



Nottinghamshire

POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

The Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Commissioner's response to the publication of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary's (HMIC) - National Child Protection Inspections (September 2014).

[The report can be found here](#)

In 2014, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) inspected the child protection work of every Police force in England and Wales. In September 2014, HMIC inspected Nottinghamshire Police to assess how well children are protected and their needs are met, and to secure improvements for the future.

As per my statutory responsibility to prepare comments on any of HMIC's published reports, under section 55(5) of the 1996 Police Act, I have read through the report published in February 2015 and make the following comments to the report and its recommendations.

Firstly, I am pleased to hear that Inspectors found that:

- staff responsible for managing child abuse investigations were highly committed, knowledgeable, and dedicated to providing good outcomes for children;
- there was good management of registered sex offenders;
- neighbourhood officers had good knowledge of those who posed the highest risk to children;
- the Force has delivered training for frontline officers and staff on vulnerability and safeguarding; and
- the Force has good relationships with partner agencies and local Safeguarding Children's Boards.

I understand that inspectors had some concerns in respect of:

- significant delays in some child protection investigations;
- a lack of supervisory oversight and management of cases;
- children were being unnecessarily detained in police custody overnight; and
- lack of awareness of child sexual exploitation in some parts of the force leading to an inconsistent response.

I agree with HM Inspector of Constabulary Zoë Billingham comments in her [press release](#) that the Force has achieved good work in many areas. I also agree that the Force needs to do more to further improve its approach to protecting children and in fact have done so since the inspection in September 2014. I believe that our partners too have an important role and

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have therefore included in my refreshed [Police and Crime Plan \(2015-18\)](#) a new strategic activity to work with safeguarding partners to increase awareness and understanding of child sexual exploitation, missing children, hidden harm and provide support to victims with partners.

In addition, action will be taken to identify the value and extent of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), specifically in relation to children and human trafficking and also to work with Adult and Children's safeguarding colleagues and IOM Partners to create an approach to managing high risk domestic abuse perpetrators.

I am aware that the Chief Constable and his staff recognise that people in crisis due to mental health should not be in Police custody and they have made a public commitment with our partners that they will find an alternative solution to the use of police cells for children and adults detained under Section 136 of the Mental Health Act by March 2015 and October 2015 respectively.

Last year, I set a target for the Chief Constable to reduce the number of non-crime related mental health patients detained in custody suites compared to 2013-14 and at the end of 2014-15 there was a 52.5% reduction.

We never want to be in a position where children need to be taken into custody, whether for crimes or because of mental health issues and we continue to work with our partners to find alternative accommodation wherever possible.

Since September 2014, a mental health nurse is embedded in custody suites in North Nottinghamshire, and plans are in place to copy this in the remaining suites. The Force has introduced a Street Triage Team, a multi-agency partnership between the Police, Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and Nottinghamshire Healthcare Trust. Police officers with mental health services can provide appropriate and expert intervention, preventing people from having to be brought into police custody.

In the first six months of this pilot, the Street Triage Team attended over 1000 incidents and reduced the use of Section 136 of the Mental by 38 per cent. Only 50 incidents required the use of this power and only nine of these were brought into police custody.

Both the Chief Constable and I recognise that there is more that can be done. The Force has conducted training for officers and partner agencies in Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), the Force follows a national CSE action plan and a Peer Review has been conducted to oversee the Force's workings in this area.

HMIC Inspectors highlighted delays in some child protection investigations, which the Force have now been resolved due to changes in crime recording, where third party reports are now recorded and investigated immediately.

A restructure of the Public Protection resources is expected later this year, which will allocate more officers and staff to work in this specialist area and offer more resilience for a growing number of cases.

We are not complacent, and we will continue to review our policies and practices to ensure steps are in place to keep people safe.

Finally, I will be working closely with the Chief Constable to ensure that the HMIC recommendations are implemented.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paddy Tipping'.

Paddy Tipping
Police and Crime Commissioner