Cumbria Office of Police Fire and Crime Commissioner

**Cumbria Police Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) response to inspections of Cumbria Constabulary published by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS)**

*Section 33 of the Police Act 1996 (as amended by section 37 of the Policing and Crime Act 2017) requires local policing bodies to respond to recommendations in inspectors reports within 56 days.*

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| **Inspection Title:** | #29536 – An inspection of the north-west regional response to serious and organised crime |
| **Date Published:** | 10/11/2023 |
| **Type of Inspection:** | National Thematic |
| **Key Findings** | |
| As part of HMICFRS’ police effectiveness, efficiency, and legitimacy inspections, HMICFRS inspected how well police forces tackle serious and organised crime (SOC).  In 2022, HMICFRS changed how they inspect this aspect of policing, to incorporate inspections of the ten regions, as well as the nine regional organised crime units (ROCUs) throughout England and Wales, and the 43 police forces. This improves HMICFRS’ understanding of how well forces and ROCUs work together to tackle SOC.  The report includes sections on the following:  - Regional findings – a summary of inspection evidence.  - The Regional Organised Crime Units (ROCU) and individual forces – the ROCU and each individual force are given a graded judgment.  The forces in this report are Cheshire, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Lancashire, Merseyside, and North Wales. | |
| **Areas for Improvement:** | |
| AFI LEVEL 3 #29550 - There isn’t enough analytical capacity in Cumbria Constabulary to fully understand and manage the threat from serious and organised crime.  AFI LEVEL 3 #29551 - Cumbria Constabulary should improve the quality of its 4P plans, how it uses them to disrupt serious and organised crime and how it records disruptions on the national database.  AFI LEVEL 3 #29552 - Cumbria Constabulary should make sure it has enough resources in its economic crime unit to target criminal finances. | |
| **PFCC & Constabulary Response to Report and Recommendation:** | |
| I welcome the inspection by His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service (HMICFRS) relating to the north-west regional response to serious and organised crime.  Within my Police and Crime Plan, a focus on crime and the causes of crime, focusing on victims and preventing offending and reducing reoffending are priorities. As PFCC for Cumbria, I take Cumbria’s response to SOC seriously.  'County Lines', drugs supply, serious acquisitive crime, exploitation, and money laundering / cash seizure are now part of daily policing and often perpetrated by Organised Crime Groups (OCGs) based in Cumbria or operating here but from outside the County.  Cumbria Constabulary has dedicated resources to tackle and disrupt SOC, but it is the responsibility of every officer in the course of their duties to disrupt SOC 'on their beat'. SOC thrives in local neighbourhoods, OCG members live within the community and as such that is often where the intelligence and opportunities are most prevalent. ​ Therefore, we recognise that both the work of Community Beat Officers and maintaining a Police presence across Cumbria vital in tackling SOC. As such, we have continued the roll-out of CBOs across Cumbria to emphasise this.  The Constabulary continue to bring in new developments to improve the current service and offer increased protection to the public. For example, the Constabulary have launched a new, dedicated roads policing unit, as part of a commitment to make Cumbria’s roads safer. This important in this context as the Roads Policing Crime Unit play a pivotal role in disrupting OGCs. This Unit proactively removed in excess of £1.5 million suspected criminal cash being moved through the Cumbrian Roads Network in 2022 and already £800k in 2023.  Furthermore, within my Office, we commission early intervention services relating to SOC, for example, the 1CLIC program, who work with vulnerable people who are at risk of county lines exploitation. The programme helps divert individuals from exploitation through signposting and offering support services. The 1CLIC program has recently expanded its current geography (to Carlisle), after the exceptional work that has been carried out thus far in Barrow-in-Furness.  Additionally, I also commission Get Safe Online which provides information and training sessions to groups in Cumbria, to educate and divert people from being scammed or a victim of fraud.  In relation to the Areas of Improvements (AFI) highlighted within the report, I have gained assurance from Chief Constable Rob Carden, that the Constabulary are in receipt of this publication and have previously corresponded with the HMICFRS regarding the anticipated recommendations in May 2023.  From discussions with Chief Constable Rob Carden, he has stated the following:  The Constabulary welcome this report and take the AFIs seriously. As a Force, we are committed and passionate in reducing and preventing SOC as well threat from OCG within Cumbria. It is my responsibility and intention to ensure that all officers and staff understand the threat from SOC and play their part in minimising harm by working in partnership to disrupt and deter SOC in Cumbria.  In relation to the report, we have invested nearly £400,000 in analytical capability and capacity, thus enabling us to be better positioned to understand and better manage the threat from SOC. Whilst this is still ongoing, we have further added a new principal analyst and conducted a review of our analytical capacity from other forces.  We have also implemented extensive training to officers where 4P plans (Prepare, Prevent, Protect & Pursue) are attributed to all required circumstances. This will enhance our officers understanding of operating across the requirements of the 4P’s across the county. Furthermore, we’ve implemented a 4P Plan meeting structure, which is reviewed on a consistent basis.  The Constabulary had experienced a backlog in the Economic Crime Unit (ECU) as a consequence of organisational decisions to prioritise high risk high harm cases – however I can confirm that this has now been subject to additional capacity. We have also made bids to channel more resource into the ECU to target criminal finances, it is ongoing but there are plans in motion to address the AFI raised in the report. | |