



Greater Manchester Police, Fire and Crime Panel

Date: 22nd July 2021

Subject: Greater Manchester Police update on the Victim Service Assessment and Engagement Action Plan.

Purpose of the report:

The purpose of this report is to inform the Greater Manchester Police and Crime Steering Group of the activity under the Victim Service Assessment and Engagement Action Plan.

Overview:

In December 2020, HMICFRS published 'An inspection of the service provided to victims of crime by Greater Manchester Police (GMP)'. The focus of this assessment was to understand the experience of the victim; this is known as a Victim Service Assessment (VSA). The findings of the inspection highlighted a number of recommendations for Greater Manchester Police and, in response to these recommendations; the Force initiated a comprehensive action plan.

Progress to date:

Initial surge activity was necessary to deal with the immediacy of issues highlighted in the VSA report. Initial action was governed through a VSA Gold, Silver and Bronze (GSB) command structure. T/DCC Hussain took the lead as Gold, and ACC Potts was appointed Silver, ACC Sykes later took over as Silver and still acts in this role. Local Policing Command Area Bronze leads followed, who then led the tactical delivery of the VSA Strategy. Initial activity additionally focussed on the HMICFRS reporting structures and evidenced progress against the recommendations. This led to the development of the VSA and Engagement Action Plan (bi-weekly submissions), reinforced by monthly meetings with HMICFRS Inspectors. Whilst this 'surge' activity described was effective in improving data integrity and improving the quality of crime recording, it was recognised from the outset that it was not sustainable.

The second phase of activity was to mitigate the impact of surge activity through the implementation of long-term structural and procedural change. This activity began with the appointment of a Performance and Improvement Oversight lead, Ch. Supt Rick Jackson. Initial activity included the proactive benchmarking of GMP against Forces recommended by HMICFRS Inspectors, this included; Humberside, West Yorkshire, Lancashire and South Yorkshire.

Existing plans within the Organisational Change Programme were accelerated to develop the Centralised Crime Recording and Resolution Unit (CRRU). This unit recorded Grade 4 incident crimes and more recently secured the training resources required to include Grade 3 incident Crime Recording. Since Crime Recording has been centralised, the average time to crime record incidents has reduced from 56 hours to 10 hours. The Victim Assessment and Referral Service is the primary offer of support for victims who report crime to GMP. There are major improvements in the number of referrals being made through Victim Assessment and Referral Service. In January 2020, Greater Manchester Police was referring 9.4% (1825) of victim based crimes to a support service; in April 2021 this stood at 26% (5981). Incident to Crime conversion performance data identifies an increase in the volume of crime recorded in 2021, in comparison to the same periods in 2019 and 2020. One

such example is the recording of crime surrounding Controlling and Coercive Behaviour, with a 49% increase in crimes recorded. There is a 45% improvement in the recording of Stalking and Harassment offences and a 17% increase in Domestic Abuse crimes recorded during the same period.

GMP entered the engagement phase within the first few weeks of December 2020 after the release of the official VSA report. This phase focused on the three enduring causes of concern, which overlap with the recommendations in the VSA report. A fourth concern was implicit (albeit not a formal cause of concern) with regards the failure of GMP to effect substantive and sustainable change. It is for this reason that the VSA recommendations are seen as symptomatic of the enduring causes of concern, which have emanated from an unreformed environment.

Quality Assurance teams were initially developed on Districts to check each incident reported into GMP was appropriately crime recorded and allocated. To the end of June 2021, 266,556 incidents have now been quality assured, resulting in 10,450 additional crime reports being submitted based upon the information provided in the initial report. This quality assurance process, together with the GSB governance structure led to a dramatic increase in the number of crime reports that GMP is recording. Despite the effects of COVID seeing a 20% reduction in crime recording, nationally GMP has only experienced a 1% reduction due to a much higher Incident to Crime Recording ratio. To complement the work of the District Quality Assurance (QA) teams, it was felt necessary to ensure the quality of the checks being conducted were to the required standard. As such the Force Moderation Team was developed with Subject Matter Experts (SME's) introduced to assess the QA work being conducted by the District based staff. Local Bronze leads were informed of any emerging risks and work-streams that required particular focus. Over the period that the Force Moderation Team has been in existence, fewer faults have been found, to the point that in June 2021, the Force Moderation Team was disbanded as a result in the increased confidence.

A root cause analysis identified that a lack of a corporate and centralised Performance Team, that had sufficient capacity and capability to drive required behaviours, was central to the change required to improve victim outcomes. Consequently, GMP's budget has been re-profiled to build the Performance and Improvement Oversight Team and uplift the Force Crime and Incident Registrar (FCIR). Additionally further resources have been secured to develop necessary high quality strategic planning, governance and policy required to underpin sustainable performance. The Performance and Improvement Oversight Team will focus activity to increase qualitative fieldwork and reality checking across Districts and Branches, feeding back to individuals and forums to drive improvement activity. The improved audit function provides increased capability and capacity, which translates into a scale of work that yields statistical significance and confidence in findings. In addition to setting performance objectives, there is now ongoing monitoring and assessment of performance improvement indicators agreed via the Executive Performance Meeting or Quarterly Performance Reviews.

The Performance and Improvement Oversight Lead has created and fostered links with key stakeholders, including the District and Branch Senior Leadership Teams (SLT's). The lead provides advice and guidance, where necessary, and ensures that changes to management practices undertake the cultural shift that is required. On an ongoing basis, monthly district performance data packs are produced, providing SLT's with detailed performance information spanning corporate functions through to local vulnerability and investigative effectiveness, which hitherto had not been provided. A Force Performance Framework has been developed and implemented across GMP, to ensure the right strategic resources drive a common series of governance processes to embed Performance priorities from the Executive to Individual levels. GMP also embarked on a training programme called *Think Victim* to ensure staff are focussed on Victim outcomes as opposed to simple adherence to process. Additional bespoke training for all supervisors which outlined

standards and performance obligations has reinforced *Think Victim* training, which over 95% of our Police Officers (Constable to Inspector Rank) have now received.

New IT products from the iOPS COGNOS system allows Performance Managers to analyse beat area problem profiles, providing the key information required for Senior Leaders to make good decisions as to how best to use finite resources. The development to iOPS (Police Works) through multiple upgrades has enhanced the iOPS mobile functionality, improving the speed of the system and user experience. System developments and focus on data integrity have allowed GMP to make significant improvements to the Annual Data Returns (ADR's) which had been highlighted as a major concern for both the Home Office and HMICFRS. The HMICFRS Oversight Board (HOB) was developed to drive compliance with recommendations, areas for improvement and other feedback. As a direct result of this scrutiny, GMP has moved from zero ADR returns in May 2019, to over 80% compliance. Structured time-bound plans are now in place to address the outstanding ADR's going forwards.

In recent months chief officer portfolios have been streamlined, and there has been recognition that a move away from omni-competent officers would better support victims. Subject matter experts and appropriately trained staff now focus on improving outcomes and support to victims. Changes have included the restructuring of cluster policing areas to local policing command areas, strengthening local leadership. The implementation of prisoner processing units (PPU's) now improve the quality of investigations and victim outcomes, whilst reducing demand on front line resources. The introduction of Crime Investigations Teams, who conduct desk based investigations, has led to over 1,500 investigations being transferred from front line resources in order to be more effectively managed to improve outcomes. Each victim is now contacted within 24 hours of the crime being assigned, and the teams have identified further positive lines of enquiry in 532 of these cases. This will result in swifter service to victims thereby increasing their confidence and satisfaction; early evidence retrieval; and a problem solving approach.

In order to strengthen the service of the Operational Communications Branch (OCB), commitments have been made to recruit 50 additional call handlers, introduce a call handlers training programme and implement the THRIVE risk assessment framework. The OCB have promoted alternative ways for the public and partners to contact GMP, such as with Single Online Home and Live Chat. So far this has increased first contact resolution to 32%.

Specific governance through the Vulnerability Board has led to a better understand of why victims are not supporting prosecutions, specifically around Domestic Abuse. An audit of Body Worn Video footage from 110 incidents has been conducted to understand how officers are communicating with victims of Domestic Abuse. Thematic learning has been shared across districts, with learning opportunities identified. A Police and Partner focus group, involving victims of Domestic Abuse, has been developed to consider how we can improve service to victims through Reflective Practice Learning Circles with staff. The Domestic Abuse Survey conducted by a Leicestershire Survey Bureau found that in 2019, 74% of our victims said they were satisfied with the overall services provided by GMP, in 2021 this increased to 85%. In 2019, 58% of our victims said that they were satisfied with the updates of progress; this increased to 71% in 2021, but nevertheless remains an area for improvement.

It is accepted that the test of effectiveness will be the long term service improvements that victims of crime receive and the confidence that communities feel through Greater Manchester. GMP will undergo further re-evaluation through the PEEL inspection which reports in February 2022. Prior to this date, the majority of the Chief Constables transformational initiatives will have been implemented and the strategic transformation required to improve services into the future will begin to gain traction.