

UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL 00:01 ON THURSDAY 8 DECEMBER 2016



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PEEL: Police leadership 2016

An inspection of Leicestershire Police

Introduction

As part of our annual inspections of police effectiveness, efficiency, legitimacy and leadership (PEEL), Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) assesses the leadership of police forces across England and Wales.

Police leadership is crucial in enabling a force to be effective, efficient and legitimate.

The inspection is focused on how a force understands, develops and displays leadership through its organisational development and is based on the recent 'Guiding Principles' developed by the National Police Chiefs' Council, the College of Policing and HMIC.

Overview

Leicestershire Police has taken positive steps to set leadership expectations, and understand the skills and capabilities of its leaders. It should do more to ensure that the entire workforce, particularly at sergeant and inspector level, understands leadership expectations, and that it has a clear picture of the leadership skills of its workforce at all ranks and levels.

The force is performing well in the way that it develops its leaders, with a well-considered approach to leadership development. The force can demonstrate positive progress in enhancing its leadership skills and capabilities through its recruitment processes. Leicestershire Police is able to identify potential senior leaders within the workforce, although this is not done consistently at all ranks and grades.

The force displays effective leadership in the way it has created a positive working environment where staff are encouraged to innovate and challenge. We found that officers and staff felt valued and supported and the force is performing well in the extent to which it is developing diverse leadership teams.

How well does the force understand leadership?

A good understanding of leadership capabilities and expectations is critical to the effective functioning of police forces. How forces engage with their workforces when setting leadership expectations is vital in ensuring that police staff and officers feel enabled to lead in an ethical way and to challenge the expectations appropriately.

Forces' understanding should also extend to their leadership strengths and weaknesses across every rank and grade. This includes an understanding of the leadership styles and personality types of individuals, and how these affect wider team dynamics. Forces should be able to take this knowledge and use it to adapt and quickly identify any gaps or issues in leadership

Leicestershire Police has developed clear leadership expectations through close work with its officers and staff, aligned to the National Police Professional Framework and the [Code of Ethics](#). What the force expects of its leaders is set out in job descriptions and within the performance and development review system. The chief officer team actively promotes the force's leadership expectations, which are also reinforced during leadership training and team meetings. We found that the workforce believes there is scope to challenge its leaders' expectations; the force regularly seeks the views of its workforce about how the force is led.

The force has good leadership training in place; those who had attended leadership training courses recently had a good understanding of what the force expected from its leaders. The force should build on effective communication that takes place as part of leadership development courses to ensure that its leadership expectations are understood by the whole workforce, particularly at sergeant and inspector ranks.

The force has a good understanding of leadership at senior levels, and many leaders within the force have completed personality type assessments and 360-degree feedback. However, the force recognises that its audit of officers and staff skills is incomplete at more junior levels of the workforce, meaning it has a more limited understanding of leadership capabilities and gaps at those levels. However, the force is now developing its approach to ensure it has a more sophisticated appraisal of the skills of its workforce. The force will want to ensure that this achieves a more systematic and inclusive approach to assessing the leadership skills of its workforce at all ranks and levels.

How well does the force develop leadership?

The way in which a force identifies and develops leadership skills is crucial in making sure they perform well now and in the future. Forces should identify leadership development programmes, containing a broad range of approaches, beyond just formal training, to develop leadership.

Forces' knowledge of their current leadership capability should also mean that they are aware of the leadership skills and experience they do not currently possess, and are seeking to recruit to address these gaps.

Leicestershire Police is able to identify potential senior leaders within the workforce and has a well-considered and coherent approach to leadership development. It uses a range of approaches to improve the effectiveness of leadership across different workforce roles. The force encourages its senior leaders to attend the College of Policing [senior leadership training programme](#) and to develop their career through work-based assignments. The force also makes use of regional posts and secondments as development opportunities. We saw some good examples of mentoring schemes and, at the time of our inspection, the force was increasing the number of trained mentors. However, we found that not all leaders and managers were aware of the mentoring and development opportunities that were available, or how to access them.

The force is using external recruitment to bring talent into the organisation and has a superintendent who joined the force under the [Direct Entry scheme](#). The force also has officers on the [Fast Track](#) scheme and the [High Potential Development Scheme](#). However, some promotion processes for superintendent and chief superintendent ranks were only open to internal candidates.

We found evidence that, when the force identifies problems with its leaders, it takes prompt and effective action and identifies learning for leadership training in respect of ethical decision-making.

How well does the force display leadership?

Good leadership encourages and develops a wide range of people, embraces change and actively supports the development of new ideas. While it is important for forces to ensure that they are representative of the communities they serve, truly diverse leadership teams are built around the wider experience, background and skills of individuals.

Leicestershire Police welcomes and encourages new ideas from its workforce and has created a number of 'change ambassadors' drawn from all ranks and grades, to promote innovation and to lead change. The force also demonstrates a proactive approach to seeking out new ideas and working practices from other organisations, including other forces. The force has made good contributions to the College of Policing leadership review and to national best practice on stop and search procedures. Through its collaboration with other forces across the East Midlands, the force is able to learn and share successful ideas across the region.

The force is working with the University of Cambridge in developing the concept of the 'Cambridge Harm Index'. This uses data from the police and partner organisations to assess the harm resulting from criminality and anti-social behaviour in localities to inform decisions about how best to deploy resources. This is a sophisticated and innovative approach to understanding and tackling demand and demonstrates the force's willingness to introduce new ideas – in this case originating from academic research.

Leicestershire Police understands that diversity extends beyond [protected characteristics](#) and that diversity of background, experience and skills can strengthen teams. The force has identified its gaps in relation to diversity and can demonstrate how it is planning to improve its understanding. The Chief Constable chairs the force's fairness and equality board and each department has a fairness and equality group. The local policing directorate has a positive action delivery plan which is designed to improve success rates for groups who are under-represented in the promotion boards at the supervisory levels of constable to sergeant.

HMIC was told that the culture within the force has improved in recent years and that the chief officer team is perceived as responsible for creating an environment where all people feel valued and supported. The force conducts a quarterly 'moves meeting' for chief inspector and above, to help build balanced teams. Decisions at this meeting are informed by a range of factors including people's skills, emotional intelligence, gender, ethnicity and broader experiences.