our processes and procedures so we can adapt to improve the outcomes for people in need. I therefore welcome any recommendations that help to improve service delivery.”  The Police & Crime Commissioner: “When someone makes a call to the police, the call handler is their first point of contact, it is therefore important their needs are thoroughly risk assessed and as much information is gathered to enable police officers to deal with any incidents, support victims and make our communities safer. I will continue to review the Constabulary’s performance and delivery against the national recommendations through my weekly one-to-ones with the Chief Constable and through my Public Accountability Conferences.”  “I am disappointed to note however, the long lead for integration into the online home system, and now fearing it may be out of date before the system is universal. I accept the challenge in bringing all forces into the system but hoped that progress could be swifter. Response to the public on 101 is a nationally recognised issue and the Constabulary works continually to improve this service in the face of ever-increasing demand – which has increased again through the Covid crisis. In the face of this, I am assured that the Constabulary is continually looking to other means of contact through online chat, email, etc. and that it continues to be a focus for attention.” | |