

# PEEL 2023–25

## Police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy

An inspection of Dyfed-Powys Police

# Contents

<b>Overall summary</b>	<b>1</b>
Our judgments	1
PEEL 2023–2025	2
The operating context for Welsh forces	2
Terminology in this report	2
HM Inspector’s summary	2
Leadership	5
Reducing crime assessment	6
<b>Providing a service to victims of crime</b>	<b>7</b>
Victim service assessment	7
<b>Police powers and treating the public fairly and respectfully</b>	<b>9</b>
Areas for improvement	9
Main findings	10
<b>Preventing and deterring crime and antisocial behaviour, and reducing vulnerability</b>	<b>13</b>
Areas for improvement	13
Main findings	14
<b>Responding to the public</b>	<b>20</b>
Areas for improvement	20
Main findings	21
<b>Investigating crime</b>	<b>24</b>
Areas for improvement	24
Main findings	27
<b>Protecting vulnerable people</b>	<b>29</b>
Areas for improvement	29

Main findings	32
<b>Managing offenders and suspects</b>	<b>36</b>
Area for improvement	36
Main findings	37
<b>Disrupting serious organised crime</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Building, supporting and protecting the workforce</b>	<b>41</b>
Areas for improvement	41
Main findings	44
<b>Vetting and counter-corruption</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>Leadership and force management</b>	<b>50</b>
Areas for improvement	50
Promising practice	51
Main findings	52

# Overall summary

## Our judgments

Our inspection assessed how good Dyfed-Powys Police is in nine areas of policing. We make graded judgments in eight of these nine as follows:

Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires improvement	Inadequate
		Investigating crime	Protecting vulnerable people	
		Preventing crime	Developing a positive workplace	
		Police powers and public treatment		
		Responding to the public		
		Managing offenders		
		Leadership and force management		

We also inspected how effective a service Dyfed-Powys Police gives to victims of crime. We don't make a graded judgment in this overall area.

We set out our detailed findings about things the force is doing well and where the force should improve in the rest of this report.

### Data in this report

For more information, please [view this report on our website](#) and select the 'About the data' section.

## PEEL 2023–2025

In 2014, we introduced our police efficiency, effectiveness and legitimacy (PEEL) inspections, which assess the performance of all 43 police forces in England and Wales. Since then, we have been continuously adapting our approach.

We have moved to a more [intelligence](#)-led, continual assessment approach, rather than the annual [PEEL inspections](#) we used in previous years. Forces are assessed against the characteristics of good performance, set out in the [PEEL Assessment Framework 2023–2025](#), and we more clearly link our judgments to [causes of concern](#) and [areas for improvement](#).

It isn't possible to make direct comparisons between the grades awarded in this PEEL inspection and those from the previous cycle of PEEL inspections. This is because we have increased our focus on making sure forces are achieving appropriate outcomes for the public, and in some cases we have changed the aspects of policing we inspect.

### The operating context for Welsh forces

It is important to recognise that forces in Wales operate in a different context to those in England. Although policing and justice aren't devolved to Wales, essential services such as healthcare, accommodation, education and social services are. This means that Welsh police and justice activity take place in unique performance and legislative contexts. In Wales, devolved and non-devolved organisations work in partnership to give local people the best possible level of service. Sometimes this means forces in Wales need to comply with both English and Welsh regulatory requirements.

### Terminology in this report

Our reports contain references to, among other things, 'national' definitions, priorities, policies, systems, responsibilities and processes.

In some instances, 'national' means applying to England or Wales, or England and Wales. In others, it means applying to England, Wales and Scotland, or the whole of the United Kingdom.

### HM Inspector's summary

I am satisfied with most aspects of the performance of Dyfed-Powys Police in keeping people safe, reducing crime and providing [victims](#) with an effective service. But there are areas where the force needs to improve.

I recognise that Dyfed-Powys Police is the second highest funded force per head of population in England and Wales and records an average number of incidents for forces in Wales. The introduction of the [Niche](#) crime recording system has created a period of significant change for the force over recent months. The system has affected the timeliness of some activities as officers and staff have adapted to a new way of working. The force has achieved some impressive standards in the effective

investigation of crime, but there is still work to do to achieve appropriate outcomes for victims.

I have concerns about the way the force is risk assessing incidents related to [domestic abuse](#). The inspection team found a variety of serious offences had been inappropriately graded in a lower risk category. Failure to identify risk and provide appropriate safeguarding and support could leave [vulnerable people](#) at risk of further harm. The force has committed to making sure that all incidents related to domestic abuse have a secondary risk assessment by specialist staff. I will be closely monitoring progress in this area.

The force should make sure that it has an effective governance structure in place to protect vulnerable people. Governance arrangements lacked the focus and structure needed to understand the risk the force is managing and respond appropriately to concerns.

The force must make sure that it answers more [101](#) calls within the recommended time period and understand why calls are abandoned. Abandoned calls might result in the public not getting the service they deserve and may affect their confidence in Dyfed-Powys Police. The force also needs to continue to improve the time it takes to answer emergency calls.

We found that the force's efforts to improve performance was producing positive results. But we also found some officers and staff felt this created a competitive environment. This could lead to officers and staff focusing on specific performance measures instead of considering the most appropriate action to take. The force should make sure that everyone properly understands their performance framework.

Officers understand the importance of appropriate behaviours and communicating effectively with the public. The force encourages strong scrutiny and challenge of stop and search. But it needs to improve its external scrutiny arrangements for the use of force.

It was pleasing to see the force's approach to problem-solving. It is also good at tackling and preventing [antisocial behaviour](#). But Dyfed-Powys Police should improve the way it communicates with local people.

The force uses data effectively to understand its finances, which we identify as promising practice. This makes sure that the force understands the actual cost of its resources and the level of finance that is available. The practice is already being shared with other forces nationally.

However, it was disappointing to see that the force doesn't consistently address the welfare of its workforce. Officers and staff felt well supported by their immediate supervisors. But the force could do more to understand the demands placed on its officers and staff and provide appropriate well-being support.

I am pleased with the way the force has responded to my concerns and I will be monitoring progress closely.



**Wendy Williams**

HM Inspector of Constabulary

## Leadership

Using the [College of Policing leadership expectations](#) as a framework, in this section we set out the most important findings relating to the force's leadership at all levels.

The chief officer team at Dyfed-Powys Police has clear priorities, which are widely communicated throughout the force. The force has a strong performance culture. We found that leaders assessed the performance of their teams against outcomes and priorities.

However, elements of governance and planning processes in some essential areas of policing aren't yet effective. Not all leaders are taking responsibility for their plans. And leaders are sometimes making decisions that affect operational policing without the necessary scrutiny or oversight from the chief officer group.

Leaders understand and value diversity and its organisational benefits. They show a belief in inclusive leadership and instilling an inclusive and supportive force culture. Nearly all officers and staff we spoke to were proud to work for Dyfed-Powys Police and described a "family feel" to the force at local leadership levels. But we did find that not all officers believed that senior leaders fully understood their concerns and well-being needs. They didn't always feel that senior officers were visible and accessible.

Senior leaders appear committed to developing leadership at all levels. But in our inspection, we found that there wasn't enough support in place for supervisors entering leadership for the first time. This meant some officers lacked crucial skills to manage teams and performance effectively.

The force's senior leadership have challenges to deal with, such as recruiting and retaining officers and staff in some important areas in a competitive job market. They are also facing the challenge of an ageing fleet. The difficulties in these areas are felt across the force, which has an effect on morale and performance among officers and staff. But the force is in a healthy financial position and is redesigning its operating model to improve organisational performance.

More detail on Dyfed-Powys Police's leadership is included in the main body of the report.



## Reducing crime assessment

The reducing crime assessment sets out what Dyfed-Powys Police is doing to reduce crime and how effective this action is. This assessment doesn't include police-recorded crime figures. This is because they can be affected by variations and changes in recording policy and practice. This means it is difficult to make comparisons over time.

In order to provide the public with an effective service, Dyfed-Powys Police needs to make sure it answers emergency and non-emergency calls quickly enough and understand why calls might be abandoned. The force should make sure that a victim contract is completed where appropriate. It is important for the force to consult and consider the views of victims to help maintain their confidence in investigations.

The force has an effective approach to problem-solving. This helps to identify local problems and gather intelligence that helps to reduce crime. We also found that the force is effective at tackling and preventing antisocial behaviour. But Dyfed-Powys Police needs to improve how it communicates with local people.

The force understands and improves the way it uses [stop and search powers](#) through analysis and monitoring at force-level meetings. It can show that its use of stop and search is generally fair and effective. This helps to reduce crime. But the force should make sure that officers understand its strategic objective in increasing the use of stop and search.

The force has effective governance arrangements for investigative standards. This results in investigations that are well supervised and are carried out effectively. The force aims to improve outcomes for victims by pursuing all appropriate lines of enquiry. But more needs to be done to achieve appropriate outcomes for victims. This will help prevent further crime.

The force doesn't always explore or record the perspective of children in households where an incident of domestic abuse has happened. Failing to adequately explore and record the perspective of children may reduce the likelihood of the right support being put in place to protect children and prevent further crimes.

More detail on what Dyfed-Powys Police is doing to reduce crime is included in the main body of the report.

# Providing a service to victims of crime

## Victim service assessment

This section describes our assessment of the service Dyfed-Powys Police provides to victims. This is from the point of reporting a crime and throughout the investigation. As part of this assessment, we reviewed 100 case files.

When the police close a case of a reported crime, they assign it an 'outcome type'. This describes the reason for closing it.

We selected 100 cases to review, including at least 20 that the force had closed with the following outcome:

Formal action against the offender isn't in the public interest – police decision (outcome 10).

Although our victim service assessment is ungraded, it influences graded judgments in the other areas we have inspected.

### **The force needs to improve the time it takes to answer emergency and non-emergency calls, but it does triage calls effectively and identify repeat victims**

The force needs to improve the time it takes to answer emergency calls. It also needs to reduce the number of non-emergency calls that the caller abandons because the call isn't answered. When it answers calls, it considers threat, harm, risk and vulnerability. It identifies repeat victims, meaning that it is fully aware of the victim's circumstances when considering what response it should give. Call handlers are polite and give victims advice on how to preserve evidence.

### **In most cases, the force responds promptly to calls for service**

On most occasions, the force responds to calls for service appropriately and within set timescales. But the force doesn't always tell victims about delays, meaning that victims' expectations aren't always met. This may cause victims to lose confidence and disengage from the process.

## **The force carries out effective and timely investigations**

In most cases, the force carries out investigations in a timely way and completes relevant and proportionate lines of enquiry. The force supervises investigations well and regularly updates victims. But the force doesn't always complete victim contracts. Victims are more likely to have confidence in a police investigation when they get regular updates.

A thorough investigation increases the likelihood of identifying and arresting perpetrators, providing a positive outcome for the victim. In most cases, the force took victim personal statements. This gives victims the opportunity to describe how that crime has affected their lives.

The force doesn't always consider the opportunity to progress a case when the victim withdraws their support. This can be an important method of safeguarding the victim and preventing further offences from being committed. And the force doesn't always record whether it has considered using orders designed to protect victims, such as a [Domestic Violence Protection Notice](#) or [Order](#).

The [Code of Practice for Victims of Crime](#) requires forces to carry out a needs assessment at an early stage to determine whether victims need additional support. The force usually carries out this assessment and records the request for additional support.

## **The force considers victims' wishes and the offender's background and usually holds an auditable record of victims' wishes**

The force usually closes crimes with the appropriate outcome type and records a clear reason for using a certain outcome. The force usually seeks victims' views when deciding which outcome type to assign to a closed investigation. When needed, officers and staff obtained an auditable record of victims' wishes. The force informed victims of the outcome code assigned to the investigation.

# Police powers and treating the public fairly and respectfully

## Adequate

Dyfed-Powys Police is adequate at using police powers and treating people fairly and respectfully.

### Areas for improvement

#### **The force needs to improve its recording of reasonable grounds for stop and search and make sure officers understand the force's approach to improving performance**

During our inspection, we reviewed a sample of 187 stop and search records from 1 January to 31 December 2022. Based on this sample, we estimate that 79.7 percent (with a confidence interval of +/- 5.6 percent) of all stop and searches by the force during this period had reasonable grounds recorded. This is broadly unchanged from the findings in our previous review in 2020. In the year ending 31 December 2020, we found that 85.4 percent (with a confidence interval of +/- 4.2 percent) of stop and searches had reasonable grounds recorded. Of the records we reviewed for stop and searches on people from ethnic minority backgrounds, two out of six had reasonable grounds recorded.

The force makes sure it gives officers ample stop and search training and has improved its annual refresher course. It has increased its use of stop and search to target the misuse of drugs, which is a priority area for the force. The number of stop and searches has risen from 170 a month in 2021–22 to 900 a month at the time of our inspection.

The force gives officers performance targets relating to stop and search. Some officers told us they felt that this created too much pressure to increase the number of stop and searches they carry out. The force also displays statistics on the number and frequency of stop and searches on data dashboards. This can create competitiveness and can move the focus away from quality to volume alone.

The force should make sure that frontline officers understand its approach to improving the effectiveness of stop and search.

### **The force should develop an independent use of force external scrutiny panel**

The use of stop and search is subject to rigorous scrutiny both within the force and from an independent external panel. But the same level of scrutiny isn't applied to the use of force, and there is no regular review from an external panel.

Dyfed-Powys Police has plans to extend the terms of reference of the stop and search scrutiny group to also scrutinise use of force. It should introduce this promptly and make sure there is effective scrutiny of both sets of powers.

## **Main findings**

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to police powers and treating people fairly and respectfully.

### **The force understands why and how it must treat the public with fairness and respect**

Dyfed-Powys Police provides a range of training that includes effective communication skills. This includes [unconscious bias](#) awareness, which aims to make sure the force can recognise their own biases and improve their communication skills with the public. This training is also given to new recruits. We found the force had a good understanding of these subjects.

The force has a clear policy on how and when officers should use [body-worn video](#). The policy sets out examples of use of force, arrests and stop and search. It shows how body-worn video not only can be used to gather evidence but also provides increased transparency, which helps to maintain public trust and confidence in policing.

We also looked at body-worn video recordings of stop and searches that show how the officer interacted with the person searched. These recordings showed that most interactions are of a good standard. We also found that the force audits the use of body-worn video in incidents of stop and search and use of force. The force told us that there was over 90 percent compliance with the body-worn video policy in incidents of stop and search. It also told us that there was approximately 85 percent compliance with the policy in incidents of use of force. The force is working to increase these percentages.

However, some officers told us that they were unclear about which incidents they had to use body-worn video for. They were also unclear about whether body-worn video was mandatory during a stop and search. The force should make sure that all officers are aware of its body-worn video guidance.

### **The force learns from stop and searches and use of force incidents**

The force holds meetings on the ethical use of police powers. This meeting includes sharing a comprehensive set of data on the use of force and stop and search. Force representatives from each local policing area attend the ethical use of police powers meeting. This makes sure that learning is shared effectively and that action taken is consistent across the force.

We found some evidence of the force sharing lessons learnt from this internal scrutiny and from analysis of wider [organisational learning](#). This includes the force adjusting training given to officers based on findings made in the ethical use of police powers meeting. The force plans to increase the range of data it uses. This includes data to understand how different use of force tactics are used on people with a disability.

### **The force encourages strong external and independent scrutiny of stop and searches**

The force acts on the scrutiny and challenge it receives from an [independent advisory group](#) to improve officers' use of stop and search powers. The group has an independent chair and a diverse membership. Members have been given training sessions, for example on strip-search and the use of anti-rip suits, to help them confidently perform their role of scrutinising the force. And the force is making a conscious effort to recruit youth panel members for more diversity.

The force gives members of the group body-worn video records of stop and searches so they can review the quality of the reasonable grounds recorded. Feedback from the group is sometimes given to officers. But some officers told us that they hadn't had any feedback on their use of stop and search from their individual supervisor or any wider monitoring group. The force should consistently share feedback from external monitoring groups with officers.

## **The force has improved how it records the use of force**

During our last inspection, we found that officers didn't always complete a use of force form when needed. It is pleasing to see that the force is now complying with the [National Police Chiefs' Council](#) national recording requirements for categories of force used.

By looking at how many arrests happen, we can work out what the minimum number of recorded use of force incidents in a force area should be. Each arrest would usually count as a use of force (for example, due to the use of handcuffs). As such, the number of use of force incidents should be at least as high as the number of arrests. In the year ending 31 March 2022, Dyfed-Powys Police recorded 5,572 use of force incidents. Based on the number of arrests in the same period, we would have expected the force to record 6,077 use of force incidents. This suggests that the force might be slightly under-recording. The force should continue to make sure that all use of force incidents are accurately recorded.

# Preventing and deterring crime and antisocial behaviour, and reducing vulnerability

Adequate

Dyfed-Powys Police is adequate at prevention and deterrence.

## Areas for improvement

### **The force should increase the visibility and accessibility of neighbourhood policing teams and reduce the extent to which they are diverted to other duties**

Neighbourhood policing officers are responsible for problem-solving and getting local communities involved in crime prevention. These duties often need a continuous, longer-term approach instead of response policing (where uniformed officers answer calls). During our inspection, many neighbourhood officers told us they couldn't spend enough time carrying out visible patrols, engaging with the public or doing preventative and problem-solving work. This was because they were diverted to other duties, such as supporting response policing teams. Some officers said that this affected community confidence and had also left the officers feeling undervalued by the force.

The force sets a visibility target for neighbourhood teams to spend 75 percent of their time being visible within their local communities. This happens through duties such as patrols and activities involving local communities. The force told us that between January and April 2023, 1 of its 14 policing areas met the visibility targets. On average, [neighbourhood policing teams](#) spent 61 percent of their time as a visible presence within local communities. Locally, some officers we spoke to estimated that sometimes this figure could be as low as 10 percent, in their experience.



It is important for the force to maintain the effectiveness of its response teams. But regularly diverting neighbourhood officers and staff from their roles potentially affects the force's ability to reduce future offending through problem-solving and early intervention. The force should work to improve the visibility and accessibility of neighbourhood policing teams.

### **The force needs to improve the way it communicates with local people**

Getting communities involved effectively helps two-way communication between the force and the community it serves. This improves the force's understanding of the needs of the community. It also gives communities the ability to influence policing in their local area and to identify local priorities.

We found that a lack of resources in the force's corporate communications department meant it doesn't have a consistent approach to giving messages to the different communities in Dyfed-Powys. The lack of resources also meant that there isn't regular evaluation of the effect of the messages given. Evaluation would help the force to understand what approaches would work best within different communities.

Each local policing area is responsible for tailoring its policing response to local needs. But some neighbourhood officers told us they didn't understand all their local communities. The force should have police community support engagement officers in each local policing area. But three of the four areas have vacancies in these important positions.

The force has a messaging system known as Llais. Members of the public can sign up to the messaging system and get local messages from the police. We found that the system didn't work on a number of common devices and browsers. And the force's website doesn't have details of police-led community meetings or the contact details for local officers and teams.

The force should make sure it fully understands the needs of all its local communities and better understands the effect of its involvement with them.

## **Main findings**

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to prevention and deterrence.

### **The force is developing its neighbourhood policing response to bring greater consistency across its policing areas**

The force is divided into four community safety partnerships that each handle a different geographical area. The issues for each partnership vary, as each area has different populations, demographics and levels of crime and antisocial behaviour.

The force began remodelling the neighbourhood policing function during our inspection. It has created local prevention hubs within each of the four areas of the force. Each local hub will come under the direct supervision of a sergeant. It will have:

- an antisocial behaviour lead;
- a problem-solving and prevention lead;
- an engagement lead;
- a targeted activity lead; and
- a vulnerability lead.

These hubs are aligned to the central team and will promote more consistent practice across the four areas of the force. But they will also be able to offer tailored support to the local neighbourhood team based on their specific priorities and needs.

The local prevention hubs were set up in March 2023 and some still have vacancies. But they are beginning to support neighbourhood policing teams across the force, providing valuable oversight of activity and promoting consistency in their approach.

The force's commitment to increasing the consistency of its approach to neighbourhood policing is positive. This is supported by its neighbourhood policing strategy, which follows national neighbourhood policing guidelines. We found that officers across all areas understood the role of neighbourhood policing in protecting people and preventing crime through problem-solving and proactively getting involved with local communities.

### **The force understands and tackles antisocial behaviour**

The force has a central antisocial behaviour co-ordinator who oversees the force's problem-solving plans. The antisocial behaviour co-ordinator gives support and guidance to the four local policing areas, which all have a dedicated antisocial behaviour officer.

We found that neighbourhood officers use a variety of powers to try to prevent antisocial behaviour, including civil orders such as [Criminal Behaviour Orders](#).

We also found good examples of neighbourhood policing teams working in partnership with other agencies. One example of this was a problem-solving plan involving a vulnerable person with complex needs who was abusing substances and committing antisocial behaviour. To address the underlying factors contributing to the antisocial behaviour, officers worked closely with partners from:

- housing agencies;
- probation;
- adult social care; and
- drug and alcohol services.

By working closely with partner services, the force made sure that the individual received the support they needed, which helped it to prevent further antisocial behaviour.

The force has an internal website dedicated to problem-solving. The website has a lot of guidance for officers on how to apply a problem-solving approach to crime reduction, including an antisocial behaviour toolkit. The College of Policing has commented positively on the toolkit and mentions it on its antisocial behaviour website.

In the year ending 31 March 2021, the force recorded 15,900 antisocial behaviour incidents. In the year ending 31 March 2022, the force recorded 7,894 antisocial behaviour incidents. This shows that the number of antisocial behaviour incidents from the previous year was reduced by approximately 50 percent. The 7,894 antisocial behaviour incidents recorded in the year ending 31 March 2022 represented 15.3 antisocial behaviour incidents per 1,000 population. This was within the normal range compared to other forces.

### **The force is effective at identifying high-harm crime, supporting victims and reducing reoffending**

The force makes good use of data to understand serious acquisitive crime. This type of crime includes domestic burglary, personal robbery, theft from a person and theft of and from a motor vehicle. The force uses data to help target its resources. This helps the force to arrest offenders and achieve justice for victims. In the year ending 31 December 2022, Dyfed-Powys Police recorded 1,598 serious acquisitive crimes. Of these, 10.1 percent were assigned an 'offences brought to justice' outcome, such as a charge. This was the highest proportion across all forces in England and Wales.

The force holds monthly local police tasking meetings and community safety partnership meetings. These meetings focus on hotspot locations and individuals who are repeat victims. The meetings we saw clearly identified threat, harm and risk in communities. The meetings also made sure there was clarity on who would be given the task of reducing or preventing the threat, harm and risk. This included activities such as targeted early intervention work and identifying and patrolling hotspot areas.

We saw good use of data to support the outcomes of the monthly local police tasking meetings and community safety partnership meetings. But the force could improve its understanding of emerging issues. We found that most neighbourhood staff knew how to access information from force systems. But the introduction of a new IT system ([Niche](#)) had created temporary delays as officers and staff adjusted to new ways of working.

The force doesn't have locally based analysts to gather information about threats and risks for neighbourhood teams. The force analysts do this work, which increases demand on this limited resource. The force should make sure that officers and staff better understand how to use self-service tools, such as Niche. The force should make sure that officers and staff know how to use its new crime reporting system's data reporting tools to better understand local demand. The force should also make sure that it has enough analysts to help neighbourhood teams understand and act on local crime and disorder.

### **The force takes a preventative approach to a wide range of crimes**

The force takes a preventative approach to serious issues such as child sexual exploitation and [county lines](#) drug dealing. Specialist officers regularly discuss signs and dangers of these crimes with schools, as well as other crime prevention advice. This is part of the force's commitment to the SchoolBeat initiative across Wales. To support this initiative, the force has invested in specially trained school-based officers who provide schools, children and young people with up-to-date information about:

- the dangers of substance use and misuse;
- county lines;
- domestic abuse;
- exploitation;
- bullying;
- antisocial behaviour;
- internet safety;
- weapons;
- radicalisation; and
- community cohesion.

In the year ending 31 March 2023, the force told us that it was active in 318 schools across its area, reaching more than 83,000 children.

The force's INTACT team works with young people identified as being at risk of committing, or becoming a victim of, serious violent or organised crime. Over the last 2 years, the INTACT team has offered targeted interventions to more than 600 children, young people and vulnerable adults. This includes boxing clubs and other diversionary schemes.

The force has estimated that 72 percent of the people who took part in INTACT diversionary schemes had no further police contact for at least 3 months afterwards. In 2022, the INTACT team received a safeguarding practice award.

## The force has an effective approach to problem-solving

The force has a dedicated problem-solving co-ordinator based within its central prevention hub at its headquarters. This officer chairs a monthly partnership problem-solving meeting. At this meeting, officers, staff and partners from other agencies discuss plans in order to co-ordinate their activity to reduce crime and vulnerability across the force. Partners include housing representatives, substance misuse services and local authority leads, among others.

The force uses the [OSARA](#) approach to problem-solving. This approach has the following stages:

- objective
- scanning
- analysis
- review
- assess.

During our inspection, we found that the force used problem-solving plans that followed this recognised structure. The plans were thorough and detailed at each stage of the process. Examples of problems that benefited from this approach include:

- cannabis farms;
- jet ski use along Welsh waters;
- cockle picking along the Welsh coastline; and
- use of off-road motorcycles.

The problem-solving plans involved a wide range of other agencies, such as:

- the Forestry Commission;
- representatives from the fishing industry;
- county councils; and
- the Royal National Lifeboat Institution.

The force also had more traditional plans to reduce antisocial behaviour, shoplifting, begging, noise nuisance and other similar issues.

We also found that the problem-solving approach wasn't limited to neighbourhood policing teams. We found examples of problem-solving plans used to improve the force's approach to crime data integrity and to manage the force's response to incident deployment.

## **The force provides professional development for its neighbourhood policing teams and wider workforce**

The force provides [continuing professional development](#) for its neighbourhood officers, including training on antisocial behaviour, civil orders, crime prevention and problem-solving. Officers also complete a training package accredited across Wales alongside training given by the College of Policing. Most of the neighbourhood staff we spoke to were satisfied with the training they had and felt equipped to carry out their daily duties.

All new student officers receive a training session from the force problem-solving lead, so that they can learn to best use a problem-solving approach. As a result, it appears there has been a cultural shift. More units are now seeing the benefits of applying a problem-solving approach to other policing matters.

# Responding to the public

## Adequate

Dyfed-Powys Police is adequate at responding to the public.

### Areas for improvement

#### **The force needs to reduce the number of non-emergency calls that are abandoned by callers**

Forces in England and Wales with a switchboard should aim for fewer than 10 percent of 101 calls to be abandoned by callers. Callers who decide to hang up because of delays in answering their calls might not get the service they deserve.

Between May 2022 and April 2023, the force told us that 25.9 percent of non-emergency 101 calls to Dyfed-Powys Police were abandoned by callers. The force doesn't have a clear understanding of why callers hang up. It could be because of long waiting times or because they choose to use another contact option, such as contacting the force online.

The force needs to understand the reasons why calls are abandoned and make sure that more 101 calls are answered within the recommended time periods.

#### **The force should review the understanding of risk and demand within the control room and the effectiveness of the response to incidents**

We found that Dyfed-Powys Police doesn't always understand the types of demand from people contacting the force for help.

The force decides how to respond to incidents by applying a grade based on a [threat, harm, risk, investigation, vulnerability and engagement](#) risk assessment. This grade sets the timescale in which the force should attend the incident.

Incidents are graded according to four levels. Those graded as 'standard' or 'resolution without attendance' don't need immediate attendance. The force puts these incidents in a queue to be managed by local policing areas.

At the time of our inspection, we found that large volumes of incidents were still in queues, without clear ownership and management of the response. Many of these calls related to vulnerable people. We didn't find evidence that the force used threat, harm, risk, investigation, vulnerability and engagement (THRIVE) to reassess these incidents, despite the fact that circumstances might have changed. We didn't find evidence that the force contacted victims again after a certain amount of time to reassess the risk.

Not understanding the level of risk contained in each response grade increases the likelihood of evidence being lost. Victims may lose confidence in the policing response.

Immediately after our inspection, the force created a new daily management meeting that focuses on call volumes and the ownership of incidents in lower response grades. Following this intervention, the force reported a decrease in the number of incidents in unmonitored queues. The force must now make sure that it continues to monitor and better understand the demand it faces.

## Main findings

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to how well the force responds to the public.

### **The force needs to improve the time it takes to answer emergency calls**

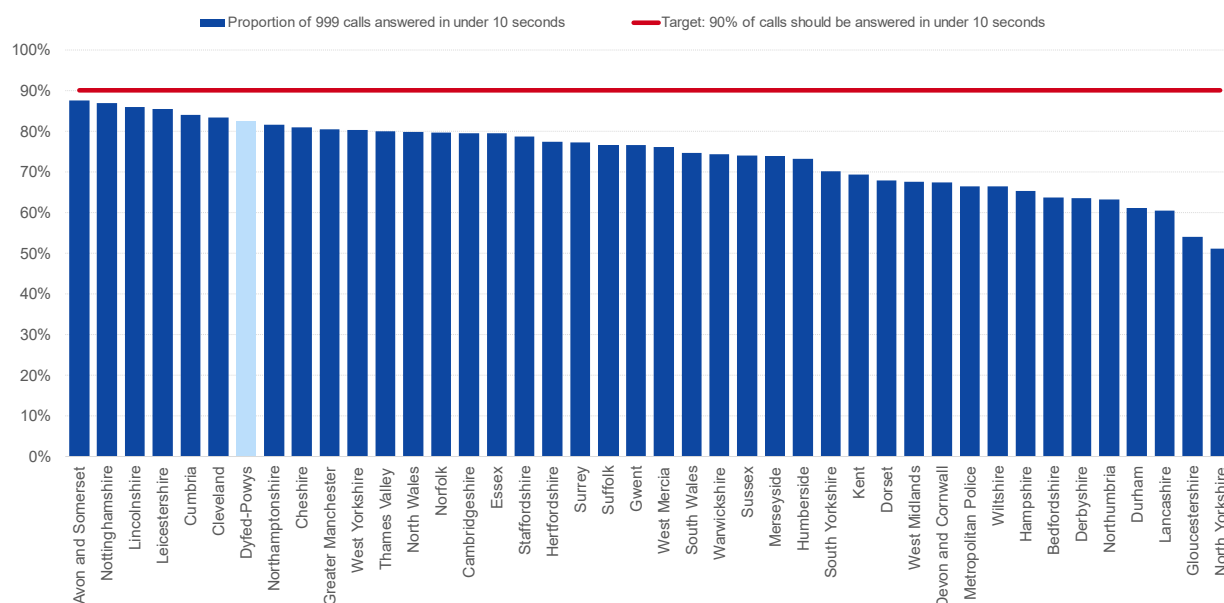
In the year ending 31 March 2023, Dyfed-Powys received 114,999 calls per 1,000 population. This was lower than expected compared to other forces in England and Wales.

On 31 May 2022, the Home Office published data on 999 call answering times. Call answering time is the time taken for a call to be transferred to a force, and the time taken for that force to answer it. In England and Wales, forces should aim to answer 90 percent of 999 calls within 10 seconds. We have used the Home Office data to assess how quickly forces answer 999 calls.

The data shows that Dyfed-Powys Police hasn't always been able to answer 999 calls promptly. In the year ending 31 March 2023, Dyfed-Powys Police answered 82.6 percent of its 999 calls within 10 seconds. This was below the expected standard of answering 90 percent within 10 seconds. If calls for service aren't answered promptly, police officers may not be dispatched to protect victims quickly enough. Failure to answer calls promptly can also lead to losing both public confidence and investigative opportunities.



**Figure 1: Proportion of 999 calls answered within 10 seconds by forces in England and Wales in the year ending 31 March 2023**



### The force can identify and understand risk at first contact

The call handlers in the [force control room](#) prioritise calls effectively and use a structured approach to assess [threat, harm, risk, investigation, vulnerability and engagement \(THRIVE\)](#). In our victim service assessment, we found this to be the case in 62 of the 63 cases we reviewed. The first prioritisation of a call was correct in all 78 cases we reviewed. We also found that there was effective supervision of calls within the force control room in all 21 cases reviewed. And call handlers were polite and professional in all 74 cases we reviewed. These outcomes compare favourably with other reviews of victim service assessments carried out in other forces.

### The force plans and manages its day-to-day response to calls for service

The force uses data about the number of incidents referred by members of the public to plan for enough response officers to be on duty each day. The force also uses this data to plan for peak demand periods, such as annual festive events and seasonal holidays.

We found that this planning had produced positive results. The force’s attendance at incidents was within the required attendance time in 50 of 54 cases we reviewed.

The force also tracks attendance times by area in local performance meetings. We found that not all areas routinely meet their target attendance times. Some teams told us that they didn’t have enough officers available or they didn’t have access to suitably equipped vehicles, which contributed to delays.

The force should continue to monitor these concerns and make sure that its response teams have enough officers on duty and access to suitable vehicles.

### **Force control room staff and supervisors offer real-time advice to its first responders to make sure evidence is gathered early at scenes**

During our inspection, we found that staff and supervisors within the control room actively monitor radio transmissions from officers attending crimes. The staff and supervisors in the control room give written advice in the incident log that attending officers can view. This includes making sure that call handlers identify opportunities to secure forensic evidence as early as possible. This also means that attending officers know what action to consider when they attend incidents or crime scenes so that evidence is gathered as early and effectively as possible.

During our victim service assessment, we found that call handlers gave correct advice on preserving evidence in 29 of the 32 cases we reviewed. Call handlers offered appropriate crime prevention advice to victims of crime in 32 out of 38 cases.

### **The force has effective governance and training within the control room**

The force control room has an effective and engaged leadership team. We found that supervisors were empowered to improve performance and inform decision-making. This was supported by supervisor training, which includes a coaching and mentoring opportunity offered through the [Chartered Management Institute](#).

The force has a full training programme for all its call handlers and is developing a training pathway for staff to achieve a qualification and credit framework in contact management and incident contact handling. This will be provided in partnership with Gower College, Swansea.

### **The force uses technology to help reporting and initial investigation of crime and incidents**

The force has a 24-hour 'digital desk'. Staff assigned to the desk respond to members of the public who contact the force using [Single Online Home](#), Twitter, Facebook and emails in Welsh and English. The information obtained from these responses is used to create crime and incident reports and decide the most appropriate response. The force is training all call handling staff to work on the digital desk. This will further improve the force's ability to respond to incidents promptly and effectively.

# Investigating crime

Adequate

Dyfed-Powys Police is adequate at investigating crime.

## Areas for improvement

**Dyfed-Powys Police doesn't consistently achieve appropriate outcomes for victims**

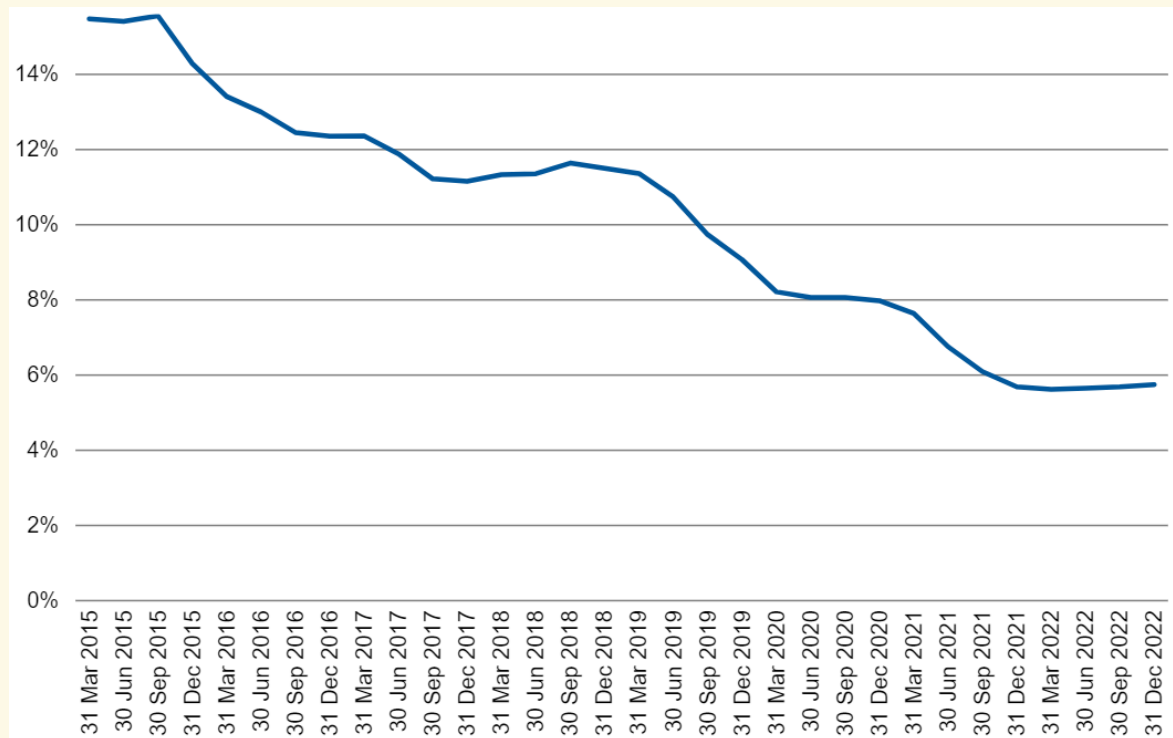
The force isn't always achieving acceptable outcomes for victims of crime. The number of crimes that are solved following investigations is low. The force needs to understand the issue and work to achieve better outcomes for victims.

**Table 1: Proportion of victim-based crimes assigned specified crime outcomes by Dyfed-Powys Police compared to forces in England and Wales in the year ending 31 December 2022**

<b>Outcome types</b>	<b>Dyfed-Powys rate</b>	<b>England and Wales rate</b>
1: Charged/summonsed	5.7%	4.6%
2 and 3: Caution – youths and caution – adults	1.4%	0.7%
8: Community resolutions	1.9%	1.4%
9: Not in the public interest (Crown Prosecution Service)	0.0%	0.0%
10 and 21: Prosecution not in the public interest (police decision)	1.9%	0.8%
14: Evidential difficulties (suspect not identified; victim doesn't support further action)	4.5%	5.6%
15: Evidential difficulties (suspect identified; victim supports action)	20.1%	11.7%
16: Evidential difficulties (suspect identified; victim doesn't support further action)	32.2%	21.9%
17: Prosecution time limit expired	0.7%	0.3%
18: Investigation complete – no suspect identified	23.3%	40.9%
20: Action taken by another body	1.7%	1.4%
22: Diversionary, education or intervention activity	0.6%	0.4%

**Note: England and Wales; excludes City of London data**

**Figure 2: Proportion of victim-based crimes assigned outcome 1 (charged/summonsed) by Dyfed-Powys Police between the year ending 31 March 2015 and the year ending 31 December 2022**



The force also had the highest proportion among forces in England and Wales of victim-based crimes assigned the outcome ‘victim not supporting further action’ after a suspect was identified. In the year ending 31 December 2022, the proportion of victim-based crimes assigned outcome 16 (evidential difficulties: suspect identified; victim doesn’t support further action) by Dyfed-Powys Police was 32.2 percent.

We found a lack of any consistent process where the force could show that it routinely audits disposal outcomes. This means leaders can’t be confident that:

- they understand what contributes to these outcomes;
- whether the outcomes are appropriate; and
- what improvements might be needed to provide justice for victims.

### **The force should make sure that a victim contract is completed where appropriate**

The [Code of Practice for Victims of Crime](#) outlines the minimum standards for victims of crime. This includes the requirement that police officers and staff should make sure victims are updated about important decision points in the investigation. It is important to consult and consider the views of victims to help keep their confidence in investigations.

The commitment to giving these updates at a regular frequency agreed with the victim is often referred to as the 'victim contract'. We found that 53 of 72 victim contracts were completed in the cases we reviewed. This means that some victims weren't promptly given information about the investigation and prosecution.

## **Main findings**

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to how well the force investigates crime.

### **The force carries out thorough and effective investigations on behalf of the public**

Our victim service assessment found that the force carried out effective investigations in 95 of the 100 cases we reviewed. Investigations were concluded after all reasonable opportunities to gather evidence were taken in 95 of the 100 cases we reviewed. And the force gave crime reports to appropriately skilled investigators in all 100 cases we reviewed.

This means that victims received an appropriate level of service in most cases we reviewed. We also found that there was evidence of an appropriate investigation plan in 54 of the 57 cases we reviewed. And in 27 of the 28 relevant cases we reviewed, arrests were made in an appropriate time frame.

As such, the public can be reassured that Dyfed-Powys Police carries out thorough and effective investigations on its behalf.

### **The force has significant delays within its digital forensic team**

Despite the effectiveness of the force's investigations, we found that the force has challenges in promptly examining digital devices, such as phones and computers. These devices often hold significant evidence and any delays to accessing this evidence can delay justice for victims.

The digital forensic unit is responsible for extracting evidence from digital devices. The force told us that in July 2020, the unit had 125 devices waiting for examination. At the time of our inspection, the backlog had risen to more than 350 devices waiting

for examination. The average waiting time was five months from when investigators submitted a device to when they received the download of evidence from it. This is clearly having an effect on the timeliness of investigations. The force is aware of the backlogs and has recently recruited more digital media investigators into the department. We found encouraging evidence that the force is starting to reduce the backlogs.

### **The force achieves positive results for victims by pursuing evidence-led prosecutions**

During our victim service assessment, we found evidence that the force considered evidence-led prosecutions where suitable, particularly in [domestic abuse cases](#). In 2020, the force had eight evidence-led charges go to court. This increased to 48 in 2022. Of these 48 charges, 30 resulted in successful prosecutions. During our inspection, we found that both investigative staff and uniformed officers spoke positively of their experience of evidence-led prosecutions. And the force's success in this area shows an ongoing focus on evidence-led prosecutions and how they might best be pursued. We saw this focus during daily management meetings.

### **The force makes sure there is effective supervision of investigations**

In 89 of the 91 investigations we reviewed, investigators were given appropriate and effective supervision, including direction and advice. This included supervisors creating investigation plans shortly after they allocated crimes to an investigator. This gave guidance to investigators and made sure they carried out the right enquiries.

But some supervisors told us they didn't have the capacity to consistently supervise investigations in their teams. This was partly because a new crime recording system called Niche had been implemented. Within some local policing areas, officers also told us that supervisors weren't reviewing workloads as often as they should. The force should make sure that the positive findings from our victim service assessment are consistent across the force.

### **The force should make sure that all investigators feel able to manage their workloads**

Most of the officers and staff we spoke to told us that their supervisors were supportive. They said supervisors took their welfare seriously and regularly reviewed workload commitments. Many officers and staff told us that workloads were appropriate and manageable. But some officers in specialist roles have higher numbers of cases. This is a particular issue for the local investigation units and the [joint investigation](#) teams. While these officers felt supported by their supervisors, some told us that their workloads were unmanageable. Some officers told us that this was affecting their well-being and the amount of time they could give to each investigation. We found that investigators are committed to supporting victims. But we also found that some teams felt their workloads had exceeded their capacity to investigate their current caseload effectively.

# Protecting vulnerable people

Requires  
improvement

Dyfed-Powys Police requires improvement at protecting vulnerable people.

## Areas for improvement

### **The force must make sure that all incidents related to domestic abuse are risk assessed appropriately**

The force has a domestic abuse policy which states that all incidents related to domestic abuse should be assessed by specialist staff following an initial risk assessment by an attending police officer. At the time of our inspection, specialist officers in the secondary risk assessment unit reviewed medium and high-risk incidents. The decision not to review standard-risk cases was made due to the high demand within the secondary risk assessment unit. Standard-risk incidents are analysed by computer software to find out if they have previously been a [multi-agency risk assessment conference \(MARAC\)](#) high-risk case or if there is evidence of an increasing or escalating risk.

If the system finds that the people involved in the incident have previously been discussed at a MARAC, it refers the case to specialist staff for further review. If the system finds that the people involved have been in three incidents in the last 12 months, it will also refer the case on to specialist staff. This system's software relies on the quality of information recorded on the system.

During our inspection, we identified more than 3,000 incidents that the software had identified as not meeting the criteria for further review. We reviewed 230 of these incidents in greater detail and found several cases with incorrect levels of risk applied.



Our inspection found serious assaults, threats to kill, incidents of non-fatal strangulation and rape, and an incident where a woman had been threatened with a lit blowtorch. The system had graded these incidents as standard risk. We reviewed one domestic-abuse-related rape case where the former partner (an offender) was continuing to sexually abuse and stalk the victim. The risk level wasn't raised by the detective constable, detective sergeant or the inspector who reviewed the case. This left the vulnerable victim exposed to continued harm.

Failure to identify risk and provide appropriate safeguarding and support could leave [vulnerable people](#) at risk of further serious harm. And the failure to upgrade cases from standard risk means that the opportunities to escalate actions applicable to cases graded medium risk or high risk are missed. Examples of these missed actions include referrals to partners to provide specialist support or consideration at a MARAC.

These incidents were brought to the attention of the chief officer team. The force has committed to make sure that all domestic-abuse-related incidents now have a secondary risk assessment by specialist staff.

The force must make sure this commitment to secondary risk assessment in all cases of incidents of domestic abuse is effective and understood by everyone.

### **The force should make sure that all officers, especially those in specialist roles, have appropriate training to carry out their responsibilities**

[Safeguarding](#) vulnerable people of any age can be complex. It is important that staff responsible for this in any role have the skills, training and ability to provide a high-quality safeguarding response. Staff must be able correctly identify and reduce risk and provide appropriate support and safeguarding.

We found that safeguarding and vulnerability training for frontline staff and their supervisors could be inconsistent. In 2022, the force gave mandatory vulnerability training to frontline staff and criminal investigation department officers. But some supervisors hadn't been given any training in vulnerability and risk assessment. The force told us that there were 64 response sergeants in a supervisory role. But the force recorded that 34 had received Domestic Abuse Matters training.

Each local policing area has specialist domestic abuse officers. These officers have an important role in:

- giving advice and guidance on domestic abuse matters to colleagues who respond to or investigate domestic abuse;
- quality assuring incidents related to domestic abuse;
- making sure the correct risk levels are applied; and
- making sure that appropriate safeguarding is offered.

But not all domestic abuse officers we spoke to had received specialist domestic abuse training, despite being in post for some time.

The central referral unit is made up of teams who triage and assess child protection and vulnerable adult incidents as well as incidents of domestic abuse. Some of the officers working in the unit hadn't received specialist training in child or adult protection. We also found that members of the unit teams didn't always fully understand each other's roles. This was despite there being numerous incidents where the areas of domestic abuse and adult or child protection would clearly overlap.

The force has now developed a comprehensive training plan. But the force must make sure this leads to improved safeguarding skills for all staff and officers involved in this important aspect of policing.

### **The force should improve its governance, performance monitoring and auditing of vulnerability to effectively protect vulnerable people**

The force has a vulnerability strategy. But we found that its governance arrangements for protecting vulnerable people didn't have enough focus or structure to understand the risk the force is managing and respond appropriately to concerns for vulnerable people.

We looked closely at force action plans on aspects of vulnerability, such as child protection, and found that most lacked detail or timely updates. For example, the force's child protection action plan had 22 actions listed. But the force had updates recorded for only two of these actions. We found similar results in the vulnerable adult and child sexual exploitation action plans. While these aspects of vulnerability are assigned to specific lead officers, we found that one lead was responsible for ten strands of the vulnerability action plan alone.

The force has comprehensive performance data that helps leaders to:

- understand arrest rates at incidents related to domestic abuse;
- understand if [body-worn video](#) has been activated; and
- carry out some limited auditing of incidents related to domestic abuse where a crime was recorded.

But the force doesn't have an active auditing process in place to monitor risk grading or the quality of information in referrals to partner organisations, such as adult and children's social care services. The force also lacks an active auditing process for decisions made when it refers cases to partners to safeguard vulnerable people.

This limited understanding could obscure important areas of development. When frontline officers attend an incident related to domestic abuse, an established method of understanding risk is to complete a [Domestic Abuse, Stalking, Harassment](#) and Honour-Based Violence risk assessment. We reviewed 239 incidents related to domestic abuse and found that 108 were recorded as the victim having not wanted to complete this risk assessment. This means that officers may not have accurately identified and recorded the actual risk level in these cases. And this means there wasn't a specialist secondary review for consideration of referral to social care partners or specialist victim support. The force was unaware of the volume of refused risk assessments recorded by officers. This means victims may not get the intervention they need, which could further increase the risk.

The force has started to address these issues but must make sure that the governance and management of vulnerability is prompt and effective.

## Main findings

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to how well the force protects vulnerable people.

### **The force has improved how it uses available powers to protect vulnerable people**

The force understands its use of powers to protect people, particularly those at risk of domestic abuse.

The [Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme](#), also known as Clare's Law, gives a victim the 'right to ask'. This means a victim can ask the police if their partner might pose a risk to them based on their partner's previous history of domestic abuse or violence. The police have 'a right to know' option in specific circumstances, which allows them to proactively share information with individuals about their partner's previous history

of abuse or violence. As such, the person can consider what risk a potential partner may pose.

At daily management meetings in local policing areas, the force considers and prioritises applications for disclosures according to the 'right to ask' and 'right to know' criteria. Specialist officers consider and prioritise applications again during daily partnership discussion meetings.

In the year ending 30 September 2022, Dyfed-Powys Police made 217 'right to know' applications, which equated to 4.2 applications per 10,000 population. This was higher than the average across all forces in England and Wales of 3.5 applications per 10,000 population.

Where the police believe that a person may be at continuing risk of domestic abuse, they can apply to the courts to have a [Domestic Violence Protection Order](#) made against the offender.

In the year ending 30 September 2022, Dyfed-Powys Police made Domestic Violence Protection Order applications in 18.3 per 1,000 recorded crimes related to domestic abuse. This was higher than the average across forces in England and Wales of 12 applications per 1,000 population.

In the year ending 30 September 2022, Dyfed-Powys Police also recorded 44 Domestic Violence Protection Order breaches, equating to 8.5 breaches per 100,000 population. This was higher than expected when compared to other forces in England and Wales.

### **The force contributes to the effectiveness of multi-agency daily discussion meetings**

The force works effectively with other agencies, such as adult and children's social care and housing and health services, to address vulnerability. As they don't all work in the same building, they hold virtual meetings to discuss high-risk cases related to domestic abuse. The virtual meetings are usually held three days a week, although one area has increased this to four times a week to meet the current demand. This is a considerable resourcing commitment for the police and partner agencies. Officers and staff work together effectively and circulate information in a prompt way to support safeguarding. There is a broad representation of partners at each meeting, although there is some variance in the representatives from the local authority area.

The force generally assesses referrals from officers that are categorised as high risk within 24 hours. We found good examples of working in partnership to safeguard the victims identified at these meetings. The force and partner agencies share information in a prompt way. The meetings review the incident and history of the victim. During one meeting, we saw that the agencies present, which included social services, health care and housing services, had already been in contact with victims and gathered information. Where appropriate, they had contacted schools to arrange

pastoral care for those children in households affected by incidents of domestic abuse. This is positive as it means that safety planning for victims can be arranged quickly and there is multi-agency decision-making about how to respond to risk.

After each case discussion, police and partner agencies at the meeting then consider if the case is high risk and needs further support. If so, they will make a referral to the [multi-agency risk assessment conference \(MARAC\)](#) held in each local policing area.

### **The force contributes to MARACs that are mostly effective**

MARACs are well established within the force. They are held every two weeks in each of the four local authority areas. MARACs hear cases that the force and partner agencies have already considered in a daily discussion meeting. At the MARACs we went to, we found good attendance and participation from statutory and non-statutory agencies including:

- social services;
- children's services;
- housing and health organisations; and
- independent advisers on domestic and sexual violence (IDVAs and [ISVAs](#)).

We saw active information sharing and activities carried out to support the safeguarding of victims and families.

During our inspection, we observed five MARACs, which were all chaired by an inspector or sergeant with subject matter knowledge. Some of the MARACs didn't set timescales or track actions arising out of the daily discussion or previous MARAC meeting. As such, it was unclear whether safeguarding actions had been completed. If they hadn't, this may have left individuals without the right support and with no method of holding the agencies to account.

We also found that the force might be repeating effort within MARAC processes. We observed the daily meetings that take place before and between MARACs. We found that information was shared effectively and actions were set. But this process sometimes occurred again at the full MARAC. Often, partner agencies joining the daily discussion would be the same partners taking part in the full MARAC. As such, they might hear and share the same information. The force may wish to think about whether both processes are needed. It could consider slight changes to the daily discussion that could avoid the need for a MARAC.

## **Attending officers don't always explore or record the perspective of children in households where an incident of domestic abuse has occurred**

During our inspection we received feedback from specialist teams that the quality of [Domestic Abuse, Stalking, Harassment and Honour-Based Violence](#) risk assessment forms and child protection or vulnerable person referrals submitted by response officers could be variable. We were told that some officers appeared reluctant to speak to children. We reviewed some examples and found that some were of a good standard. But often the [voice of the child](#) was missing or incomplete. Failing to properly explore and record the perspective of children may reduce the likelihood of the force putting the right support in place to protect children in these situations.

We are reassured that, following feedback, the force has now put in place a process in its daily governance meeting to make sure that children's details are checked and quality assured. These checks also include quality assuring the voice of the child. The force includes this process in its performance framework.

When the force identifies a child as living in a household where an incident related to domestic abuse has happened, we found that an automatic referral to the child's school is made following [Operation Encompass](#) protocols. This tells the school that their pupil is a member of a household where domestic abuse has taken place. This helps the school to take action to support the child.

# Managing offenders and suspects

## Adequate

Dyfed-Powys Police is adequate at managing offenders and suspects.

### Area for improvement

#### **The force should make sure it completes risk assessments of registered sex offenders promptly and in line with national best practice**

The force should make sure that the monitoring and risk assessment of registered sex offenders is completed in their home environment and visits aren't organised in advance. This helps to inform an accurate picture of the risk posed by the individual, and is in line with [authorised professional practice](#) from the [College of Policing](#).

If visits to registered sex offenders are announced beforehand and aren't carried out in their homes, the force may miss opportunities to observe signs of offending behaviour. The force may also miss opportunities to observe the presence of unauthorised material or devices.

We reviewed ten records of registered sex offender visits carried out by the force. In seven of these, we found that visits were pre-arranged and took place with the offender visiting police premises, rather than officers attending the offender's home.

In one example, we found that the force assessed a very high-risk offender as needing monthly home visits to best understand any ongoing risk the person might pose. Due to caseloads within the unit, this home visit was delayed by two months. As an alternative, the offender manager made an appointment with the registered sex offender to see them in the police station. After the meeting, the offender manager then delayed the next home visit for another three months. This meant that an unannounced home visit to the registered sex offender didn't take place when it should have.



The force must make sure the management of registered sex offenders is in line with authorised professional practice and is intrusive enough to properly identify risk.

## Main findings

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to how well the force manages offenders and suspects.

### **The force effectively pursues offenders and manages outstanding suspects**

The force effectively oversees the apprehension of suspects and wanted persons. This area has improved since our [last inspection](#). Chief officers scrutinise activity relating to high-risk outstanding offenders at the force daily management meeting. Each local policing superintendent is held to account for giving an update on progress of the arrest during the meeting. During these meetings, the force discusses offenders who haven't yet been arrested and puts in place appropriate interventions and actions. Offenders that other departments need help in finding and arresting are also discussed at the daily management meeting.

We also observed the management of outstanding suspects and offenders at a more local level. Neighbourhood and specialist teams are given the task of finding offenders who prove more difficult to apprehend. Nearly all officers we spoke to were positive about the way the force targets offenders. The force gives certain types of offenders specific attention. For example, Op Manatee is the process for apprehending domestic abuse suspects and Op Wolf relates to other serious crime suspects.

### **The force has assurance measures for released under investigation decisions, the use of pre-charge bail and voluntary attendance**

We found that the force uses [released under investigation \(RUI\)](#), [voluntary attendance](#) and pre-charge [bail](#) appropriately and effectively.

The criminal justice department oversees the bail management process appropriately. A centrally managed custody system lets officers know when bail dates are approaching. This helps them carry out investigations as quickly as possible and safeguard victims. It also means there is less risk of the bail dates passing without further action being taken.

The force is good at identifying safeguarding opportunities with the imposition of bail conditions. Bail was well understood in the force, as well as why it is used to safeguard the victim's wishes and for other public protection concerns. The force carries out a THRIVE assessment if a suspect is released and not bailed or if the suspect is released from bail onto RUI. The victim is kept informed of the disposal outcomes and supervisors have oversight of the use of bail and RUI.



Officers we spoke to understood the processes around bail, RUI and voluntary attendance. They also understood the central importance of victims to the processes. The force makes good use of its IT systems to manage bail and RUI cases. The force will be adding data on bail and RUI to existing data dashboards that officers can use.

### **The force makes sure teams that manage potentially dangerous offenders are appropriately trained, but not all staff feel confident using specialist equipment**

The force makes effective use of a wide range of digital equipment to support the monitoring of potentially dangerous offenders. The force uses an application called eSafe to monitor internet use by registered sex offenders, which is often installed as part of conditions within a [sexual harm prevention order](#). But we found that although the force has 200 eSafe licences, less than 100 were in use. The force could improve how it allocates and uses these licences to maximise intelligence gathering and investigative opportunities.

Some officers also told us that, despite receiving practical training, they felt less confident with other specialist digital equipment because it wasn't user friendly. The force should consider whether the use of this equipment should be monitored and what might be done to encourage its wider use.

### **The force has improved the quality of risk management plans used to manage dangerous offenders**

The force uses the [active risk management system \(ARMS\)](#) to manage the risk posed by dangerous offenders. The content and quality of the risk management plans has improved since our last inspection. The force complies with [multi-agency public protection arrangements](#) guidance for completing ARMS.

All staff we spoke to were aware of the authorised professional practice guidance and attempted to make sure they completed ARMS within the required time periods. Staff felt they were able to keep up with the 12 monthly reviews but weren't always able to complete ARMs within the 15 days of changes in any lead agency.

Despite this, we found that backlogs in risk assessments and visits were relatively small. One issue was that the force couldn't easily find information on oldest outstanding visit to a registered sex offender. This information helps the force to understand the level of risk in offender management teams and the extent of the demands placed on them. The force should make sure that this level of detail is known to senior leaders.

## **The force has a positive approach to investigating indecent images of children**

We inspected Dyfed-Powys Police during one of our recent thematic inspections, [\*An inspection of how well the police and National Crime Agency tackle the online sexual abuse and exploitation of children\*](#). In our inspection, we considered how well forces tackle the online sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children. We found that Dyfed-Powys Police employs an analyst to review webchat information taken from suspects' computers. This helps identify other potential offenders and children at risk. The force immediately investigates the most concerning cases, which has led to numerous children at risk being identified and safeguarded.

## **The force's paedophile online investigation team identifies and takes action against offenders accessing indecent images of children**

We found that the force takes prompt and effective action against offenders who access indecent images of children, in line with [Kent internet risk assessment tool](#) time periods. All officers and staff were appropriately trained in this risk assessment model and risk assessments were of sufficient quality. The level of risk identified determines how promptly the force should carry out enforcement action. Actions include applying for and executing a warrant to arrest the suspect and seize devices suspected of being used to access indecent images of children. We found that the force dealt with high-risk and medium-risk cases quickly. Sometimes, low-risk cases went beyond the specified time limit, but this wasn't routine. Backlogs and delays were relatively small.

Warrants are executed alongside the [digital forensics](#) unit (DFU). The DFU is responsible for examining devices. Where possible, the DFU will also provide a local criminal investigation department officer who will become the officer for the case. The [paedophile online investigation team](#) gives seized devices to the DFU for examination. The local criminal investigation department officer in the case is then responsible for onward case progression. The DFU has a specially adapted van that has digital equipment to triage devices used at a specific address.

We also found the force was effective in sharing concerns with partners such as children's social care. Where a child is identified as being connected to an offender accessing indecent images of children, a referral to children's social care is made in sufficient time for a strategy discussion to take place before the execution of the warrant. The children's social care service can then attend the discussion to support the completion of a warrant.

We found that some investigators within the criminal investigation department reported high workloads due to the additional paedophile online investigation team cases they received. We also found that the understanding of the welfare of suspects post-arrest was subjective. We found that this understanding was dependent on the skills and knowledge of the officer in the case allocated within the local criminal investigation department.

# Disrupting serious organised crime

We now inspect [serious and organised crime \(SOC\)](#) on a regional basis, rather than inspecting each force individually in this area. This is so we can be more effective and efficient in how we inspect the whole SOC system, as set out in HM Government's SOC strategy.

Each force works with [regional organised crime units \(ROCUs\)](#) to tackle SOC. These units lead the regional response to SOC by providing access to specialist resources and assets to disrupt [organised crime groups](#) that pose the highest harm.

Through our SOC inspections, we seek to understand how well forces and ROCUs work in partnership. As a result, we now inspect ROCUs and their forces together and report on regional performance. Forces and ROCUs are now graded and reported on in regional SOC reports.

Our SOC inspection of Dyfed-Powys Police hasn't yet been completed. We will update our website with our findings (including the force's grade) and a link to the regional report once the inspection is complete.

# Building, supporting and protecting the workforce

Requires  
improvement

Dyfed-Powys Police requires improvement at building and developing its workforce.

## Areas for improvement

### **The force must effectively balance operational need with supporting the welfare of its officers and staff**

The force doesn't consistently address staff and officer welfare. And the force doesn't always understand the demands placed on staff and officers, which means it doesn't always give appropriate welfare support. The force has researched staff and officer needs using occupational health surveys, a 2022 well-being survey and a [Blue Light Wellbeing Framework](#) self-assessment, for example. But many officers and staff we spoke to felt the force didn't understand their role and the stresses placed on them. Officers and staff felt well supported by their immediate supervisors. But the force's wider understanding and analysis of well-being trends weren't effectively communicated to supervisors.

An example of this concerns the force's support for high-risk roles. In our [last inspection](#), we said the force needed to make sure it was carrying out proactive welfare checks on officers and staff who work in high-risk roles and may be dealing with traumatic incidents.

The force provides mandatory psychological checks for some officers and staff in high-risk roles. But we found that these checks weren't consistently carried out as scheduled across some of the teams in high-risk roles. At the time of our inspection, the force didn't consider teams involved with investigating abusive images of children, including child protection officers and criminal investigation departments, for psychological screening. But these roles have to deal with many distressing and difficult cases.

Some officers within specialist units reported some levels of stress. Some officers within specialist units reported feeling that senior officers didn't understand the pressures they face. We found similar feelings among officers in the vulnerability hub. To better cope with demand, the force had decided that cases assigned to the hub wouldn't have further risk assessment unless they met certain criteria. While this did help to reduce the pressure slightly, some officers told us they still felt unable to cope with the demand. Joint investigation teams reported similar feelings, with many officers reporting having to work extra hours to cope with demand. Some supervisors said that they often took laptops home to continue working.

The force should improve the understanding of the welfare needs of its officers and staff to offer better support to high demand and high-risk roles.

### **The force must make sure supervisors have the necessary training and skills to carry out their role**

We talked with a wide range of supervisors of officers and staff during our inspection. Several supervisors told us they hadn't received any welfare or leadership training, either before or since starting their supervisory role. Many said they felt ill-equipped to deal with the leadership challenges they face.

This was a particular concern for constables who had been temporarily promoted to sergeant. As the promotions were temporary, they didn't receive extra training. The force told us that as of 12 July 2023, 30.5 percent of all response policing sergeants were temporarily promoted constables. And while most officers and staff we spoke to were supportive of their supervisors, some told us their supervisors were more focused on performance than the well-being of their teams.

In 2021, the chief constable committed to introducing a leadership academy. The aim of this leadership academy is to support an inclusive learning culture and improve standards and well-being across the force. This would be an effective way to develop skilled leaders, but it hasn't yet been introduced.

The force has been supplying HR masterclasses for its first-line supervisors. As of 31 March 2023, the force told us there were 215 sergeants in post. Force records show that 60 sergeants attended these classes in 2022. Some 7 sergeants attended in 2023, or 31.0 percent of its current workforce of sergeants. This potentially leaves 69.0 percent without any formal leadership training. The force also developed an authentic leadership course, which started in June 2023. The force told us that 6 sergeants (2.0 percent) had attended the course. The force developed a critical conversations training session in September 2021, designed to help line managers to have meaningful and supportive conversations. The force reintroduced the critical conversations training in 2023. As of July 2023, 12 sergeants (5.0 percent) had accessed the training.

The force will be adopting the [College of Policing leadership programme](#) later this year. But it must also consider whether the plans it has in place will sufficiently and promptly address the gap in supervisory skills.

### **The force must consider its personal development review process to make sure it is effective and valued by officers and staff**

The personal development review (PDR) process is used to support police officers and staff to take responsibility for their professional development and plan their career progression. It gives individuals and their line managers an opportunity to discuss a range of topics, including welfare. The information recorded can be used to support a range of development activities.

The force has developed its own PDR based on feedback from staff. Most staff reported that it was better than previous PDRs. But many officers and staff we spoke to still didn't value the process itself. Many felt that the PDR was still too complicated. And they felt it was designed to promote force objectives and not personal or professional development. This view was held across many departments and staff networks.

The force has designed the system so that officers can record evidence for their PDR throughout the year. But several officers and supervisors reported that meaningful and regular PDR individual discussions weren't always carried out due to demand pressures. And many people we spoke to didn't believe that the PDRs were ever looked at once complete. Some officers gave examples of where they had used the PDR to correctly record the development opportunities they were seeking, but the force hadn't followed these up or supported them with development.

Our survey of the force suggests this could be improving. We found that 53.7 percent (241 of 449 respondents) agreed that they value the process of reviews and appraisal. And 45.9 percent (206 of 449 respondents) agreed that PDRs were an effective tool in their development. But the force has more work to do to make sure the process feels meaningful for its workforce.

The force should make sure staff feel invested in the PDR process and that it is seen to add value to personal and professional development.

## Main findings

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to how well the force builds and develops its workforce.

### **The force needs to improve how it identifies potential first-line leaders**

The senior officer team are made aware of any officer who is graded as outstanding in their personal development review discussion. This allows the team to further consider their development. But the definition of outstanding can be subjective. And concerns about the usefulness of the personal development review suggest that it may not be the best way to identify potential candidates for development.

The general view of staff we spoke to was that individuals wanting to progress had to seek out development opportunities themselves. An important attribute for any leader is to identify colleagues who have leadership potential or other ability. But we saw limited evidence of this during our inspection.

This means that the force may be missing opportunities to identify and develop talent. The force should think about the steps it can take to identify future leaders and other talented individuals.

### **The force provides a range of well-being measures, but there is limited awareness of them across the workforce**

The force has a range of options to support well-being, including:

- Care First (employee assistance programme);
- Blue Light Champions (mental health awareness scheme);
- [Oscar Kilo](#) (peer support scheme for police officers);
- reverse mentoring;
- financial well-being advice pages;
- parental support;
- Prostate Cymru;
- menopause support;



- endometriosis-friendly employer accreditation; and
- staff support networks.

But staff awareness of the range of support options appeared limited, particularly among response and neighbourhood policing teams. Most knew the force had an [occupational health unit \(OHU\)](#) but didn't know more than that. Most officers said they would go to their first-line leader if they needed support. This may result in officers not receiving the right support, especially as some supervisors weren't fully aware of the range of support options available.

A specific well-being site on the force intranet gives guidance and shares activities that could help officers and staff improve and maintain their well-being. But very few staff we spoke to were aware of its existence. Some of those who were aware of the intranet site said that the force intranet was difficult to navigate. The force should consider how it might improve officers' awareness of the welfare options available.

### **The force has improved the capacity and capability of its OHU**

The force has faced significant challenges in resourcing its OHU. Job vacancies have affected waiting times for people trying to access the service. This has been made worse by the vast rural geography of Dyfed-Powys. And some clinicians have had to perform administrative duties while posts were vacant. But the force has been proactive in recruiting to fill posts. In 2022, the force appointed a new manager in and has since filled all vacancies. As a result, the force reports that it has substantially reduced the OHU waiting time to an average of 11 days.

The OHU team have made sure they are working towards achieving [Safe Effective Quality Occupational Health Service](#) standards. The manager has made sure the team has monthly continuous professional development to improve the service the OHU offers. The manager has also made sure the OHU adopts clinical supervision and auditing protocols. The OHU is transferring all its paper records into an electronic database, which will also improve its performance.

The OHU has been peer reviewed and is positively working through a 27-point action plan. The force told us that 18 out of 27 of these actions were shown as completed as of March 2023.

Officers and supervisors who have accessed the OHU all reported positive experiences that improved their health and well-being.



## **The force has an effective risk management response to traumatic incidents at work**

We found good evidence that the force values and promotes [trauma risk management \(TRiM\)](#). Nearly all officers we spoke to showed an awareness of the TRiM scheme and of the force's commitment to promoting it. The force has also recognised that TRiM is designed primarily for critical incidents. It is introducing a new process called ADJUST, which will follow some TRiM principles but will be available to a wider range of officers for more incidents. This should be a positive step to improve overall staff well-being.

## **The force has a good understanding of the challenges faced by new recruits**

The force has made good progress in recruiting officers through the new [Police Uplift Programme](#) and policing education qualifications framework entry programmes. The force has invested more resources into its learning and development team to make sure it can support and train this volume of new recruits. This includes a sergeant and eight constables. The force has also created two extra student officer support roles to offer pastoral support to the students.

All tutors who are assigned a student are trained to a national standard. The head of learning and development checks in twice a week with divisionally based leads to support the progression of students.

The force always tries to make sure that student officers aren't working alone in remote locations but can't always make this happen due to operational demands. Some students reported feeling vulnerable and ill-equipped to deal with certain operational matters. In these cases, a buddy or mentor could offer valuable support. However, according to a survey we carried out from 14 February to 24 March 2023, 62.2 percent of new recruits with less than five years' service in the sector (97 of 156 respondents) didn't have a buddy or mentor. This is something the force may wish to review.

Many students reported that doing both a degree and police work is stressful and has a significant effect on their work-life balance. Many students reported that they often work on rest days to complete their degree portfolio. But the force has been proactive in making sure that officers are given protected learning days for their continued development.

Student officers have personal individual sessions with tutors at week 3 and week 21 to discuss progress and well-being. Some students said they would welcome more sessions during this intense period of change. But it was reassuring to note that in the staff survey we carried out, 92.4 percent of new recruits (144 of 156 respondents) agreed that their line manager nurtures an environment of trust and confidence.

Most student officers appeared excited at the prospect of becoming substantive police officers and were looking forward to a career with Dyfed-Powys Police.

### **Staff reported feeling comfortable addressing discriminatory behaviour**

Nearly all the staff we spoke to during our inspection had never witnessed any discriminatory behaviour. Most said that they would feel completely comfortable challenging such behaviour if they saw it. Most staff also believed that their supervisors would challenge such discriminatory behaviour.

These findings were supported by a staff survey we carried out, which indicated that:

- 93.2 percent (603 of 647 respondents) agreed that their line manager creates an ethical working environment; and
- 92.5 percent (598 of 647 respondents) agreed that their line manager challenges discriminatory behaviour.

### **The force is making efforts to retain new recruits and understand why they might leave the force**

The force has adopted the early leavers framework and has a process to encourage people who might consider leaving before retirement to 'say and stay'. Supervisors are encouraged to have early conversations with potential leavers to find out the reasons why they might be considering a career change.

HR specialists now offer to hold exit interviews with all leavers to understand barriers to retaining staff. This aims to give leavers greater confidence to speak openly about their reasons for leaving. This also allows the force to consider addressing the factors that might cause a person to leave, if appropriate. Exit interview findings will also give the force greater clarity on any patterns and trends over time so it can consider relevant actions. Feedback from several officers indicated that the cost of living and pay were significant contributing factors to leaving the force, especially for officers with long commutes given the increased cost of fuel.

The force discusses leavers at strategic resource group meetings to think about whether there are options for retention. We found that knowledge of why officers might consider leaving was developed and mature at the strategic level. But first-line supervisors might benefit from knowing more about the themes identified in the resource meetings. Informing more supervisors about the barriers to retention may help them to offer local tailored support and encourage people to stay in the force.

### **The force creates opportunities for officers and staff from underrepresented groups to develop and progress**

We saw positive strategic oversight, governance and the application of resources to support equality, diversity and inclusion. This included clear oversight from senior officers.

The force has:

- a clear race action plan;
- a positive action strategy;
- an established representative workforce group that reports back into the equality, diversity and inclusion group; and
- a culture group.

The College of Policing commended the force for its equality impact assessment. The force has a comprehensive action plan for recruitment, retention and progression of underrepresented groups. Senior leaders were committed and passionate about this workstream.

The force uses an 'adverse impact calculator' to monitor the effect of promotion opportunities. This makes sure that underrepresented groups aren't unfairly disadvantaged in established promotion procedures. There are extra support options available to underrepresented groups, including familiarisation workshops, interview practice and preparation, and a springboard programme for female officers. The force also offers learning programmes to support officers and staff from underrepresented groups. This is encouraging, but not all officers and staff we spoke to were aware of these measures.

Currently, the force doesn't have any female officers above the rank of superintendent. But the force is reviewing methods to give female aspiring senior leaders opportunities to help their development and progression.

The force helps staff support networks to encourage applications for promotion or lateral development opportunities from staff from underrepresented groups. The force has held focus groups with female officers and staff to discuss the barriers to progression. The force promotes and values Welsh language ability at all levels.

# Vetting and counter-corruption

We now inspect how forces deal with vetting and counter-corruption differently. This is so we can be more effective and efficient in how we inspect this high-risk area of police business.

Corruption in forces is tackled by specialist units, designed to proactively target corruption threats. Police corruption is corrosive and poses a significant risk to public trust and confidence. There is a national expectation of standards and how they should use specialist resources and assets to target and arrest those that pose the highest threat.

Through our new inspections, we seek to understand how well forces apply these standards. As a result, we now inspect forces and report on national risks and performance in this area. We now grade and report on forces' performance separately.

Dyfed-Powys Police's vetting and counter-corruption inspection hasn't yet been completed. We will update our website with our findings and the separate report once the inspection is complete.

# Leadership and force management

## Adequate

Dyfed-Powys Police's leadership and management is adequate.

### Areas for improvement

#### **The force should make sure it has effective governance processes to support its performance framework**

During our inspection, we found that the force focused on improving performance and this was producing positive results. But officers and staff reported concerns that performance was being driven by an overly competitive process that included comparisons through local league tables. This could make officers feel that they need to carry out more arrests, stop and searches, and other activities to visibly improve their performance, rather than tailoring their approach to the circumstances. This behaviour can create an unhealthy culture between teams. The positive drive to improve performance may lead to unintended consequences, which strategic leads should monitor.

We also found that there were inconsistent approaches to how performance was managed locally and how this was recorded. Some departments carry out performance audits at random, which may not be aligned to force priorities. There isn't a force-wide, consistent approach to auditing. Many audits are stored across multiple systems in various computer programs. As such, these audits don't always inform strategic leads effectively. This means that senior officers can't reassure themselves that the information they rely on to make decisions is as accurate as it should be.

The force should review its performance management framework to reassure itself that the framework clearly aligns with the force's objectives. And the force should also reassure itself that the positivity of the move to a more performance-driven approach isn't disrupted by unintended consequences resulting from a competitive culture.

### **The force should make sure it understands how its investment in IT systems improves productivity**

The force has invested in data reporting software (Microsoft Power BI). It uses the data it collects and analyses to effectively target enforcement and crime prevention activity. The force understand the benefits of this activity. For example, it has identified areas with higher levels of drugs offences. This allowed it to direct prevention and intervention activity by increasing the use of stop and search in these areas. And it aimed to increase positive results in stop and searches.

But we found the force didn't have a detailed understanding of how its overall investment in IT is resulting in increased productivity. For example, it couldn't tell whether officers were using new laptops effectively by completing incident or crime recording updates while out in the community. The force told us that poor connectivity meant officers had to return to stations to complete work. This increased travel time and reduced capacity.

There are other areas that would benefit from further investment in performance and productivity data. For example, the force doesn't use telematics data effectively across its fleet to understand where vehicles are most used and needed. We found that the workforce struggled at times to find enough vehicles to manage daily demand effectively. Some teams reported having to share one car among ten staff, while other stations reported having more vehicles than staff.

The force should make sure that investment in enabling technologies appropriately supports the work of frontline officers and staff.

## **Promising practice**

### **The force effectively uses data to understand its finances**

Dyfed-Powys Police uses data effectively to manage and understand its finances. This makes sure the force understands the actual cost of its resources and the level of finance that is available. It has a disciplined approach to using finances effectively and supporting the wider management teams in making savings.

For example, the force performance meeting includes a section on financial reporting. During this meeting, the financial lead can explain what the force is spending and in what areas. This data is available down to frontline officer level and is linked to performance. The data sheets used to manage finances are easy to understand. The finance department uses effective data systems to make these data sheets available. The information discussed also covers the finances of similar forces and the status of finance nationally to allow Dyfed-Powys Police to compare its financial performance to other forces. This financial reporting is a detailed piece of work that is supported by an investment in [Achieving Financial Excellence in Policing](#). This will place the force in a strong position to understand investment and productivity.

The force is already sharing the practice with other forces nationally.

## Main findings

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to leadership and management.

### **The force's financial plans, including its investment programme, are affordable and will help the force continue to meet future demands**

The force shows effective financial management. It makes the best use of the finance it has available. And its financial plans are both ambitious and sustainable. The total funding for Dyfed-Powys Police is £133.414m annually. The police and crime commissioner raised the [precept](#) by £1.87 a month for band D properties in the force's area to £22.49 a year (a 7.75 percent increase). This increase will raise a total precept of £72.518m.

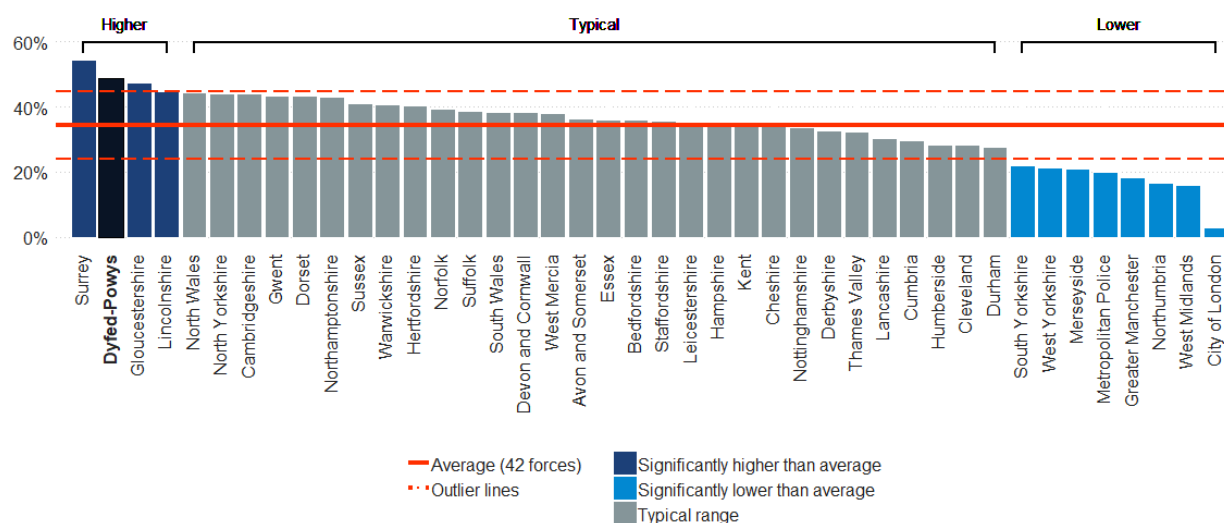
The financial forecasts within the mid-term financial plan are based on realistic assumptions about future funding and expenditure. The force needs to make savings and has identified the areas where they will be made. The force told us that it has identified £6.4m of savings to be made in 2022/23. The force estimates that it will need to make further savings over the medium term to balance the budget and keep current service levels.

The force is confident that the required savings are achievable. But it isn't filling vacant posts, which means that extra work is passed to current staff and officers. The force should continue to monitor and understand the increases in demand caused by the vacancy rate.

In the year ending 31 March 2023, Dyfed-Powys received 48.6 percent of its funding from precept. This is higher than expected when compared to other forces in England and Wales.



**Figure 3: Proportion of funding received from precept across all forces in England and Wales in the year ending 31 March 2023**



**The force has a strategic planning framework that makes sure it addresses local and national priorities, but the framework has some gaps**

Senior officers effectively understand the force’s priorities. But communication of the force’s strategy isn’t always clear to frontline officers. These officers were sometimes unable to explain the force’s priorities and how that related to their regular activities. The force regularly reviews its operating model to make sure it stays fit for purpose and able to respond to changing demands. And the force’s governance arrangements show some effective use of data, covering most aspects of its performance. But several more detailed performance measures were missing in some important policing areas. This was the case in the fields of domestic abuse, where there wasn’t enough oversight and governance in terms of overall force performance. This meant some areas of poor performance across the force went unrecognised, which could expose people to further risk of harm.

**The force is starting to invest in a structured leadership approach but needs to make sure senior leaders have visibility**

We found lots of positivity in the force around ‘first-line’ leadership. Most of the officers and staff we talked with spoke highly of their immediate supervisors and leaders, saying that many were caring and compassionate. In the workforce survey we carried out, 84.5 percent of respondents (547 of 647) agreed with the statement that their line manager nurtures an environment of trust and confidence. Most stated that the force has a “family feel”.

But many officers said that this didn’t extend throughout all leadership levels. Some groups reported little or no interaction with some inspectors, chief inspectors and superintendents. Officers noted that some superintendents were very proactive. But some reported a less visible approach, particularly in more remote locations. Some officers reported that leaders had a very supportive leadership style.



Other officers reported occasions when there appeared to be a transactional leadership approach.

Some officers agreed that demands on senior leaders and the vast geography of the areas they cover could affect their availability. But some officers felt that some senior leaders could do more to improve visible leadership.

At the time of our inspection, the force had developed a leadership training programme to help support its leaders, which is due to start in December 2023. And the force has committed to senior leaders becoming more visible and engaged with the workforce. This renewed approach had started shortly before our inspection and involved the assistant chief constable visiting areas within the force and talking to officers and staff. The force should make sure this approach is adopted across all ranks.

November 2023 | © HMICFRS 2023

[hmicfrs.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk](https://hmicfrs.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk)