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:** | #28790 – Homicide Prevention: An inspection of the Police contribution to the prevention of homicide. |
| **Date Published:** | 11/08/2023 |
| **Type of Inspection:** | National Thematic |
| **Key Findings** | |
| This inspection examined how effectively the Police understood and contributed to the prevention of, homicides.  We conducted a thematic inspection of homicide prevention, jointly supported by the National Police Chiefs Council, the College of Policing and the independent Office for Police Conduct. In our inspection, we examined:   * how effectively forces understand the pattern of homicide in their areas, including the underlying causes and risks; and * how effectively forces contribute to the prevention of homicides, including how they use the homicide prevention framework.   This report sets out our findings. | |
| **Recommendations:** | |
| [Report #28790: Homicide prevention: An inspection of the police contribution to the prevention of homicide - Cumbria Police - HMICFRS Monitoring Portal (justiceinspectorates.gov.uk)](https://monitoringportal.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/issues/28790)  Recommendation 1 #28835 - By 31 August 2024, chief constables in England and Wales should devise an approach to make sure their force can, on a sufficiently frequent basis, produce an analytical report concerning its death investigations. This will help the force to:   * better understand the pattern of death reports across the force area, drawing on force data and information gathered by other organisations, including the NHS and local authorities; and * identify any linked series of death reports.   Recommendation 2 #28878 - By 1 December 2023, chief constables should make sure their force can quickly identify lessons from homicides and serious violence incidents. The process should be capable of involving partner organisations when appropriate, so that lessons can be learned more widely. | |
| **PFCC & Constabulary Response to Report and Recommendation:** | |
| Cumbria’s Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner welcomes the HMICFRS Report – An inspection of the Police contribution to the prevention of homicide.  Cumbria is considered one of the safest regions to live within England and Wales, with homicide rates recorded at 0.0006 per 1,000 population. This is the 6th lowest nationally and compares to an England and Wales average of 0.01.  That said, any homicide is a sad loss and has a significant impact not only on the victims’ family but also the wider community. Homicide cases will always be unique as they can be the result of different criminal behaviour, acts or drivers, with the most common being domestic abuse, knife crime, drugs, serious violence, and alcohol. To be successful in tackling homicide, policing as well as partnership activity must be focussed on tackling the causes and drivers that lead to homicide.  The Serious Violence Duty which came into effect on 31st of January 2023, intends to do just that. The duty aims to tackle serious violence (in which homicide falls under) across regions in England and Wales through collaboration. Specifically, by creating the right conditions for authorities to collaborate and communicate regularly, using existing partnerships where possible, and to share information and take effective coordinated action in local areas.  In Cumbria, the partnership arrangements through which authorities collaborate is the Safer Cumbria Partnership, which I chair. While I’m not a responsible authority under the Duty, I play an important role in convening local partnership arrangements in Cumbria. As such I am responsible for monitoring the exercise of functions of the Duty and for holding partners to account for their compliance and delivery.  The Duty required specified authorities to produce a Serious Violence Needs Assessment (SVNA) and Strategy. The SVNA is a comprehensive evidence-based analysis conducted by Safer Cumbria Partnership to identify the root causes and contributing factors of serious violence. Data collection is centred around serious violence incidents as defined by the duty and related data (such as hospital admissions, youth offending data) and factors associated with committing or being a victim of serious violence, such as drug abuse, mental ill health, and adverse childhood experiences. Data analysis is also conducted from primary sources, such as Cumbria Constabulary’s Business Analytics Unit and Crime Command Unit. The data collected here is related to Police recorded occurrences of violent offences. Further data is collected also from key partners such as North-West Ambulance Service, North Cumbria Integrated Care, Youth Offending Service, and numerous 3rd sector organisations. All data is used to produce an informative assessment and understanding of the impact of Serious Violence within Cumbria.  Work has commenced on the Strategy, and Cumbria’s focus will be to target alcohol and drugs (driver for county lines/organised crime), children and young people (to reduce the likelihood of them becoming involved in violent crime), violence against women and girls (VAWG). By implementing early interventions in these focus areas this will hopefully deter acts of homicide from occurring in the first place.  Lastly within my Police & Crime Plan 2021-2025, I have set out my commitment to meeting the requirements contained within the Serious Violence Duty and ensuring that Cumbria Constabulary also meets this national priority. I am also aware that the Chief Constable has identified tackling serious violence in his Force Strategic Assessment.  As chair of Safer Cumbria, I am also aware that partner agencies are involved with conducting domestic homicide reviews and are looking at any learning which might help to reduce risk of homicides related to domestic abuse or within a domestic setting. To help reduce the risk of harm to domestic abuse victims, I work with the Councils to commission a victim service which includes Independent Domestic Violence Advisor support, as well as other support services such as through the women’s centres. | |