

PFCC Report Acknowledgement record

Version:

Force	Staffordshire
Police and Crime Commissioner	Ben Adams
Chief Constable	Chris Noble
Title of inspection	State of Policing: The Annual Assessment of Policing in England and Wales 2021
Inspectorate	 <small>Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services</small>
Summary of inspection	This is Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary's report to the Secretary of State under section 54(4A) of the Police Act 1996. It contains his assessment of the effectiveness and efficiency of policing in England and Wales based on the inspections we carried out between April 2021 and November 2021.
Grade	
Recommendations	
Areas for improvement	

Police Crime and Commissioner's Acknowledgement

The HMICFRS annual report highlights that whilst policing has had a number of important success, some major problems need to be addressed. Advances noted by Sir Tom include domestic abuse, child protection, the quality of some investigations, relations with the public and workforce diversity. There is a strong focus on the importance of improving public confidence in the police. This follows a number of pivotal national events that have had a damaging effect on public trust.

As the report states, policing has become increasingly challenging as the service strives to address complex issues rooted in societal problems. Protecting people from harm, particularly vulnerable people has become a high priority for the service. Recent increases in funding, and consequently officer numbers, are enabling the service to rebalance that work with improvements to fundamental policing services which the public rightly want to see. My Police and Crime Plan, published last year, places considerable emphasis on developing flexible and responsive local policing services which deal effectively with what matters most to communities.

Sir Tom's report also highlights that integrity and professionalism is essential to public confidence. I expect the force to have a rigorous approach to, and a low tolerance of, unacceptable behaviour of officers and staff, ensuring they meet the required standards.

The report references the “sometimes brittle and fragile relationships between chief constables and PCCs”, acknowledging this is in the minority of cases. In Staffordshire, I am confident that my working relationship with the Chief Constable is strong and professional, founded on democratic accountability in delivering shared outcomes for communities.

Sir Tom highlights the need for proactive as well as reactive policing to protect “the silent, the fearful and the weak” and rightly emphasises that the primary purpose of policing is prevention. My Police and Crime Plan prioritises the need to prevent harm and protect people (particularly children and those that are vulnerable) by ensuring they are appropriately safeguarded and receive the help and support they need. This goes beyond policing and, in Staffordshire, we have a range of partnership activities in place to do this. Our Violence Reduction Alliance is working to strengthen the visibility, early identification and response to prevent serious violence and its associated harms.

The report acknowledges the “considerable power and influence” of PCCs in this area, including powers to provide funding for worthwhile activities to occupy young people and divert them from crime and the temptations of crime. My office commissions a range of prevention and early intervention programmes for those more vulnerable to crime (domestic abuse, sexual assault and abuse, drug and alcohol misuse, exploitation, harmful sexual behaviour, hate crime, road crime, online fraud, cybercrime) and antisocial behaviour. We are also engaged with schools to ensure delivery of consistent, good quality education about community safety related topics so that children can make informed, positive and safe choices. Diversionary activity is also a priority; delivering activity and personal development programmes for children and young people at risk of being drawn into crime.

I welcome the recognition of the very significant role of the PCC in the Criminal Justice System, including in ensuring each service plays their part in supporting the delivery of a single CJS. My Police and Crime Plan has as a priority to ensure Staffordshire Police, the Crown Prosecution Service, Courts, the Probation Service and HM Prison Service all work seamlessly so that effective justice is delivered more quickly. I am using my existing powers to convene the relevant bodies to do this but look forward to the proposals set out in the PCC Review Part Two to formalise such arrangements.