

PCC acknowledgement Inspection response

Version:

Force	Staffordshire
Police and Crime Commissioner	Ben Adams
Title of inspection	Efficiency spotlight report: The impact of recruitment and retention on the criminal justice system
Inspectorate	 <p>HMICFRS CJI Criminal Justice Joint Inspection Making communities safer</p>
Summary of inspection	<p>In this report we focus on recruitment and retention in the agencies that we inspect. We draw on evidence from inspection activity conducted by each of our individual inspectorates, both jointly and singly, of those we inspect: the police, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), the Probation and Youth Offending Services and the Prison Service. We set out the findings from our work, as well as cross cutting themes. We conclude by highlighting signs of progress as well as ongoing risks to the CJS.</p>
Grade	
Recommendations	<p>5.1 The effectiveness and efficiency of any service relies on its people. Each agency needs the right people doing the right job for the (CJS) to be effective. Issues around recruitment and retention therefore impact on the efficiency of the CJS and the effectiveness of the service provided to defendants, victims and witnesses.</p> <p>5.2 During our inspections we have spoken to a wide range of staff and officers working in the CJS and we have been impressed by the level of dedication, passion and commitment displayed across all agencies. We found that most staff do their best to deliver a good service against a backdrop of considerable operational pressures. We also see that all the agencies that form the CJS are under immense operational pressure.</p> <p>5.3 Pressures arising from the pandemic have not eased as anticipated, with the Crown Court outstanding caseload remaining high. This places pressure on all agencies as they continue to maintain cases within the system while new cases enter it, with fewer cases being concluded.</p> <p>5.4 A combination of recruitment and of creative approaches to long term vacancy management has resulted in the primary issue no longer being one of unfilled vacancies, but rather one of varying levels of experience. This creates additional pressure within an already overloaded system adding to delay and reduced capacity and capability. The criminal justice agencies we inspect are working to address the issue of inexperience while maintaining or improving their level of service. The challenge will then be to retain existing staff and having invested in them, the new recruits.</p> <p>5.5 Recommendations or areas for concern have already been made in the reports we have drawn from for this spotlight, and we do not seek to repeat them here.</p>

	<p>5.6 While recognising some early signs of progress, we have set out key risks that remain. While all the agencies we inspect are aware of the issues and are working to deal with them, there are two key areas where we urge further focus.</p> <p>5.7 First, all agencies should invest more in understanding why staff leave. The reasons will be different and varied across different roles and locations within each agency as well as across the CJS. Agencies should use this information to inform future changes to improve recruitment and retention and ensure that the right support and incentives are in place to retain staff.</p> <p>5.8 Second, that all agencies should regularly review caseloads, capacity, capability and productivity. This will help to ensure there is adequate supervision and support for staff across the CJS</p>
Areas for improvement	

Police Crime and Commissioner’s acknowledgement

Here in Staffordshire the police force has exceeded the government uplift targets for police officers but this significant recruitment has led to high levels of inexperience in a difficult and pressured environment. I can only concur with the inspector’s findings that this is a common thread running through all the agencies inspected. Inevitably this affects the efficiency of the service that can be delivered because induction, training, mentoring and support all draw from existing resource. More experienced police officers, prosecutors and probation practitioners can also be left shouldering a disproportionately complex caseload. This can all meld together to reduce timeliness and quality, adversely affecting others working in the CJS, defendants, victims and witnesses. Capacity remains a standing discussion item at our local LCJPB and I am hopeful that retention in these roles will assist, over time, in developing the skills and expertise the CJS needs to recover.