

Rt Hon Yvette Cooper MP
Secretary of State for the Home Department
2 Marsham Street
London
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Date: 22nd May 2025

Dear Home Secretary,

SUBJECT: An inspection into how effectively the police investigate crime

I write in response to the recent publication of the '*An inspection into how effectively the police investigate crime*' report on 27th March 2024.

The effective investigation of crime, management of crime-related demand and victim support is paramount to building trust and confidence in policing.

I am pleased that Greater Manchester Police (GMP) was highlighted on a number of occasions throughout the report in respect of positive practice. This included the establishment of the Investigation Improvement Team (IIT) to improve outcome rates, a clear message from senior leaders that effective crime investigation is a priority, and the co-location of advisors from the victim service provider being based within the Force Contact, Crime and Operations (FCCO) Branch to give victims of crime a faster and better-quality service.

I do, however, note the main findings of the report and support the recommendations for improvement across policing. In consultation with senior leaders at GMP, I can respond to the recommendations as follows:

Recommendation 3: By 31 December 2025, chief constables should make sure their force has an effective and efficient end-to-end process to deal with online reports of crime. The process should remove all unnecessary delays in recording, assessing and allocating crime reports, and make sure the force consistently complies with its requirements under the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime.

GMP has a centralised Crime Recording and Resolution Unit (CRRU). This includes handling online reports of crime which are routed in via email or Single Online Home (SOH) to the Digital Contact Team (DCT). The CCRU records 100% of GMP crime, and since introducing this approach in July 2024, the Force can evidence improved consistency in information handling, and crime-flow processes, improvements in timeliness, and improvements in National Crime Recording Standards (NCRS) accuracy.

Between 97- 98% of crimes are recorded within 24hrs of public contact; incident to crime conversion (crime closing codes) performance is consistently over 93%. Regular thematic audits by the Force Crime Registrar's audit team report that NCRS recording accuracy results average in the 90% range.

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This is an improved picture in comparison to when frontline officers had the authority to create and close crime.

Online reports are subject to a triage process and a risk assessment based on threat, harm, risk, investigation and engagement (THRIVE) is completed, which will determine the grade of the incident. Once graded, contact is made with the victim and a Victim Needs Assessment will be completed. I understand that further work is required to ensure that Victim Needs Assessments are fully and accurately completed by the investigating officer in all cases and to ensure that victims are updated throughout the investigation.

Recommendation 4: By 31 December 2025, chief constables should make sure the end-to-end process for receiving, assessing and allocating reports of crime in their force minimises delays in the investigation process and the length of time before investigators contact victims.

Since August 2024, all crime has been recorded by the CRRU. This deliberate move away from frontline officers recording crimes was to ensure improvements in NCRS recording accuracy, quality and timeliness, whilst ensuring a consistent approach force-wide.

When GMP was placed into 'Engagement,' HMICFRS found considerable delays and under-recording of crime. As a result of a renewed focus on compliance and crime recording practices, GMP is now ethically and accurately capturing the details of crime reported by the public of Greater Manchester, recording around 30,000 crimes per month on average.

A Decision Support Matrix (DSM) was introduced in June 2024 to ensure consistent crime allocation across the Force and is used by the CRRU and District/Branch supervisors to determine the correct resource, seriousness and complexity of the crime and subsequent investigation required.

To support the assessment phase of crime management, GMP introduced the Action Review Document (ARD), this document is appended to every crime and requires officers to complete a themed review. This places a focus on what happened, the victim, the suspect and what needs to happen next. To ensure timeliness of progression, the sergeant on setting an action completion date for the officer, will also set an action for themselves the day after that completion date. It is expected that this will support positive action to minimise delays in investigation progression and ensure regular and timely contact with the victim.

Recommendation 5: By 31 December 2025, chief constables should design and operate a policy that results in their force allocating to investigators crimes that are commensurate with each investigator's level of training, accreditation and experience.

The GMP Crime Policy and the Crime E-Guide clearly outline the characteristics of PIP1 and PIP2 investigations. The Decision Support Matrix (DSM) ensures a consistent crime allocation across the Force. This process involves the initial submission of a crime, followed by a PIP1 supervisory review to ensure that an initial investigation has been completed to an acceptable standard. Once this review is complete the DSM is utilised to identify the appropriate team for forward allocation. This should be documented on the ARD on the crime with the supervisor rationale.

The DSM is used by the CRRU and District/Branch supervisors to determine the correct resource, dependant on the type, seriousness and complexity of the crime and subsequent investigation required. The Force Crime Management Policy now contains guidance regarding interim crime reviews; presenting further opportunity for supervisors to identify crimes that require reallocation due to changes in circumstances. Accurate crime allocation is a performance indicator captured within the GMP PIP1 crime audits. The results are consistently 90% compliance or higher.

Recommendation 6: By 30 September 2025, chief constables should make sure their force has a clear policy relating to investigation plans. They should make sure their force communicates this policy to officers and staff. As a minimum, this policy should cover:

- **when to start an investigation plan.**
- **who is responsible for writing the investigation plan.**
- **what to consider including in an investigation plan;**
- **how supervisors should review and approve investigation plans; and**
- **how the force will monitor investigation plans to check their quality, and to make sure investigators and supervisors have followed them**

The GMP Crime Management Policy and the Crime E-Guide outlines what is required from the Officer in the Case (OIC) in terms of an Investigative Assessment and crime management standards. The circumstances of the incident, enquiries conducted, and the results of those enquiries should be recorded with consideration to the incident, the victim and suspect and what has and needs to be done.

The guidance also clearly outlines the respective roles of the OIC, the reviewing Sergeant and the reviewing Inspector. This includes assessing the quality of the four-themed review, and actions appended to the ARD. It is directed that clear bespoke direction be provided throughout the investigation, with timely progress reviews scheduled and adhered to. Inspectors are required to review all investigations exceeding 90 days.

At the conclusion of the investigation the sergeant must record a review and in doing so adhere to a Crime Finalisation Checklist. In addition, all crimes are sent to the GMP centralised Crime Finalisation Team for review and closure to allow for further checks will be completed based on the finalisation checklist.

Recommendation 7: By 30 June 2025, chief constables should include in their investigation policies a direction stating that when an image exists, investigators should search it against the Police National Database and any other relevant databases before their force closes an investigation.

GMPs Force Crime Management Unit routinely request digital evidence and approximately two thirds of victims and witness respond to requests and send the images through for review. Once received, trained officers review these for suitability for Police National Database facial recognition submission.

The new crime management policy will include reference/guidance for officers to consider and utilise the PND and it is now contained with GMP's crime E-guide.

Recommendation 9: By 31 December 2025, chief constables should make sure the first supervisory review of a crime investigation takes place early enough for the supervisor to be able to:

- **review any actions taken, including those to assess and manage risk;**
- **make sure the investigator has put in place the appropriate support for victims, and is complying with the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime;**
- **set or approve an investigation plan;**
- **review the investigator's caseload; and**
- **set a date for a further review**

GMP crime allocation ensures that there are minimal touch points and delay in crime allocation, and the CRRU utilise the Decision Support Matrix (DSM) to ensure that the crime is allocated right first time.

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Investigative experience informs GMP that early and continual supervisory involvement within investigations leads to improved crime management standards in the timeliness/progression and outcomes of crimes. To support this process, GMP introduced the ARD. The ARD is overseen by the supervisor and then used throughout the life span of the crime, the supervisor sets dates for the officer in line with the action and sets an additional task that supplements the officer's task to monitor progression/compliance.

GMP crime management policy outlines the roles and responsibilities of supervisors and provides clarity on what is expected from them, this includes the importance and value of holding regular one to one's with staff, a key aspect being around crime management and workloads. Supervisor involvement is captured within the Force crime audits. These audits enable the Force to identify any supervisors who are not providing the appropriate support for officers. Once identified these supervisors are provided with additional training.

The GMP Investigations Improvement Team and the Victim Services Strategic Lead are working closely with all Sergeants and their teams to share advice and knowledge on the best ways to support victims.

Through the delivery of Sergeants CPD, a mandated technical skills course and 1:1 inputs, the Force is embedding the statutory principles of the Victim Code and professionalising PIP1 crime management underpinned by the Force's Plan On A Page (POAP) to reinforce 'quality, standards and behaviour'. Further, GMP's online toolkit Sherlock which is available to all officers and staff was highlighted within the Inspection report for the knowledge and guidance it provides the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime and should be utilised by investigating officers and their supervisors.

Recommendation 10: By 31 March 2026, chief constables should:

- **make sure any member of staff who has a role in supporting the investigation process completes the College of Policing 'Introduction to investigation' learning programme;**
- **satisfy themselves that the content of their force's ongoing investigative training for responders is designed to develop their investigative skills and performance, and to improve outcomes for victims, and that their force gives responders protected time to complete this training;**
- **make sure their force focuses sufficiently on case file preparation when providing professionalising investigations programme level 1 training, while taking into account local procedures and case management systems;**
- **make sure their force gives officers and staff continuing professional development opportunities about preparing case files;**
- **make sure their force keeps accurate records of professionalising investigations programme level 2 accredited officers and staff, and that those officers and staff complete annual continuing professional development to maintain their accreditation, which forces should also accurately record; and**
- **review the investigative training their force gives to supervisors, making sure it equips them to oversee and direct crime investigations effectively.**

I am aware that all officers who conduct investigations have attained the required PIP1 skills as required by the College of Policing national standards, and this is recorded on their personal training records. In terms of the investigative training for responders, student officers receive extensive classroom training on case file preparation whilst existing officers have the College Learn packages and supervisors receive a one-day course. GMP is compliant and satisfied that it is meeting national standards and Authorised Professional Practice (APP).

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Recommendation 11: By 30 September 2025, chief constables should establish and implement a process to monitor the proportion of recorded crime that their force allocates for investigation. This should include a process to make sure a decision not to allocate a crime for investigation is appropriate.

The CRRU are the force primary and central repository for the initial recording of crime. These are staff members who have been specially trained around NCRS guidance and HOCR. As part of their role, they make decisions on further crime allocation for investigation, dependant on solvability factors and again have received training around this.

To support staff in the CRRU with decision making, all 400+ staff members have received "Reasonable and Proportionate" training which guided them through different crime types and provided education with regards to whether a crime should be further allocated or closed at source.

This training and decision making has been embedded within GMPs Decision Support Matrix and once the CRRU have made a decision to further allocate, this tool ensures that the crime is allocated to the correct resource, first time.

The new crime management policy also contains a chapter covering guidance on the allocation policy to support the CRRU and officers and provides clarity on mechanisms to return/reject a crime should they feel that it needs to be allocated to a different department or that the crime does not require further investigation.

GMP are already able to report the number of crimes that the Force is investigating every month/week/day, and this data is already shared with both HMICFRS and with my officials each month in the operational performance meeting.

Yours Sincerely.



Kate Green
Deputy Mayor of Greater Manchester