

**From:** Matthew Scott, Kent Police and Crime Commissioner  
**To:** Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel  
**Subject:** Crime Data Integrity re-inspection 2018  
**Date:** 6 February 2019



**Introduction:**

1. As outlined in the 'Safer in Kent' Plan, the PCC expects Kent Police to have the right resources with the right skills to investigate, and where possible, bring to justice those who harm individuals and businesses. To do so though, there is an explicit expectation that when a crime is reported, it is recorded accurately.
2. Further to previous reports submitted to the Panel, this paper updates on Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS)<sup>1</sup> most recent re-inspection of Crime Data Integrity.
3. It also outlines how the PCC, in discharging his statutory responsibilities, has held the Chief Constable to account and will continue to do so in the future.

**Background:**

4. On 20 July 2017, the Panel received a report setting out Kent Police's record in relation to HMICFRS Crime Data Integrity inspections.
5. For reference, a summary is provided below:
  - February 2013 - the previous PCC commissioned an inspection to determine whether the people of Kent could have confidence in the Force's crime figures. HMICFRS found that Kent Police was recording approximately 90% of crime correctly and had a target-driven culture. Their judgment was that 'appreciably more needed to be done before the people of Kent could be confident that the crime and resolution figures published by the Force were as accurate as they should be'.
  - January 2014 - interim report published that found Kent Police was recording 96% of crime accurately and had also moved away from a target-driven performance culture to one focused on outcomes and quality of service. Their judgment was that the Force had made significant improvements, but they needed to be sustained over a longer period of time before the people of Kent could be confident in the crime and resolution figures published by the Force.
  - November 2014 - third inspection report published which found that Kent Police was recording 96% of crime accurately. HMICFRS also found no evidence to suggest any remaining pressure to meet numerical performance targets, concluding the people of Kent could have confidence in Kent Police's crime figures, although the Force needed to maintain focus and continue making improvements.
  - June 2017 - HMICFRS found that Kent Police had not maintained the standards of accuracy reported in November 2014 and were graded 'Inadequate'. Based on an examination of crime reports for the period 1 June to 30 November 2016, they estimated that the Force failed to record over 24,000 reported crimes each year; representing a recording rate of 83.6%. They made seven recommendations and identified one area for improvement (AFI).
6. The PCC considered the June 2017 findings totally unacceptable. The Chief Constable also apologised to any victim who did not receive the service they were entitled to and approved a comprehensive improvement plan. This resulted in the Force implementing processes to effectively monitor data integrity, and taking action to address all the recommendations and the AFI.
7. On 27 September 2018, the Panel received a further update advising that the Force had received formal notification from HMICFRS that the next Crime Data Integrity inspection would commence on Monday 1 October 2018 with fieldwork taking place from Monday 29 October 2018 for three days.
8. The findings from this latest inspection - [Kent Police: Crime Data Integrity re-inspection 2018](#) – were published on 15 January 2019; a summary of which is provided below.

---

<sup>1</sup> Formerly Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC).

### **HMICFRS re-inspection 2018:**

9. HMICFRS examined crime reports for the period 1 April to 31 June 2018 and graded Kent Police 'Outstanding', estimating the Force records 96.6% of reported crimes – higher than any other Force in England and Wales, and one of only two forces to achieve this grading to date.
10. In comparison to the 2017 findings, HMICFRS also estimated that the improved accuracy meant the Force had recorded an additional 25,400 crimes for the year covered by the re-inspection audit period. As a result, substantially more victims had their reported crimes recorded, received an improved service and were offered additional support from Victim Support.
11. In addition to achieving an overall crime-recording rate of 96.6%, HMICFRS found:
- 95.7% of reported violent crimes (including domestic abuse) were recorded; in comparison to the findings of the 2017 inspection, HMICFRS estimated the Force is recording an additional 12,380 crimes each year;
  - more than 98.2% of reported sex offences, including rape, were recorded; estimating the Force is recording an additional 660 crimes each year;
  - 62 of 63 audited rape reports were accurately recorded, with the force having improved all aspects of rape recording.
12. As well as substantially improving crime-recording accuracy, HMICFRS noted the Force had:
- Comprehensively mapped its crime-recording processes to make sure it has a detailed understanding of all the channels through which reports of crime are received;
  - Given officers and staff a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to crime recording;
  - Provided comprehensive training to improve the understanding of crime-recording requirements among officers and staff;
  - Improved supervision and quality assurance of crime-recording decisions, in the Investigation Management Unit (IMU) and Central Referral Unit (CRU);
  - Effective departmental learning feedback processes in place to support its commitment to continual improvement; and
  - Strong audit and governance arrangements to make sure improvements made to crime-recording accuracy are sustainable and will continue.
13. In relation to the recommendations made in its 2017 report, HMICFRS also found the Force had completed them all, including:
- reviewing the operating arrangements of the IMU;
  - introducing a call-handling quality-assurance process which includes checking that supervisors check incident reports completed by the IMU;
  - reviewing the use of secondary incidents to ensure use of them does not inhibit crime-recording accuracy; and
  - introducing extra crime-recording audit capacity.
14. However, HMICFRS did find that in a few areas the Force acknowledged it still had more to do, including work to make sure:
- it records all reports of crime within 24 hours of receipt of the report; and
  - it records all third party professional reports at the first point of contact.
15. In addition, they also found:
- occasional misunderstanding of new rules for recording of harassment offences, but this was neither systemic nor widespread;
  - a small minority of staff had not yet completed their crime-recording training, but the Force has effective processes in place to ensure all staff receive the necessary training.
16. In conclusion, HMICFRS stated:

*“Improvements to crime-recording arrangements in Kent Police since our 2017 report are impressive. Crime-recording and ensuring the best possible service to victims of crimes are priorities...”*

*“The leadership shown has resulted in a cultural change to the importance of crime-recording among officers and staff. This has ensured that more victims receive the service to which they are entitled and deserve...”*

*“The force has made excellent progress, and has substantially improved its crime-recording arrangements. We are confident that these improvements are sustainable.”*

17. HMICFRS will continue to monitor progress, and Kent Police, as with all police forces, may be subject to a further unannounced crime data integrity inspection at any time.

**Holding to account:**

18. One of the principle ways the PCC has held the Chief Constable to account is through the quarterly Performance and Delivery Board.

19. Open to Panel Members and the public, on a non-participating basis, the meeting is chaired by the PCC and papers are submitted by the force in advance and published [here](#). The Chief Constable is required to attend the meeting in order to present and discuss the papers, and answer questions about delivery of the Safer in Kent Plan and policing generally in the county.

20. Initially a paper in its own right, but subsequently included within the ‘Safer in Kent Plan: Delivery & Performance’ paper, the Force has regularly submitted comprehensive updates on crime data integrity. This has included substantive updates on action taken, governance and the latest crime data accuracy position.

21. Based on internal audits, the Chief Constable has consistently reported a compliance rate of more than 92%, and stated that if HMICFRS were to re-inspect at that time, he was confident they would come to the same conclusion. In light of the findings from the latest HMICFRS re-inspection, the Chief Constable said:

*“I am delighted to see such a significant improvement to our crime recording being recognised. This is testament to the hard work and commitment of our officers in ensuring we get crime recording right...”*

*“It is particularly pleasing that HMICFRS has recognised the excellent progress made and our proven ability to make significant advances since their last inspection.”*

*“We will continue to make further progress and build on the improvements we have made so far to provide the best service possible to the people of Kent.”*

22. The PCC has also welcomed the findings of the latest HMICFRS inspection and is pleased that Kent Police is now leading the way in this vital area. However there is no room for complacency, and the PCC will continue to receive updates on crime data integrity at the Performance and Delivery Board as appropriate. The PCC will also continue to hold the Chief Constable to account via their weekly 1:1 briefings which are held in the OPCC, and allow discussion of a wide variety of subjects, including significant operational matters and delivery of the Safer in Kent Plan.