



NORTHUMBRIA PCC RESPONSE TO HMICFRS INSPECTIONS OF NORTHUMBRIA POLICE

Inspection title	Meeting the needs of victims in the criminal justice system
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NORTHUMBRIA PCC RESPONSE TO HMICFRS

I welcome the report on meeting the needs of victims in the criminal justice system (CJS), which assessed whether the police, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) and the Probation Service understand what victims need, whether they meet those needs and whether they provide a good quality service.

It is disappointing to note that instead of trying to meet the needs of victims, it was found that the three bodies focused on whether they complied with the 12 rights set out in the Victims' Code, with an emphasis on process rather than quality, and in addition to this, there was a lack quality information and poor communication between CJS bodies. It is so important that we put victims at the heart of the CJS and make sure we are doing things right by them. My office and I will continue to work with the police and key CJS partners to improve victims' experiences of the CJS, as well continuing to engage directly with victims and amplifying their voices through my Victims Champion.

Northumbria's core victims' service, Northumbria Victim and Witness Service, is delivered by Northumbria Police and is subject to regular monitoring and scrutiny. We will ensure that this service is reviewed against the findings of this report and any identified areas of improvement are reflected in the future scrutiny of this service.

The Chief Constable has provided me with a position statement in respect of Northumbria Police (NP) against the recommendation that is specifically for Chief Constables.

Recommendation 3: *By 31 December 2024, the College of Policing should work with the National Police Chiefs' Council and chief constables to develop minimum standards for the completion of victim needs assessments. These should include standards for timeliness of completion and clarity on the information to be recorded.*

- Officers currently record Enhanced/Standard Victim status within the Crime Recording Needs Assessment within Crime Recording screens. A method of measuring timeliness compliance is currently being scoped.
- The Victims Needs Assessment (VNA) for cope and recovery/support within Northumbria's integrated communications and control system allows for timeliness data for referrals to be captured now but does not indicate if the referral is Enhanced/Standard. VNA referrals are actioned quickly, so this is unlikely to be an issue.



- The VNA question set is currently undergoing improvements and depending on information received from the CoP/NPCC, further amendments may be made.
- It will be ensured that requirements are considered within the new Recording Management System.

I will monitor progress where further action is required to ensure that NP are compliant through my regular HMICFRS Scrutiny process.

Yours sincerely,

Kim McGuinness
PCC for Northumbria