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:** | #29045 – Race and Policing: An inspection of race disparity in police criminal justice decision-making- Recommendation 11 |
| **Date Published:** | 25/08/2023 |
| **Type of Inspection:** | National Thematic |
| **Key Findings** | |
| In this report, we examine what published demographic data is available for a range of police criminal justice decisions. We then detail the policy context that exists for these, before setting out the findings from the fieldwork that we carried out.  Our commission In July 2021, the Home Affairs Select Committee published a report summarising what progress had been made on the recommendations of the 1999 Macpherson report.  The report concluded that there had been some important improvements in some aspects of the police response. For example, in the policing of racist crimes, in the commitments made to promoting equality and diversity, and in good examples of local community policing.  The report recommended that His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services carries out thematic reviews of race and policing to provide scrutiny of the police service response. Our programme of work on race and policing demonstrates our response to this recommendation.  This inspection is the second in our race and policing programme that we started in 2021. The first inspection, focusing on leadership and governance, is published alongside this report. We draw on some of the findings from that inspection in this report.  Our overarching question for the race and policing programme is: How effectively are the police responding to race-based inequalities and disparities that negatively affect community confidence? In this inspection, our aim was to explore race disparity in the police forces selected for fieldwork, and in particular how well they understand, scrutinise and communicate their relevant work. | |
| **Recommendations:** | |
| Recommendation 1 - #29102:  By 30 September 2024, chief constables should make sure that forces carry out comprehensive analysis of race disparity in police criminal justice decision-making. Where this analysis indicates that people from ethnic minority backgrounds are disproportionately affected, police forces should explain, or revise, their ways of working.  Recommendation 2 - #29148:  By 30 September 2024, chief constables should make sure that information from the Youth Justice Board summary disproportionality toolkit relevant to the force area is included in their force’s analysis of police criminal justice disparity.  Recommendation 3 - #29194:  By 30 September 2024, chief constables should make sure that work takes place with communities, police and crime commissioners, and other agencies to establish or build on arrangements for the scrutiny of police criminal justice disparity.  Recommendation 4 - #29239:  By 30 September 2024, chief constables should make sure that information about criminal justice disparity is published on force websites, or that force websites clearly link to other websites where this information can be found. Published information should include any explanations for identified disparity and actions forces will take to address it. | |
| **PFCC & Constabulary Response to Report and Recommendation:** | |
| Cumbria’s Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner welcomes the HMICFRS Report – Race and Policing: An inspection of race disparity in police criminal justice decision-making- Recommendation 11.  As the PFCC for Cumbria, it is my statutory responsibility to hold the Chief Constable to account. One of the ways I ensure that this is done, is by establishing an Accountability Framework, within this framework lay meetings that provide scrutiny and an onus upon the Force to act appropriately. Attendance from myself or my office at each of these meetings provides an integral part of the overall accountability process. It provides reassurance on emerging areas of concerns and helps to prompt initial discussions of what I may require further reassurance on.  Meetings where matters such as, race disparity in police criminal justice decision making, may be discussed, or highlighted in:   * Ethics & Integrity Panel   The panel currently has six members of the public appointed to it whom meet on a quarterly basis. The purpose of this panel is to provide a forum that challenges, encourages, and supports myself as PFCC, the Chief Constable and Chief Fire Officer in monitoring and dealing with integrity and ethical issues within the OPFCC, Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Service. To ensure and maintain high standards of integrity and ethics there is a need for a robust, independent and transparent system of oversight of the way complaints and misconduct allegations made against police officers and staff are handled and investigated by the police. The decisions taken, actions and behaviour of police officers and staff need to ensure public trust and confidence in policing.  To ensure openness and transparency the agenda and reports are published following each panel meeting.  Currently, we are looking at the NPCC Race Action Plan and what Cumbria Constabulary are doing in relation to it. If there are any complaints or misconduct allegations which relate to race-related matters, the Panel would also deal with this appropriately.   * VAWG Scrutiny Panel   The OPFCC works alongside Cumbria Victims Charitable Trust who now chair and scrutinise the Violence Against Women and Girls Scrutiny Panel. The Panel sits four times a year and within each sitting they will scrutinise different areas of Violence Against Women and Girls. Scrutiny around racial disparity and VAWG is one of the areas which is continuously on the annual areas to cover.  The Force provide case reports on randomly selected incidents and the panel will review these at the meeting. Prior to the beginning of each meeting a Force Subject Matter Expert will explain further the intricacies of each crime area.  One such panel meeting covered ethnic minority cases specifically involving black people. The panel and the OPFCC Victims Quality Champion was assured by the presentation and the good standards of response given to the victims in each case by the Officers involved. The force highlighted that officers need to be understanding of communities and tailor responses to individual investigations.  Where there are concerns around lack of understanding around cultural differences, the force showed great initiative in a recent investigation by reaching out to specialist persons in this area to achieve the best outcome for a victim.  To conclude, as Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, I remain fully committed to such issues and realise the importance of supporting and hearing those who have been mistreated or overlooked unfairly. I therefore recognise the recommendations made within this report and take everything on board as a result. | |