



NORTHUMBRIA PCC RESPONSE TO HMICFRS INSPECTIONS OF NORTHUMBRIA POLICE

Inspection title	CJJI efficiency spotlight report: The impact of recruitment and retention on the criminal justice system
Type of inspection	<input type="checkbox"/> Northumbria-specific <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> National Thematic
Date inspection published	09/02/2024
Deadline for PCC response (56 days)	05/04/2024
Recommendations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> National <input type="checkbox"/> Local

NORTHUMBRIA PCC RESPONSE TO HMICFRS

I welcome the spotlight report on the impact of recruitment and retention on the criminal justice system. This report draws upon evidence from inspection activity conducted by each of the individual inspectorates both jointly and singly for those inspected: the police, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), the Probation and Youth Offending Services (YOS) and the Prison Service.

Although there are no direct recommendations for police forces, as recommendations have already been made within the inspectorate reports, Northumbria's Chief Constable has provided me with an update on the force's position.

Position – staff turnover:

- Turnover in both officers and staff roles remains below national average (9.1% for officers and 15% for staff) and has continued to decrease over the last 12 months.
- The proportion of officers leaving within the first three years of service saw a peak in 2022 (13.11%) but has since stabilised to 8.45% though 2023.
- The proportion of officers leaving within the first five years of service is considerably lower than the national average of 69%.
- Following delivery of Uplift, Northumbria has 40.5% of its officers with under 5 years' service, 1557 officers, slightly above the national forecast for 2024. That said, Northumbria exceeded its Uplift targets, hence the slightly higher proportion is expected.
- The force monitors attraction, retention, and turnover to understand and prevent resignations and loss of talent. The current approach is aligned to the National Leavers Framework to ensure patterns and drivers can be considered against national insight.
- The reasons for leaving are monitored at the Culture and Leadership Board and inform activity within our people strategy. Areas with high turnover are provided with departmental specific insight which then informs departmental improvement plans and interventions.
- Support is in place for all new recruits. Student officers are given performance development reviews, one to ones, and complete a wellbeing passport when they commence their training. They are visited by support organisations and the wellbeing team during their initial onboarding phase. Pulse interviews and dedicated meetings have been introduced with all students at the 6, 12, 18 and 24 month point in their journey (Say & Stay interviews). The process seeks to proactively engage with students to ensure any issues are identified at the earliest stages. The results form part of the wider governance structure in relation to the student journey.



Position – investigative resource:

- The proportion of Detectives Constables in Northumbria is 15% of all resources (566 out of 3,800 officer posts) and the force has carried a 15% vacancy in this area for the last 2 years. The introduction of a bespoke entry route for detectives under Uplift allowed the attraction and recruitment of additional officers under the investigative pathway.
- The force continues to make progress in closing the detective gap and current forecasts indicate it will achieve this over the next 12 months, reaching the required resource level by April 2025. In order to mitigate risk, the force continues to utilise Police Staff Investigators (PSIs) across all investigative functions.
- The Investigative Capability Plan is designed to deliver an effective and sustainable investigative capability across the force, whilst being able to meet current and future demand. Following the Force Operating Model review in March 2024, focus is on ensuring the force has the correct amount and experience level of investigative resource in the right areas, particularly considering the introduction of an additional 58 FTE posts in Crime and Safeguarding to target risk and existing areas for improvement.
- In terms of people, culture and well-being, the force is actively engaged with the NPCC sponsored Recruitment, Retention & Wellbeing of Investigators Group. The force has utilised best practice within the NPCC Toolkit, this includes a re-introduction of DC Tutor Constables, improved support for undertaking the National Investigators Exam and regular monitoring of investigative demand.

Position – specialist staff:

- Whilst skills shortages persist in select specialist and technical roles due to marked differences in remuneration when compared to private sector, Northumbria Police are able in the most part to recruit the skills and experience needed.
- Recognising a need to ensure competitiveness for the future, in 2021 the force began the Role and Reward Project, first focussing on modernising our approach to pay and job evaluation. The force introduced a new pay model and bespoke support and investment to increase pay competitiveness across technical roles, securing technical skills and supporting force transformation.
- The force's ability to recruit is enhanced also by a focus on employer brand and attraction, promoting the organisation as an employer of choice within the region.
- The ability to compete with other employers can be hindered by the speed in which the force can recruit.

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