

The Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Commissioner's response to the publication of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary's (HMIC) - National Child Protection Inspection Post-Inspection Review (Feb 2016).

On 4th February 2016, HMIC published its Post Inspection Review report into child protection in Nottinghamshire following its initial inspection in September 2014 and report of its findings in December 2014. In February 2015, the Force provided HMIC with an Action Plan setting out how it intended to respond to the recommendations in the inspection report. Inspectors carried out a post-inspection review in August 2015 to assess the progress made by the Force in implementing the recommendations.

HMIC reported that the Force is committed to improving the way it protects children and was encouraged to find knowledgeable staff dedicated to improving outcomes for children who are at risk of harm. Further, that important steps had been taken to implement some of the recommendations made in the 2014 inspection report.

Also at the time of its review in August 2015, improvements in services within the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH)¹ were evident; there was better supervision of incidents where children had been reported missing from home and no child had been detained in police custody under section 136 of the Mental Health Act² since April 2015.

However, HMIC was concerned to find that other recommendations had yet to be implemented, such as those relating to the oversight and management of cases involving children at risk of sexual exploitation, and police attendance at child protection conferences, neither of which had improved. Nor had the Force conducted regular audits of practice to improve services, concluding that although some progress has been made, challenges remain, and the Force will need to maintain its focus on improving services to protect children for some time to come.

¹ This is an entity in which public sector organisations with common or aligned responsibilities in relation to the safety of vulnerable people work. The hubs comprise staff from organisations such as the police and local authority social services who work alongside one another, sharing information.

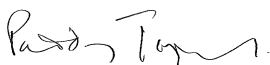
² Section 136 of the Mental Health Act 1983 allows a constable to remove an apparently mentally disordered person from a public place to a place of safety for up to 72 hours so that they can be examined by a registered medical practitioner and be interviewed (by an approved mental health professional), and any necessary arrangements for treatment or care can be made.

I am disappointed that at the time of writing, not all the HMIC recommendations have yet been completed to HMICs satisfaction and I share HMICs concerns that more needs to be done.

For the first time in office, in order to deliver further improvements, I have set the Chief Constable a target in this year's Police and Crime Plan (2016-18) to reduce the number of children being detained in police custody overnight compared to last year, and a strategic activity to work with safeguarding partners to increase awareness and understanding of child sexual exploitation, missing children and hidden harm.

The Force has a dedicated 4ACTION database for tracking and responding to HMIC recommendations and areas for improvement. The Force provides regular HMIC update reports to my Joint Audit and Scrutiny Panel who provide additional scrutiny in these important areas.

Yours sincerely

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

Paddy Tipping
Police and Crime Commissioner