



SURREY POLICE - PAPER FOR PCC MANAGEMENT MEETING

**Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) Inspection into how Surrey Police tackles Domestic Abuse (DA)**

Whilst the national media headlines for police following the HMIC report on all Forces and domestic abuse was 'Police must do better', this was not an accurate reflection of the Surrey specific report. At the beginning of the inspection, senior officers met with the inspectors and gave an honest appraisal of where the Force's strengths and areas for development were and what we had in plans to deal with them. The Force was praised for its degree of self-awareness and commitment to improve. The outcome from the Surrey inspection is summarised below.

Positive comment from HMIC

- The Inspectorate praised the Contact Centre for how they dealt with calls for service that were domestic related. Contact Centre and Force Control Room (FCR) have effective processes for review and continuous improvement and sought to identify if a caller was a repeat.
- Overall the Force was reported to have a good understanding of risk and an effective allocation of work based on that risk and all staff that they spoke to display a commitment to reducing threat and risk.
- MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences) were praised and described as well run and overall there was good effective multi-agency working to tackle domestic abuse.
- There was recognition that new processes were underway in identifying and managing perpetrators of domestic abuse to reduce repeat offending and that the Force had a project plan well embedded that was focussing on continuous improvement in how we tackle domestic abuse. HMIC made recommendations about more effective project management of these plans which have been put in place.

### Key areas for operational improvement commented on by HMIC

The core themes from the final report recommendations had in many instances been responded to by the time the report had been published. However, with an operational focus the inspectors commented on the following areas in particular;

- A lack of formal training for officers and staff on domestic abuse. (Please note that they found there was a good understanding of domestic abuse amongst the officers and staff that they spoke to despite this)
- More engagement with domestic abuse through Neighbourhood teams was required to support victims and focus on perpetrators
- The arrest rate (for the period that statistics were requested for) was 45% and shown as the lowest of all the Forces that responded (36 of 43)
- There was the potential for a disjointed approach to supporting victims of domestic abuse through the investigation and prosecution process

### Force response

The Force has adopted an Action Plan to deal with each of the recommendations stemming from the areas requiring improvement. This is overseen by ACC Cundy and forms part of the Public Protection Continuous Improvement Plan that is governed by the Public Protection Programme Board. Each of the recommendations has an action with an assigned owner in the heads of the relevant department or ACC Neighbourhood Policing.

Detective Superintendent Paul Furnell of the Public Protection department within Specialist Crime Command has responsibility for the single oversight of the combined recommendations from HMIC for Surrey and Sussex Police. A number of the recommendations for Sussex were of a similar nature to Surrey's.

### Actions to date

- Learning and Development and Public Protection leads are refocusing embedded domestic abuse training and rolling continuous professional development refresher events on domestic abuse for 2014/15. This includes support from Outreach services and survivors to deliver personal stories and experiences
- Work is well underway on maximising the resources in Neighbourhood Policing to support dealing with domestic abuse where it is safe to do so and raising awareness across all operational staff on who poses the greatest risk of perpetrating domestic abuse.
- Domestic Abuse performance was reported on with a recognition that a performance focus on domestic abuse had resulted in more persons charged with domestic abuse related offences than other victim based crime and more reports of domestic abuse overall. It should be noted that the reporting

period that HMIC requested arrest data for was slightly historic and the performance management figures that our Crime Information System (CIS) produced meant that the Force was shown to have a low arrest rate at around 45%. Current (end of April 2014) data shows an arrest rate of 65.9% and a detection rate of 46.8% reflecting roughly a 50% increase in DA detections compared to last year. This reporting year the Force has currently charged 109 perpetrators with DA related offences compared to 50 for the same period last year – a 118% increase.

- The Force is reviewing its processes for how survivors of domestic abuse are kept up to date during an investigation and the interaction between police, Victim Support and Outreach services in supporting those in need of help. The introduction of a Victim Support member of staff into the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub in April 2014 will assist with this work.
- A repeat DA victim procedure has been published with a sixteen point guidance on the expectations on officers and staff when dealing with a DA crime
- A trial is underway that sees additional officers dispatched to the report of DA crime to capture early evidence and retain victim support for a prosecution when the responding officers are unable to complete the necessary actions in timely and supportive manner.
- The Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS) otherwise known as Clare's Law was rolled out from March 8<sup>th</sup> 2014.
- The Force will implement Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPO) from June 12<sup>th</sup> 2014 in time for the start of the World Cup. This allows police and the courts to ban a domestic abuse perpetrator from their home address if they are suspected of committing a domestic abuse crime and there is insufficient evidence to charge them and impose appropriate bail conditions to keep the victim safe.