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Address: Sent Via Email

Date: 6th December 2023

Dear Partners and Colleagues,

On Wednesday 6 December, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) will release its PEEL (Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy) report on Thames Valley Police to the public.

In 2014, HMICFRS introduced its police efficiency, effectiveness and legitimacy (PEEL) inspections, which assess the performance of all 43 police forces in England and Wales. Since then, it has moved to a more intelligence-led, continual assessment approach, which focuses more on making sure forces are achieving appropriate outcomes for the public. It is therefore not possible to make direct comparisons between the grades awarded in this PEEL inspection and those from the previous cycle of PEEL inspections.

The results

Following the inspection which was carried out in July 2023, the report assesses the force in eight areas using a system based on four grades ranging from Outstanding to Inadequate.

The force has been graded as Good for police powers and public treatment and Adequate for preventing crime and developing a positive workplace. The report also highlighted that our officers understand the importance of appropriate behaviours, demonstrate effective communication with the public and involve community members in the scrutiny of how we use police powers. Furthermore, it was highlighted that the force makes good use of stop and search as a policing tactic and

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finds the object searched for in a higher proportion of cases than any other force in England and Wales.

However, they have assessed that Thames Valley Police Requires Improvement for investigating crime, responding to the public, managing offenders, and leadership and force management. We were also rated Inadequate for protecting vulnerable people in which concerns were raised about how the force works with partner organisations to assess and manage risks to vulnerable people, including making sure that risk assessments are detailed enough and dealt with promptly.

Safeguarding the vulnerable

We always welcome scrutiny of our force and have made progress in a number of areas since the Inspectorate's visit. Earlier this year, and in response to findings in the report around safeguarding the vulnerable, we took immediate steps to increase staffing levels in our safeguarding teams, including doubling the senior leadership team to support their focus on protecting vulnerable people. Referrals to partners for vulnerable people are now sent within appropriate timescales according to those outlined by HMICFRS, and backlogs in the force's multi-agency safeguarding hubs have now been cleared. The HMICFRS report notes the Inspectorate is pleased with improvements made since the inspection and we would like to thank our partners, particularly in local authorities for their support in improving our joint processes in this area.

Improved partner work

We are extremely proud that the HMICFRS report has recognised our improved partner work to protect the vulnerable in respect of domestic abuse victims, our improved response to stalking and harassment, and greater use of prevention orders. From April to September this year we saw an increase in domestic abuse arrests from 4,475 to 4,616. We also saw a 22% increase in charges for rape and an 11% increase in charges for other sexual offences compared to the same period in 2022. This is in addition to the success of our specialist operations to safeguard victims of human trafficking and sexual exploitation and reducing the risk of reoffending by registered sex offenders.

Setting a positive example

We are leading the way with Project Vigilant to protect those in our night time economy, the implementation of our Race Action Plan and investing further in our neighbourhoods. We have also seen a significant decrease in homicide in our force area. This has led to our force being recognised by the Home Office in October 2023 as a positive example of tackling the deaths of young men on our streets. Much of this is as a result of our work around Op Deter which seeks swifter charge and remand decisions to those who carry knives with the aim of reducing knife-enabled crime, reducing re-offending and bringing more offenders of knife-enabled crime to justice.

We have an incredibly committed workforce who strive to improve every day and continue to evolve the force's response to protecting our communities when they need us. The report reflects how we communicate well with the public, keep people safe and provide an effective service which prevents crime, especially as a result of the close working relationship we have with our partners.

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While the report identifies areas of improvement, I am proud of the work and improvements we have achieved so far. We greatly value the continued support of our partners and it is thanks to you that we have been able to make these improvements.

If you would like further information on any of the areas identified in the report, please do not hesitate to get in touch with my Staff Officer Detective Sergeant Sarah Allen; sarah.allen2@serocu.police.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Jason Hogg
Chief Constable

