



Dear Home Secretary,

This is the response from West Yorkshire regarding.

HMICFRS report - An Inspection into how effectively the police investigate crime.

In West Yorkshire, we understand the importance of the effective investigation of crime, which includes the service provided to victims and the recording, assessing, allocating and investigating of crimes. I welcome the report from the inspectorate, which highlights both cases of good practice, but also areas where investigative models and process are not good enough and more needs to be done.

As a result of a previous PEEL inspection, West Yorkshire has changed fundamentally how it investigates crime with an end-to-end project looking at all aspects of the victim's journey. As PCC I have been able to collaborate with the Police in their understanding of how victims are affected by crime and where there needed to be a whole system transformation to facilitate this change.

This has resulted in a change of ethos in West Yorkshire Police and under the heading of 'we are all investigators' ensured that staff were getting the basics right first time and the mantra of 'involve, inform, investigate' helped them to remember the victim in the whole journey.

The most recent HMICFRS PEEL report highlighted the need for the Force to increase the number of crimes solved following investigations and the challenge of increasing OBTJs and improving outcomes has been embraced by the Force.

At a recent Police and Crime panel we talked through the AFI's from this PEEL assessment and the work that is taking place. Under Investigating Crime there were 3 AFI's and the work taking place is summarised as follows:

1. West Yorkshire Police doesn't consistently achieve appropriate outcomes for victims.

The Force has commenced Operation Review, this is an audit of volume crimes from when the call for services comes into the police to its' conclusion. The question set considers the initial response, investigation, victim support and wishes and vulnerability. The auditor then provides feedback to investigators and supervisors to ensure continual improvement.

2. West Yorkshire Police should make sure there is supervisory oversight of investigations, ensuring that all investigative opportunities are taken.

The Force has a better understanding of workloads across the Force with the introduction of a Power bi app which demonstrates this data at, individual, team and district level. On a four weekly basis Corporate Services identify the investigators with highest workloads to ensure targeted support for management by supervisors.

Operation Reset ran between January – February 2025, the purpose of the operation was to improve the service to victims ensuring supervisor reviews completed at 28 days, provide a robust approach to crime finalisation and proportionate investigations and identifying any missed opportunities for positive outcomes and OBTJs. During this operation 2320 investigations were reviewed and 8.79% resulted in a positive outcome.



Over the previous months there has been a significant focus in supervisory oversight of investigations which has seen improvements in compliance. In August compliance was around 26.1% and has seen increase to 56.7% as at January 2025.

3. West Yorkshire Police needs to make sure that the requirements of the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime are complied with.

When the Force were previously inspected there were 6,900 cases where the victim had not received an update for more than 42 days. The Force made the decision to move back to the previous regularity of contact at 28 days, significant improvements have been made and the figure reduced to 1699 victims of crime who have not received an update within 28 days.

Current compliance around victim needs assessment for crimes that are 7 days old is at 97.3%, for the 2.7% outstanding a digital worker will then send a reminder to the supervisor and officer.

Regarding this inspection report, at the most recent force HMICFRS Strategic Board a senior leader (Chief Inspector or above) was identified as the subject matter expert to lead operationally on achieving the requirements of each of the recommendations for Chief Constables. In addition, each recommendation has a chief officer lead to provide strategic oversight, ensure good governance and accountability of progress which will be reviewed at the relevant strategic boards chaired by the chief officer lead. Once the recommendation is considered achieved by the force a letter is prepared by the Deputy Chief Constable and sent to HMICFRS for consideration of closure.

We were pleased to see that there are some best practice examples from West Yorkshire in the report namely.

Case study 7: Regional CSI control room in West Yorkshire

Case study 11: Forensic marking in WYP

A member of my office attends the WYP HMICFRS Strategic Board and will keep me updated with the progress on this report and we will ensure that any learning is shared with the APCC.

Regards,

Alison Lowe,

Deputy Mayor of West Yorkshire for Policing and Crime



Our response to key recommendations in the inspection report

Recommendation 3:

By 31 December 2025, chief constables should make sure their force has an effective and efficient end-to-end process to deal with online reports of crime.

The process should remove all unnecessary delays in recording, assessing and allocating crime reports, and make sure the force consistently complies with its requirements under the [Code of Practice for Victims of Crime](#).

We have regular meetings with the Chief Constable and part of the discussion is to ensure that victims how report crimes online are dealt with effectively and efficiently. Our Policy Manager is working with the force to understand the requirements under the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime and ensures that this is consistently applied in all cases.

Operation Reset looked at all ways that a crime comes into the Police Force and ensures that all unnecessary delays are dealt with and the quarterly performance report that we receive from West Yorkshire Police shows all the different crime reporting mechanisms and the delays (or not) so that we can be assured that the force is doing all possible to remove these.

Recommendation 4

By 31 December 2025, chief constables should make sure the end-to-end process for receiving, assessing and allocating reports of crime in their force minimises delays in the investigation process and the length of time before investigators contact [victims](#).

The process for contacting victims was looked at in detail after our last PEEL inspection and the force undertook a piece of work to ensure that the length of time taken to contact and update victims was minimised. This has now taken place, and the force has improved on previous outcomes but as well they have committed to continue to make improvements in this area with performance being scrutinised via the reassurance board, weekly reporting to relevant senior leaders, via crime accountability meetings and Operation Review auditing VCOPs compliance.

Recommendation 5

By 31 December 2025, chief constables should design and operate a policy that results in their force allocating to investigators crimes that are commensurate with each investigator's level of training, accreditation, and experience.

Much of the work for this recommendation took place after the previous PEEL reports when a full review of Safeguarding took place to ensure that crimes were going into the right place for investigation. This saw an uplift in numbers into the Safeguarding units which ensured that these high harm crimes were being investigated by officers with the appropriate training and experience.



The Force is now including functional demand into the annual Force management statement. Recent changes mean that as the Public Protection Unit demand was increasing year-on-year an extra 17 officers went into districts to meet this demand. The Multi Agency Safeguarding Hubs saw an increase of five sergeants + 16 officers. Recruitment for the data warehouse team is ongoing which will prevent any blockages.

The Crime Allocation policy will also be changing. The Force now has a better performance management tool to appropriately manage workloads and are seeing a downward trend in workloads across the Force.

A passport for direct entry detective constables has been launched which provides a pathway to gaining the required skillset in becoming an accredited detective ensuring they have experience on patrol and all areas of crime investigation.

Recommendation 6

By 30 September 2025, chief constables should make sure their force has a clear policy relating to investigation plans. They should make sure their force communicates this policy to [officers](#) and [staff](#).

As a minimum, this policy should cover:

- **when to start an investigation plan.**
- **who is responsible for writing the investigation plan.**
- **what to consider including in an investigation plan.**
- **how supervisors should review and approve investigation plans; and**
- **how the force will monitor investigation plans to check their quality, and to make sure investigators and supervisors have followed them.**

The work after the previous PEEL inspection looked at the introduction of a Supervisors Allocation and Investigation Plan template which ensures that all requirements have been considered such as completing the Victim Needs Assessment (VNA), referral to Victim Support and other Services and Victim's Voice recorded.

Various iterations of investigation plans have been included on Niche to help officers, and this policy will help bring all the good work together and ensure a consistent process.

Recommendation 7

By 30 June 2025, chief constables should include in their investigation policies a direction stating that when an image exists, investigators should search it against the [Police National Database](#) and any other relevant databases before their force closes an investigation.

In West Yorkshire Police there are good links with the Police National Database and the Intelligence department champions its use across the force. Again, this will ensure a consistent process of something that will already happen.

Recommendation 9



By 31 December 2025, chief constables should make sure the first supervisory review of a crime investigation takes place early enough for the supervisor to be able to:

- review any actions taken, including those to assess and manage risk.
- make sure the investigator has put in place the appropriate support for [victims](#), and is complying with the [Code of Practice for Victims of Crime](#);
- set or approve an investigation plan.
- review the investigator's caseload; and
- set a date for a further review.

In the work that has taken place since the last PEEL inspection, many of these actions have been reviewed and acted upon. Parts of this recommendation are already part of previous work such as complying with the Code of Practice for Victims of crime or the review of the investigator's caseload, so any outstanding points can be subsumed into the previous work.

Recommendation 10

By 31 March 2026, chief constables should:

- make sure any member of [staff](#) who has a role in supporting the investigation process completes the [College of Policing](#) 'Introduction to investigation' learning programme;
- satisfy themselves that the content of their force's ongoing investigative training for responders is designed to develop their investigative skills and performance, and to improve outcomes for [victims](#), and that their force gives responders protected time to complete this training;
- make sure their force focuses sufficiently on case file preparation when providing [professionalising investigations programme level 1 training](#), while taking into account local procedures and case management systems;
- make sure their force gives [officers](#) and staff [continuing professional development](#) opportunities about preparing case files;
- make sure their force keeps accurate records of [professionalising investigations programme level 2 accredited officers and staff](#), and that those [officers and staff](#) complete annual continuing professional development to maintain their accreditation, which forces should also accurately record; and
- review the investigative training their force gives to supervisors, making sure it equips them to oversee and direct crime investigations effectively.

As a longer standing recommendation, these items will be worked on over the coming months and any updates brought by the respective senior officer to the HMICFRS strategic board. In our work with West Yorkshire Police we will ensure that this is reflected alongside other important work.

Recommendation 11



By 30 September 2025, chief constables should establish and implement a process to monitor the proportion of recorded crime that their force allocates for investigation. This should include a process to make sure a decision not to allocate a crime for investigation is appropriate.

West Yorkshire Police uses the E-Bit algorithm to establish whether a crime should go for further investigation. This process is regularly discussed at our governance meetings and any tweaks to the algorithm looked at and agreed by all parties present. We are assured that the force uses this appropriately and evaluates on a regular basis to ensure that all crimes are assessed in a proper way.

EBIT has been really successful in terms of increasing the OBTJ rates by around 3.1%. At the same time, its screened in less overall crime for secondary allegations. This has allowed the police to have more focus on investigative quality.

In our last governance meeting we were informed that WYP want to bring the E-Bit process upstream into call handling process so that the golden hour work is not lost in crimes where there are investigative opportunities. This could be a great innovation as it would concentrate work on those areas where there are investigative opportunities, so we wait to hear the results and evaluation from this work.