

**The Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Commissioner's response to the publication of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary's (HMIC) - PEEL: Police Effectiveness (Vulnerability) Dec 2015.**

[The report can be found here](#)

On 15<sup>th</sup> December 2016, HMIC published its vulnerability inspection report which examined the overall question, *'how effective is Nottinghamshire at protecting from harm those who are vulnerable and supporting victims?'* The inspection considered in depth how the Force responds to and supports missing and absent children and victims of domestic abuse, and assessed how well prepared the Force is at responding to and safeguarding children at risk of sexual exploitation.

In answer to the above question, HMIC rated the Force as 'Requires Improvement' and identified seven specific areas where improvements could be made. I am disappointed with this assessment but confident that the Chief Constable is taking all necessary steps to make the required improvements.

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



Paddy Tipping  
Police and Crime Commissioner

## **ANNEX 1 – FORCE RESPONSE TO HMIC AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT**

- 1. The force should improve its approach to safeguarding victims of domestic abuse who are assessed at high risk. It does not refer all high-risk cases to multi-agency risk assessment conferences and criteria differ between the county and city areas for those cases that will and will not be considered. The triaging process does not involve all partner organisations, is inconsistent with other forces and is contrary to recognised guidance.**

*Force Response: No action required.*

*The multi-agency risk assessment (MARAC) process is a non-statutory partnership meeting to address joint working for high risk victims of domestic abuse. In some cases those high risk victims are already well engaged with partners and services.*

*Every high risk case is considered for MARAC albeit not every case is then heard at the MARAC.*

*There is however, a robust and effective triage process in place to deal with the high volume of high risk cases in the City and the County.*

*At present there are 6 MARAC's chaired by the police every month. In addition, to manage the demand, a further 6 triage processes involving agencies (the week prior to the MARAC) occurs to determine who goes through to the full MARAC process. All high risk DA referrals are assessed and actioned through a staged triaged process. Point 7 of the SafeLives principles of an effective MARAC arguably infers that there is a general acceptance that not all HIGH risk referrals will meet the MARAC threshold. Part of the local triage process is to filter out those that fall below that threshold yet still provide support.*

*The triage process provides a Real Time Intelligence Unit (RTIU) function with police and commissioned services.*

*Therefore, all high risk domestic abuse cases are considered, notwithstanding the capacity issue; through the multi-agency recommendations. An assessment is made as to which cases would benefit most from being heard at the full MARAC; the triaging system means that other high risk cases are not ignored. A co located Independent*

*Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVA) service in the County work alongside the police providing safeguarding to all high risk victims of domestic abuse regardless of MARAC referral. The County process does result in a default position whereby all agency referrals regarded as high risk go directly into MARAC for consideration.*

*It is a multi-agency decision, based on risk, resulting from comprehensive information sharing. The actions and interventions made are also recorded on a single system – NICHE.*

**2. The force should improve its initial response to vulnerable victims by ensuring frontline officers and staff are appropriately trained to investigate and to safeguard vulnerable victims.**

*Force Response: The force has delivered a comprehensive vulnerability training package to all front line officers and a series of vulnerability briefings have been delivered by the Public Protection (PP) Senior Management Team.*

**3. The force should improve its investigation of cases involving vulnerable victims by ensuring officers with appropriate skills and expertise carry out such investigations and it supervises their workloads to ensure they can do so effectively.**

*Force Response: To improve the quality of the investigation surrounding vulnerability the force has embarked on a Career Pathways programme which has resulted in an influx of qualified detectives into PP departments and their replacement of non PIP2 qualified officers. All staff within Public Protection are now either a) already accredited detectives or b) working towards their ICIDP (Initial Crime Investigators Development Programme) portfolio.*

*In addition to the ICIDP, PP officers receive a variety of specialist inputs in order to investigate vulnerability. This includes Visor, RM2K, SCADIP, Safeguarding Adults, Safeguarding Children, Domestic Abuse specialist training (Equation), DASH training, Rapid Response training (Child death) and multi-agency cross authority training to tackle CSE.*

*Within PP, there are regular supervisory reviews on all investigations with appropriate investigation plans set. The workloads remain very high.*

*As part of the PP business case, efforts have been made to identify workloads and match demand with allocated resources. The PP business case is to be submitted to the COT for their consideration of increased resources*

- 4. The force should improve the way it works with partners to share information and safeguard vulnerable people, specifically in relation to addressing the backlog in cases that require further assessment and referring to other organisations.**

*Force Response: The backlog has been cleared. There is a temporary solution in Information Management. This action will be completed when there is permanent staffing and adequate resources in place to manage this demand. The target completion date is the end of October 2016. A new draft Service Level Agreement has been written and is being consulted on with Children's Services for scrutiny and feedback.*

- 5. The force should improve its compliance with the duties under the code of practice for victims of crime, specifically in relation to victim personal statements.**

*Force Response: No action required; this is a duplicated recommendation. A recent internal audit 'Victim Code of Practice' conducted by Mazars (Dec 2015) identified ten recommendations which the Force have responded to. These actions are currently being monitored through 4Action.*

*Mazars Recommendation 4.7 is: The offer/availability of a Victim Personal Statement (VPS) to the victim should be clearly communicated and acknowledged within the Victim Code of Practice working sheet.*

*Action: Communication strategy to be written and cascaded to relevant staff. Significant changes to be outlined and communicated via Weekly Order.*

*Closing comment: The communications strategy was implemented on the 21st March 2016 with a News item on the Intranet containing key messages. No significant changes so all divisional frontline Sgts have been emailed signposting them to the article and requesting they brief their staff with regard to the changes and requirements.*

*This recommendation refers to the offer of the Victim Personal Statement.*

**6. The force should improve its response to persistent and repeat missing children by ensuring information from previous missing episodes is used to develop a co-ordinated and prioritised response.**

*Force Response: A joint protocol is in place. "Missing from Home and Care Joint Protocol" This is in place for both the County and the City. The protocol defines the roles and responsibilities of all those concerned with the processes around children who go missing. It is derived from the Department for Education 'Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care January 2014' and also incorporates key elements of the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) guidance, and which introduces the new definitions of 'missing' and 'absent'. The protocol responds to the concept of the 'hidden' missing as outlined within the DfE guidance. There is currently a secure email used for intelligence sharing.*

*The protocol has a section on 'Return Interview' here it states: "During the course of a return interview, a child may provide information that may assist in quickly locating them should they go missing again and thus help prevent future harm. For example, locations visited, whom they associated with, vehicles they travelled in, etc. The professional undertaking the return interview, whilst not sharing the whole return interview, is required to feedback key information to the relevant police missing person coordinator in a timely manner so that it is readily accessible in the event of future episodes"*

**7. The force should improve its response to child sexual exploitation by developing its understanding of the nature and scale of the issue and ensuring that preventive activity is properly co-ordinated.**

*Force Response: A regional problem profile has been completed and disseminated to forces. This has contributed to a local profile and together the profiles have driven the 4 P's plan which enables the proper coordination of preventative activity in Nottinghamshire.*