

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey



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Response from Kevin Hurley, Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Surrey to the HMIC report '**Crime data integrity – Inspection of Surrey Police**' and the national thematic report '**Crime Recording: Making the Victim Count**'

In many ways I am pleased with what the HMIC have found when they visited Surrey Police to look at the integrity of crime data. I have set a Police and Crime Plan based on the six People's Priorities that the residents of Surrey have told me are important to them. One of these six priorities is Putting Victims at the Centre of the Criminal Justice System and another is Being Uncompromising in Standards, which encompasses leadership and ethics. Many of the findings that the HMIC have reported on tell me that these aims are being addressed.

I am pleased to see that the Chief Constable has '*clearly communicated to the workforce the critical importance of integrity, transparency and a strong victim focus in the way crime is recorded*' and that the Deputy Chief Constable '*displays a strong desire to see positive improvements in the way officers deal with different types of crime and has introduced some important changes of practice in crucial areas such as the recording of rape*'. This for me is demonstrating good leadership and a strong emphasis on victims, echoed by the report: '*a considerable amount of work has been done recently by Surrey Police to build a strong commitment to providing a victim-centred approach*'.

I am also reassured to see that the report recognises that Surrey Police leaders are already taking action: the Chief Constable is taking active steps to address shortcomings in the recording of community resolutions; three detective sergeants are now in charge of making no-crime decisions; and rapes are now recorded immediately as a crime with strong checking and governance arrangements.

The national report recognises that in some forces the setting of performance targets is having a negative effect on crime recording and recommends that PCCs should not set performance targets based on police recorded crime. One of my first acts as PCC was to get rid of all targets as I could see the unintended consequences they create. The report for Surrey recognises this and states that '*we found no evidence of crime data integrity being skewed by inappropriate performance pressures*' and recognises that my plan to meet



Surrey people's priorities *'makes direct reference to the fact that no numerical targets are set locally for the police to achieve. Instead, there is a strong emphasis on building local satisfaction with the style of policing delivered in Surrey'*.

There are areas in the report of positive crime recording, including an *'effective approach to crime recording'* in the Crime Recording Unit and that the *'Event assessment unit is a constant source of help and guidance on crime recording principles'*.

Whilst the report recognises that all reported incidents are recorded on Surrey Police systems, I am of course concerned that not all crimes are being moved from being an incident on the system to being recorded as a crime. This clearly affects victim care and investigations. Whilst I agree with the recommendations made in the report, they focus on systems, audit, policies, supervision and training. I will need to discuss with the Chief Constable how we can take these forward in a time of reducing resources.

In conclusion, I am of the view that Surrey Police does the right thing for victims and that the issues identified are ones of understanding and training with regard to the completion of the computerised forms. I have been vocal about my views on lack of resources for policing nationally and in Surrey and the reduced training given to officers across the service and ranks. The report for Surrey and the national thematic have common themes of lack of resources being put into what is essentially a recording process and a lack of training. I believe this is result of underfunding for policing. Without improved funding in Surrey, I can ask the Chief Constable to do what she can to address the local and national recommendations but we will face a choice of officers and staff spending more time on training and processing of information or spending more time responding to public calls for help and patrolling the streets.

