

The Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Commissioner's response to the publication of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary's (HMIC) - PEEL: Police Leadership December 2016.

[The report can be found here](#)

On 8th December 2016, HMIC published its PEEL: Police Leadership report (2016). I am pleased that HMIC recognises that Nottinghamshire Police's chief officer team understands the importance of having strong, ethical leaders and the Force is trying to ensure that everyone understands what the Force expects from its leaders. However, I am disappointed that HMIC found only a limited understanding throughout the Force of what is expected of effective leaders.

HMIC has expressed concerns about the temporary positions of my Chief Officer team at a time of unprecedented change and challenges. HMIC cite a start date of 1st April 2017 for the new Chief Constable but this is incorrect, in fact the new Chief Constable starts on 1st February 2017 some two months earlier. I am surprised and disappointed that HMIC did not check these dates with me prior to publication. Decisions about the appointment of a Chief Constable are mine. In June 2016 I faced the retirement of my Chief Constable and Deputy at almost the same time. For stability I asked the Deputy Chief Constable Sue Fish to delay her retirement until a new Chief Constable was appointed. I am grateful to Sue Fish for her loyalty and service.

I agree that there needs to be stability but the processes to attract good candidates and appoint a Chief Constable inevitably takes much longer than other posts. Rushing this process is ineffective. I am proud to say that our selection process attracted six really good candidates and produced an outstanding preferred candidate who was unanimously approved by the Police and Crime Panel on 9th December which is in contrast to other forces.

I would also like to say that I am more than satisfied with the current Command Team (albeit two Command Officers being temporary) who have vast experience of policing Nottinghamshire and have done a really good job since the substantive Chief Constable left

in June last year at a time of unprecedented change. Following the publication of this report I met with HMIC Mike Cunningham to discuss my concerns over this report.

In addition to the inaccuracies, it seems to me that HMIC has failed to recognise the magnitude of change that officers at all levels are now having to face, in terms of having significantly less staff, increasing demand of a complex nature, managing huge change programs, having to learn new systems and procedures to secure future efficiencies and so inevitably there will be gaps identified.

For example, over the past five years Nottinghamshire Police has been required to make savings of £54m in order to balance the budget due to government cuts. Staffing accounts for the highest single cost and in order to make these savings the establishment of both police officers and police staff has reduced significantly. During my first term in office I pledged to increase officer and PCSO numbers because this is what ordinary members of the public told me they wanted and so during this period I worked with the Chief Constable to find savings elsewhere. However, in 2016, all alternatives had been exhausted and in 2015/16 the only viable solution to make the huge savings needed was to reduce staffing levels which was done with great reluctance.

In 2016, according to the recent HMIC VFM profile (2016) 1 in 10 members of staff (10.7%) left Nottinghamshire Police. Most significantly almost a third of our PCSOs (27.9%, 89) left the organisation most through voluntary redundancy. There were 128 (6.1%) of Police officers and 96 Police Staff (10.1%) leave the Force – none of which have been replaced due to a freeze on recruitment connected with the need to save £12m this year to service government cuts.

Nottinghamshire Police is funded differently to some forces with 72% of funding received from central government while the national average is 67%. This means that when cuts are made, it can have a deeper impact in Nottinghamshire than in some other forces. The consequence of this is that budget reductions between 2012/2013 and 2016/2017 are double that of the average police force.

The loss of these staff has left a vacuum and inevitably with crime and other calls for service remaining largely the same to increasing, officers and staff are effectively carrying a 10.7% increased workload. At the same time, new technological systems introduced to improve efficiencies such as NICHE and MFSS introduced in 2016 have required additional training (and abstraction from operational duties tackling crime and responding to calls for service) which has increased workloads even further in the short term. In addition, the drive to increase compliance with the complex NCRS rules and necessary training has led to further abstractions.

Higher levels of reported sexual crime and CSE (especially in Nottinghamshire) which require substantially more time to investigate and with significantly reduced capacity, the Force has had to place even greater scrutiny in the way it manages demand ensuring that incidents which carry the highest level of threat harm and risk are prioritised.

The new pressures placed on officers and police staff (possibly worried about their job security) led to an increase in sickness which has increased from 4.4% at the end of 2015 to 4.7% in 2016 for Police officers (in line with the national average and trend); and 4.8% to 5.6% for Police staff (much higher than the national average of 4.8%) thus reducing capacity even further. This further reduces overall capacity and increases the workload of those available for operational duty. In former years, overtime was often a buffer to address times of reduced capacity but the requirement to make £12m savings in 2016/17 has greatly limited this resource.

Invest to save efficiencies such as new IT Systems, collaboration and new ways of working take time to come on-stream and in 2016/17 these efficiencies are not fully materialised and yet capacity is at an all-time low and complex demand is increasing.

The Force recognises that identifying and responding to the gaps in leadership capability will be important to implement new ways of working. A future workforce plan aims to identify the Forces' leadership requirements. The Force uses a broad range of approaches and techniques to understand the relative strengths of its leadership. A development programme to address the gaps identified in leadership capability will help but with significantly less staff

and the need to manage huge changes, this requirement will have to compete with other pressures and I believe that HMIC should take into account the ever changing environment when forming their judgements which I believe are sometimes devoid of understanding.

The Force has a dedicated 4ACTION database for tracking and responding to HMIC recommendations and areas for improvement. **Annex 1** of this written response to HMIC provides an update on the current action taken by the Force to address the issues raised by HMIC. 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

ANNEX 1 – FORCE RESPONSE TO HMIC AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- 1. Nottinghamshire Police should ensure that its expectations for leadership are clearly understood across the force (including frontline staff and officers).**

Force Response:

Activity is taking place in Force to ensure clear communication as to what the Force expects from its leaders across all ranks and grades. This includes a formal review and refresh of the Joint Leadership Strategy to ensure it articulates what the leadership expectations are for each rank and role across the Tri-Force Collaboration. It is anticipated that this Strategy will be reviewed and updated by the end of March 2017.

In line with the Strategy, there are five core leadership programmes available at the ranks of Sergeant and Inspector and equivalent police staff which aim to reinforce leadership expectations. These include programmes for temporary promoted Sergeants and Inspectors and programmes for Substantive Inspectors and Police Staff Equivalents. The Senior Leadership Development Programme, run by the College of Policing, is also authorised across the Force for Superintendents, Ch Inspectors and police staff equivalents.

Communication of leadership expectations continues to be supported by events such as the Senior Leadership Conference which takes place quarterly, where topics such as the staff survey, organisational change, organisational culture and staff behaviour are discussed.

2. Nottinghamshire Police should develop a comprehensive leadership skills analysis that clearly links to the force's training needs.

Force Response:

Chief Inspectors, Inspectors and police staff equivalents across the organisation have been asked to undertake a skills gap analysis within their respective functions to identify, assess and prioritise first and second line managers who would benefit from taking part of the Force's core leadership programmes. Those who have been determined as a priority will undertake the first 5 day programme for Substantive Sergeants and Police Staff Equivalents in February. This will be followed up by the Substantive Inspectors and Police Staff Equivalents Programme thereafter. Those not determined to be a priority will undertake training later on in 2017.