



NORTHUMBRIA PCC RESPONSE TO HMICFRS INSPECTIONS OF NORTHUMBRIA POLICE

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NORTHUMBRIA PCC RESPONSE TO HMICFRS

I welcome the second rapid review report on the policing response to the disorder which took place in July and August 2024, focusing on the use of an intelligence-led approach, arrangements for tackling online content and social media and crime investigations. With the online world, and use of social media, ever growing, this report will improve our understanding of how it is used and the impact it has on issues like this. The recommendations will ensure we are better prepared for any potential future incidents.

I am delighted that several areas of good practice within Northumbria have been identified and highlighted within this report. With misinformation spread so easily via social media, I am pleased to read that Northumbria actively sought to dispel false narratives live time to reduce the risk of an escalation in tensions.

My office recognises the important and unique role played by Crimestoppers and has previously utilised this service to deliver focused campaigns. I find it reassuring that Northumbria police also recognize this and sought Crimestoppers assistance in its attempts to identify some of those involved in the disorder and that this yielded such positive results.

It is concerning to read that forces didn't sufficiently prioritise intelligence on disorder. The Chief Constable has already provided me with updates in relation to activity being undertaken to strengthen force relationships and understanding of communities in Northumbria. It is important to acknowledge that during the height of the disorder, Northumbria Police received an overwhelming increase in reports through ORLO, increasing from an average of 15,000 per month to 20,000 over just 3 days. This level of demand was unprecedented however the force has taken steps to enable them to manage any future surges in demand. I look forward to updates in relation to the national recommendations and the improvements this will generate in order to further support forces to understand disorder-related risk at both a local and national level.

The Chief Constables has updated me on the current force position with regards to the content of the report as follows:

Recommendation 1



With immediate effect, the National Police Chiefs' Council and chief constables should create a plan and begin work to improve how the police service collects, analyses and communicates intelligence about disorder. They should plan to:

- establish clear and resilient intelligence networks, functions and processes to help the police service respond to national emergencies involving disorder more effectively;
- test these arrangements, once they have been established;
- give National Police Coordination Centre strategic intelligence and briefing greater capacity and capability to support the police service in recognising, analysing and responding to information and intelligence on disorder, particularly at times of national emergency;
- prioritise the collection, analysis and distribution of intelligence on disorder and community tension;
- make sure that frequent, accurate and comprehensive strategic intelligence assessments on the threat and risk of disorder are reflected in public order public safety strategic risk assessments;
- revise how the police service classifies and collects intelligence on disorder to help it to better assess the threats posed, including whether intelligence categories such as “cultural nationalism” and “domestic extremism” are relevant and understood across policing;
- make sure each police region has an intelligence team or function that can assess the threat of disorder, which we suggest could be part of each regional information and co-ordination centre; and
- make sure that neighbourhood policing teams perform a central role in helping forces to better understand community mood, sentiments and tension.

Recommendation 2

With immediate effect, the National Police Chiefs' Council and chief constables, working with the Home Office, should create a plan and begin work to better understand and respond to the risk associated with online content. They should plan to:

- make sure that at force, regional and national levels there is enough police capacity and capability to monitor, analyse and respond to online content;
- make sure that forces have capacity and capability to manage risk from online content through effective communication arrangements;
- identify the full range of technical solutions that the police service uses or could use to improve monitoring and analysis of online information and intelligence on disorder, and responses to it;
- review whether provisions within the Online Safety Act 2023 are fit for purpose to support policing in its response to disorder; and
- improve structures and arrangements for liaison and support between the police service, government departments and online service providers.

Recommendation 3

With immediate effect, the National Police Chiefs' Council and chief constables, working with the College of Policing, should create a plan and begin work to improve how the police service investigates offences associated with large-scale disorder. They should plan to:

- revise the revise the public order public safety Strategic Policing Requirement to



include and specify the range of investigative resources that can be deployed when the national mobilisation plan is activated;

- make sure that senior investigating officers receive training and guidance to better manage investigations into widespread disorder;
- make sure that there is an investigation plan or strategy that can be used by all forces at times of a national police mobilisation to disorder; and
- make sure that all forces routinely carry out structured debriefs of suspects and offenders, to obtain potential evidence or intelligence about disorder.

I will continue to monitor the force's progress in relation to the nationally coordinated work through my regular scrutiny process.

Yours sincerely,

Susan Dungworth

Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria