


PFCC and CC Force Inspection response record

Version:

Force	Staffordshire
Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner	Ben Adams
Chief Constable	Chris Noble
Title of inspection	An inspection of the effectiveness of the police and law enforcement bodies' response to group-based child sexual exploitation in England and Wales
Inspectorate	 <p>HMICFRS Making communities safer</p>
Summary of inspection	<p>On 21 March 2022, the then Home Secretary, the Rt Hon Priti Patel MP, wrote to HMICFRS, requesting an inspection under section 54 (2B) of the Police Act 1996.</p> <p>The terms of reference asked us to inspect the police and other law enforcement bodies in England and Wales and consider how effectively they respond to victims and perpetrators of group-based child sexual exploitation. We were also asked to assess how their responses influence investigations and the ways in which they safeguard children.</p> <p>During our inspection, we focused on three broad areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The nature and scale of offending. • The police's attitude towards victims. • The quality of investigations and wider outcomes.
Grade	Thematic (not graded)
Recommendations	<p>Recommendation 2 By 31 December 2024, all chief constables should make sure that their forces have problem profiles for child sexual exploitation, each of which should include an assessment of the nature and extent of group-based child sexual exploitation. This should include relevant data from local partner agencies and should be updated frequently, at least annually.</p> <p>Recommendation 4 By 31 December 2024, all chief constables and the relevant business user groups for police record management systems should make sure there are sufficient measures in place to identify group-based child sexual exploitation.</p> <p>Recommendation 8 By 30 June 2024, all chief constables of forces that are yet to receive the Hydrant Programme's continuing professional development offer should arrange it.</p> <p>Recommendation 9 With immediate effect, all chief constables should take effective steps to eradicate victim-blaming language in their forces.</p>

Areas for improvement	<p>Area for improvement</p> <p>All chief constables should work with their statutory safeguarding partners to review, promote and make sure that relevant group-based child sexual exploitation disruption and prevention initiatives are implemented effectively in their forces.</p> <p>This should include consideration of options such as the advice given in the Home Office disruption toolkit and an Operation Makesafe (a national police initiative to raise awareness of child sexual exploitation in the business community) type of approach.</p>
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Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner’s initial response

The PFCC welcomes this report assessing how effectively forces respond to victims and perpetrators of group-based sexual exploitation. The PFCC’s office is working with the force and Cinerobota to produce two victim videos, which will be used as a police training resource. The videos have been commissioned following regular themes / messages arising from the PFCC’s Victim Feedback Forum, which include: being believed, supported, updated and protected. Non-victim blaming plays a part in how victims want to be treated and is linked to those messages. One of the videos will portray a child victim and will show what ‘good’ looks like when speaking with victims and what ‘bad’ looks like. This will support officers in how to correctly respond to and support victims of crime.

The PFCC’s Victim Forum meets quarterly and pulls together victims’ thoughts both positive and negative about the police and the service they have provided. This information once collated is shared with Commanders so they can action key concerns at a local level. Key themes will be presented to both the Police and PFCC Victim Boards, as well as the LCJPB, so that it is also considered by senior officers to ensure a top-down approach.

In addressing these recommendations, I am confident that work is underway here in Staffordshire to ensure improvement and consistency of approach to victims and perpetrators of group-based child sexual exploitation. It is noted that PFCC commissioning involvement in this area is challenging and complex and we will no longer be involved / providing funding for support for CSE victims from 1 April 2024, relying on both Local Authorities to deliver in house CSE Support.

Chief Constable’s response

As per statement from NPCC Lead for Child Protection and Abuse Investigation, December 2023:

“The report contains many areas we are aware of and working on to develop consistency and improvement. In many ways, it echoes the recent self-assessment returns completed by forces on behalf of the CSE Taskforce in the summer.

“Prior to the inspection taking place, significant work was being undertaken in this area by colleagues in the Hydrant Programme and the Vulnerability Knowledge and Practice Programme, which has been accelerated following the launch of the CSE Taskforce in April. This has ensured that significant progress has already been made in meeting the requirements of all the recommendations contained in

the report. This includes work to improve our understanding of the scale and nature of the threat, through better use of data and analysis; working collaboratively with the organisations in the third sector to improve insight and engagement with victims and survivors; supporting investigations through a well-established and experienced peer review and support capability; delivering CPD events to forces and publishing up-to-date practice advice to assist SIOs in their approach to complex child sexual abuse and exploitation investigations. This work will continue to be driven by the Taskforce working with all forces and the College of Policing, which will ensure that we can address the recommendations swiftly and effectively.

“The recommendations will be managed by the Taskforce and whilst some are specifically for Chief Constables, I recommend that at this stage, forces allow the Taskforce to provide you and your teams with support and advice that can help shape your local response.”

Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner’s overall comments

With the PFCC’s oversight and support, Staffordshire Police remain committed and engaged with the CSE Taskforce to ensure that all recommendations are addressed consistently across the force for vulnerable victims of child sexual abuse.