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Hampshire Police Praised for Safeguarding Work but Urged to Improve Call Response Times

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Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary has earned praise for its efforts in protecting vulnerable individuals, though it has been urged to improve the speed at which it handles emergency and non-emergency calls.

An inspection carried out by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) assessed the force across eight areas of policing. The constabulary

received a ‘good’ rating in two areas and was deemed ‘adequate’ in six. Unlike several other forces that were told they required improvement, Hampshire Police stood out for its positive work with vulnerable groups and partnership efforts.

HMICFRS reported that the force has been particularly effective at safeguarding those at risk. Working closely with local agencies through its multi-agency safeguarding hub, the constabulary has demonstrated a robust commitment to supporting vulnerable people. Inspectors were especially impressed with the force’s safeguarding training programme, which is shared with partner organisations and has been recognised as best practice by the College of Policing.

The force’s communication with the public has also improved since the last inspection, allowing officers to better understand community concerns and gather intelligence more efficiently. This progress has been supported by wider collaboration with other agencies in tackling crime, promoting early intervention, and solving long-term issues.

Performance Concerns

Despite these gains, concerns remain over the force’s ability to respond to calls for service in a timely manner. HMICFRS noted that delays in answering calls and deploying officers can lead to victims losing faith in the police response. This remains a key area for improvement, although inspectors did acknowledge progress had been made since the previous review.

The inspection found that while the overall quality of investigations has improved, with officers actively pursuing justice even when victims decline to proceed, the rate of solved crimes remains low. This continues to be a challenge in achieving better outcomes for those affected by crime.

His Majesty’s Inspector of Constabulary Roy Wilsher commented: “I am pleased with some aspects of Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary’s performance in keeping people safe, reducing crime and providing victims with an effective service, although there are areas where it can improve.”

He added, “The constabulary works effectively with other organisations to keep vulnerable people safe and tackle perpetrators’ behaviour. It uses innovative digital processes that help identify risk to vulnerable people who are victims at the earliest opportunity.”

Wilsher also acknowledged structural reforms made by the force, such as the move to a new localised policing model, which he said has helped deliver more focused deployment of staff and resources. However, he noted that “key areas such as response, neighbourhood and investigative policing have been severely stretched at times.”

Despite these pressures, the inspectorate found the force was still managing to support and develop its workforce effectively.

Wilsher concluded: “I hope that the operational changes the constabulary is making will help it better meet the needs of the public and its workforce, and I will be monitoring its progress closely.”

The report signals a mixed but promising picture for Hampshire Police. While its commitment to safeguarding is strongly commended, continued efforts are needed to deliver a more responsive and effective front-line service.