

PEEL 2023–25

Police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy

An inspection of North Yorkshire Police

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Overall summary

Our judgments

Our inspection assessed how good North Yorkshire Police is in ten areas of policing. We make graded judgments in nine of these ten as follows:

Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires improvement	Inadequate
	Preventing crime	Investigating crime		
	Recording data about crime	Responding to the public		
	Police powers and public treatment	Developing a positive workplace		
	Protecting vulnerable people	Leadership and force management		
	Managing offenders			

We also inspected how effective a service North Yorkshire Police gives to victims of crime. We don't make a graded judgment for this area.

We set out our detailed findings about things the force is doing well and where the force should improve in the rest of this report.

We also assess the force's performance in a range of other areas and we report on these separately. We make graded judgments for some of these areas.

Data in this report

For more information, please [view this report on our website](#) and select the 'About the data' section.

PEEL 2023–2025

In 2014, we introduced our police efficiency, effectiveness and legitimacy (PEEL) inspections, which assess the performance of all 43 police forces in England and Wales. Since then, we have been continuously adapting our approach.

We have moved to a more [intelligence](#)-led, continual assessment approach, rather than the annual [PEEL inspections](#) we used in previous years. Forces are assessed against the characteristics of good performance, set out in the [PEEL Assessment Framework 2023–2025](#), and we more clearly link our judgments to [causes of concern](#) and [areas for improvement](#).

It isn't possible to make direct comparisons between the grades awarded in this PEEL inspection and those from the previous cycle of PEEL inspections. This is because we have increased our focus on making sure forces are achieving appropriate outcomes for the public, and in some cases we have changed the aspects of policing we inspect.

Terminology in this report

Our reports contain references to, among other things, 'national' definitions, priorities, policies, systems, responsibilities and processes.

In some instances, 'national' means applying to England or Wales, or England and Wales. In others, it means applying to England, Wales and Scotland, or the whole of the United Kingdom.

HM Inspector's summary

I am pleased with the performance of North Yorkshire Police in keeping people safe, reducing crime and giving victims an effective service.

I have been impressed with the force's response to the findings of [our last inspection in 2022](#). The force has worked quickly to improve the policing service it provides to the communities of North Yorkshire. Because of this, it has made progress in all the areas of improvement identified in our last inspection. I recognise that it has been challenging for officers and staff to make these changes. The force has plans to better engage with its officers and staff so that they feel a part of plans to make improvements.

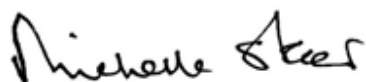
I am pleased that the force now has adequate governance in place. It has clear strategic plans that are informed by accurate information and a detailed performance framework. The force now has adequate oversight of its enabling services, such as human resources, finance, IT, estates and vehicle fleet. The force now benefits from a workforce plan, which helps it to provide a service that meets the policing needs of the community.

There has been significant investment in the force's control room. In this inspection, we found improvements in call handling and the way the force assesses risk as part of its response to the public. The force has also improved how quickly it arrives at emergency and priority incidents. It should continue to focus on making improvements in these areas.

I was pleased to find an improvement in the overall management of criminal investigations. The force has invested in its governance and performance processes to improve and maintain the quality of its investigations. However, there is more to do to achieve better outcomes for victims.

The force has improved its approach to protecting [vulnerable people](#). It is confident that the development of [safeguarding](#) investigation teams will improve its services to [victims](#). I am pleased to see that the force is making good use of the [Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme](#) and [Domestic Violence Protection Notices](#) and [Orders](#) to protect people.

Chief officers have made well thought out changes and investments to make sure the force has the resources to meet the public's demands. The force's leadership and management have significantly improved its services to the public. There are still areas in which North Yorkshire Police must do better. However, I am optimistic that the force's leadership and management will continue to build on the improvements that we have seen during this inspection.



Michelle Skeer

HM Inspector of Constabulary

Leadership

Using the [College of Policing leadership standards](#) as a framework, in this section we set out the most important findings relating to the force's leadership at all levels.

North Yorkshire Police has clear plans and priorities, which its operational activity focuses on. This is reflected in the force's 'plan on a page', which the chief officer team has presented to all officers and staff. We found that the force's investment is now concentrated on making sure that it has the right people in the right places, and its activities are aligned to its strategic plans and stated priorities. The force has improved its workforce planning. It understands the impact of anticipated leavers and joiners, their roles and responsibilities, and how this links to performance.

The force now has effective governance processes in place to manage its performance. We found greater scrutiny of performance, with a focus on improving services. The force has quickly responded to the areas for improvement identified in our previous inspection. However, it needs to better engage with its officers and staff so that they feel part of the plans to make improvements.

When making decisions, leaders think through plans and consider the potential impact on other areas of the force's work. There is clear ownership of workstreams, including the force's digital strategy, and its collaboration and performance framework.

North Yorkshire Police is investing in the capability and capacity of its leadership to support the workforce and improve performance. Support is available to officers, police staff and volunteers entering leadership roles for the first time. This practice is relatively new, but we have seen evidence of how leaders responsible for the performance and management of officers and staff are focusing on development opportunities.

More detail on North Yorkshire Police's leadership is included in the main body of the report.

Reducing crime assessment

The reducing crime assessment sets out what North Yorkshire Police is doing to reduce crime and how effective this action is. This assessment doesn't include police recorded crime figures. This is because they can be affected by variations and changes in recording policy and practice, making it difficult to draw comparisons over time.

Problem-solving is a priority for the force and it helps to reduce crime. The force is investing in early intervention to reduce and prevent crime at the earliest opportunity.

The force works well with other organisations. This helps it to develop long-term, sustainable plans to find the root cause of repeat problems and to make changes that will help communities and prevent crime. When crimes take place, officers and staff generally take positive action to arrest offenders, and investigations are generally well supervised. However, there is still more to be done to consistently achieve appropriate outcomes for victims.

The force makes effective use of ancillary orders, such as Domestic Violence Protection Notices and Orders and the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme to reduce crime.

The force's neighbourhood policing teams work well with communities to understand and meet their needs. They are building the public's trust and confidence, encouraging them to share information to help deter and detect crime.

The overwhelming majority of recorded grounds for stop and search are reasonable. This helps the force reduce crime. The force understands and improves the way it uses [stop and search powers](#), through analysis and monitoring at force-level meetings. It can show that its use of stop and search is fair and effective, helping to reduce crime.

The force should continue to improve how quickly it answers 999 calls from the public.

More detail on what North Yorkshire Police is doing to reduce crime is included in the main body of the report.

Providing a service to victims of crime

Victim service assessment

This section describes our assessment of the service North Yorkshire Police provides to victims. This is from the point of reporting a crime and throughout the investigation. As part of this assessment, we reviewed 100 case files.

When the police close a case of a reported crime, they assign it an 'outcome type'. This describes the reason for closing it.

We selected 100 cases to review, including at least 20 that the force had closed with the following outcome:

Further investigation to support formal action not in the public interest – police decision.

Although our victim service assessment is ungraded, it influences graded judgments in the other areas we have inspected.

The force needs to improve the time it takes to answer emergency and non-emergency calls

North Yorkshire Police needs to improve how quickly it answers emergency calls and reduce the number of non-emergency calls that the caller abandons because they aren't answered.

The force effectively identifies and records vulnerable and repeat victims

When the force answers a call, it uses a structured process that considers [threat, harm, risk and vulnerability](#). It identifies repeat and vulnerable victims, meaning that it is fully aware of the victim's circumstances when considering what response it should give. Call handlers are polite and give victims advice on crime prevention and how to preserve evidence.

The force doesn't always respond promptly to calls for service

North Yorkshire Police doesn't always respond to calls for service within set timescales and it doesn't always inform victims of delays, meaning that victims' expectations aren't always met. This may cause victims to lose confidence and disengage from the process.

The force's crime recording is of a good standard

The force has effective crime recording processes in place to make sure that all crimes reported to it are recorded correctly and without delay.

We set out more details about the force's crime recording in the [crime data integrity](#) section below.

The force's investigations are mostly effective

In most cases, the force carries out investigations in a timely way. But it doesn't always complete all relevant and proportionate lines of enquiry. The force supervises most investigations well and regularly updates victims. Victims are more likely to have confidence in a police investigation when they receive regular updates.

A thorough investigation increases the likelihood of perpetrators being identified and arrested, providing a positive end result for the victim. In most cases, victim personal statements are taken. These give victims the opportunity to describe how that crime has affected their lives.

When victims withdraw support for an investigation, the force considers progressing the case without the victim's support. This can be an important method of safeguarding the victim and preventing further offences from being committed. In some cases, the force doesn't record whether it has considered using orders designed to protect victims, such as a Domestic Violence Protection Notice or Order.

The [Code of Practice for Victims of Crime](#) requires forces to carry out a needs assessment at an early stage to determine whether victims need additional support. The force doesn't always carry out this assessment and doesn't record the request for additional support.

In most cases the force assigns the right outcome type to an investigation and considers victims' wishes, but it doesn't always hold auditable records of them

The force closes crimes with the appropriate outcome types and records a clear rationale for using a certain outcome. This is effectively supervised. But the force doesn't always seek victims' views when deciding which outcome type to assign to a closed investigation. An auditable record of the victim's wishes isn't always obtained when required. In most cases the force does tell victims which outcome code was assigned to the investigation.

Crime data integrity

Good

North Yorkshire Police is good at recording crime.

The Home Office Counting Rules, which provide the standard for crime recording in England and Wales, have changed since the last time we inspected the force for crime data integrity.

This change mainly relates to the way forces record violent crime. This means we can no longer compare the findings from this audit to those from previous audits.

We estimate that North Yorkshire Police is recording 93.9 percent (with a confidence interval of +/- 2.4 percent) of all reported crime (excluding fraud).

We estimate that the force is recording 95.2 percent (with a confidence interval of +/- 3.7 percent) of violent offences.

We estimate that the force is recording 96.2 percent (with a confidence interval of +/- 3.2 percent) of sexual offences.

Areas for improvement

The force needs to improve how it records crime when antisocial behaviour personal is reported

The force is failing to record all crimes when [victims](#) report [antisocial behaviour personal](#). We examined 50 incidents and found that, of the 16 crimes that should have been recorded, only 9 were. Victims of antisocial behaviour are often subject to abuse and torment for substantial periods, and this crime is often committed by neighbours. Failing to record crimes and effectively tackle antisocial behaviour can mean victims live in fear in their own homes while being subjected to long-term abuse and torment by people living next door or in the local community.

The force needs to improve how it records equality data

The force's data for victims of crime shows that age and gender are well recorded. However, ethnicity is much less well recorded, and other [protected characteristics](#) are hardly ever recorded. The force should be collecting this information to understand the extent to which each protected group is affected by crime, how this differs from those without the protected characteristics, and whether a different approach is needed for these victims.

Main findings

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to crime data integrity.

The force effectively manages crime recording

The force has improved the crime-recording expertise of its crime recording and occurrence management unit. Trained staff are responsible for the recording, confirmation and classification of crime, cancelling crimes (where it is judged that a crime didn't take place, or was recorded in error), crime finalisation and outcomes. They are also responsible for quality assuring and [dip sampling](#) crime-recording decisions. This makes sure that a crime is recorded in those incidents where a crime is identified. Although there are some gaps where the standards around crime-recording may not be fully understood, these will be easy to correct. The crime recording and occurrence management unit is an effective example of how the force has improved its crime-recording performance by concentrating crime-recording specialists in a single unit.

The force doesn't always record reported incidents of rape correctly

The force doesn't always have a clear understanding of when to record an [N100](#) (reported incident of rape or attempted rape). We found four rape crimes that had been incorrectly recorded as N100s, and three N100s that weren't recorded at all. Rape is one of the most serious crimes a victim can experience. Therefore, it is especially important that reports are recorded accurately to make sure victims receive the service and support they expect and deserve.

Police powers and treating the public fairly and respectfully

Good

North Yorkshire Police is good at using police powers and treating people fairly and respectfully.

Area for improvement

The force should improve its recording of use of force, particularly the use of handcuffs for stop and search

During our audit of ten [body-worn video](#) recordings of [stop and search](#) incidents, half involved the use of handcuffs, and all were concluded without complaint from the searched person. The force needs to enhance its quality assurance process to make sure that it understands whether the use of handcuffs was needed, and that any learning is shared.

Main findings

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to police powers and treating people fairly and respectfully.

The force understands the importance of treating the public fairly and respectfully when using police powers

The force has a use of police powers board. This has strategic oversight of the use of police powers including [stop and search](#) and use of force. It considers how powers are used and the impact this may have on the communities in North Yorkshire.

All officers have received [unconscious bias](#) training. This helps officers to identify stereotypes and cultural influences and avoid allowing them to affect their behaviour and decisions. They have also received training in the use of stop and search powers, effective communication and the use of force. The training emphasises the importance of explaining each stop and search and considering how the search was carried out. Our audit of ten [body-worn video](#) recordings of stop and searches found that each search concluded positively and without complaint from the person searched.

During the year ending 31 March 2022 the force carried out 2,518 stop and searches, compared to 3,797 the preceding year. This is a decrease of 33.7 percent. This is a larger decrease than the 25.9 percent reduction across all forces in England and Wales. The force provided additional training to officers to increase their confidence in using these powers. The force told us that it recorded 1,756 searches between April and September 2023. If this level of searches continues for the remainder of the year ending 31 March 2024, this will be an increase compared to the previous year.

During our inspection, we reviewed a sample of 159 stop and search records from 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022. On the basis of this sample, we estimate that 85.5 percent (with a confidence interval of +/- 5.1 percent) of all stop and searches by the force during this period had reasonable grounds recorded. This is broadly unchanged compared with the findings from our previous review in 2021, when we found 86.8 percent (with a confidence interval of +/- 4.4 percent) of stop and searches had reasonable grounds recorded.

We found that officers were confident in the use of the stop and search powers, which may explain the increase in its use in the first six months of 2023/24. Our audit of how stop and search is used shows that officers understand the right circumstances in which to use this power.

The 'linked find rate' is where the stop and search results in finding a particular item or items that formed the officers' suspicion and grounds for the interaction in the first instance. Linked find rates should proportionately mirror the force's levels of stop and search use. In the year ending 31 March 2022, North Yorkshire Police's linked find rate was 22.6 percent. The find rate for all forces in England and Wales during the same time period was 22.2 percent.

The force scrutinises the use of force and stop and search powers well

Officers are aware that they must use body-worn video for all stop and search encounters and when they use force. The video is used as part of ongoing monitoring. The force has an automated system for monitoring both use of force and stop and search. The officer submits a record, and the system then notifies a supervisor to review the circumstances. This notification has a link to the record of the search and/or use of force, and the body-worn video footage. Once it has been reviewed, feedback is sent to the officer. Stop and search 'champions' select random samples to check the quality of the supervisory reviews. Any common themes that emerge are shared with the stop and search working group and the new use of powers board. The force is currently identifying champions to bring this additional scrutiny to the use of force.

The force has established area-based community review groups, which review stop and search and use of force and then share cases with the force-wide strategic scrutiny group. The scrutiny and community review groups are independently chaired and their membership is a good representation of the community. All attendees have received training in stop and search and have been offered the opportunity to go on patrol with officers. Both groups review documents connected to the incident, view the body-worn video footage and give feedback to officers. There is duplication in some of the meetings, which presents an opportunity for members of the strategic group to examine broader issues associated with use of police powers.

The community review groups and strategic review group provide feedback to individual officers and to the force as a whole, so that improvements can be made. We found that the panels reviewed the circumstances of each case thoroughly and offered effective challenge. They provided the force with meaningful insight to make improvements.

The force understands levels of disproportionality in its use of police powers

'Disproportionality' is when a particular group of people is affected by police action in a way that is substantially different from people not of that group. When examining disproportionality data for stop and search rates between people from ethnic minority backgrounds and White people, a value of less than 0.8 shows that a person from an ethnic minority background is less likely than someone who is White to be stopped and searched. A value higher than 1.25 shows that someone from an ethnic minority background is more likely to be stopped and searched.

In North Yorkshire, Asian or Asian British people were 3.5 times as likely to be stopped and searched compared to White people. The likelihood of a person who is Asian or Asian British being searched across England and Wales is 1.6. This is based on local population data from the 2021 census. The force has developed a detailed understanding of this information. It has identified where the searches have occurred and where the person searched resides, be that in North Yorkshire or elsewhere. The force told us that 25 percent of its searches involve people who aren't resident in North Yorkshire. Our audit showed that nine out of ten cases involving people from ethnic minority backgrounds had reasonable grounds recorded.

The recorded use of force by officers shows low levels of disproportionality. In the year ending 31 March 2022, 1.9 percent of all use of force incidents were against people from a Black or Black British background and 2.2 percent against those from an Asian or Asian British background. This is in comparison to the England and Wales figures of 13.6 percent for Black or Black British and 6.9 percent for Asian and Asian British.

The force has increased its recording of when it uses force

Officers are required to complete a use of force form when they use force on a person in the course of their duties. This record is reviewed by a supervisor who provides feedback to the officer. The force uses this information to identify themes in the use of force, and this contributes to the training officers receive. To improve the recording of use of force, North Yorkshire Police has developed a reminder system to alert officers to complete a use of force form. In the year ending 31 March 2022, the number of these forms that were completed was 52.3 percent higher than the previous year.

North Yorkshire Police was the fourth lowest force in England and Wales in recording an injury to the subject in the year ending 31 March 2022, at 2.8 percent. The England and Wales rate in the same period was 4.8 percent. The force was also the sixth lowest in recording an injury to the officer in the same year, at 2.1 percent of incidents. The rate across England and Wales was 3.2 percent.

Preventing and deterring crime and antisocial behaviour, and reducing vulnerability

Good

North Yorkshire Police is good at prevention and deterrence.

Promising practice

The force has focused on reducing vulnerability in rural areas

In isolated rural areas, it can be harder to access support services than in urban areas. The rural task force has worked closely with independent [domestic abuse](#) services to make sure they can spot the signs of abuse and can provide support to victims of domestic abuse.

The task force, in partnership with local farmers and nine other police forces, targeted poaching offences. The force told us that this operation saw a 34 percent reduction in offences between 1 January 2022 and 31 December 2022 when compared with the previous year. During this operation they identified the risk of harm to a child who was poaching with adults. Due to the nature of what the child had witnessed, this was immediately shared with children's social care, to protect the child.

Main findings

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to prevention and deterrence.

The force prioritises prevention and early intervention

An assistant chief constable is responsible for the force's neighbourhood policing strategy, which prioritises preventing and deterring crime and [antisocial behaviour](#), and reducing vulnerability. The neighbourhood policing performance framework gives a greater insight into the force's problem-solving activities.

Using our [value for money profile](#), published in February 2023, we can see that when compared to the most similar forces, North Yorkshire Police spends more on neighbourhood policing. The net spend in North Yorkshire is £17.22 per member of the population compared to £15.75 in similar forces. We found that there were more officers working in neighbourhood policing than are shown on the value for money profile. The proportion of resources allocated to neighbourhood policing demonstrates the priority the force gives to neighbourhood policing and that its approach is sustainable.

The investment in problem-solving 'tactical advisers' gives frontline staff access to advice on how best to resolve a problem. The tactical advisers evaluate all problem-solving plans, identifying good practice and areas for improvement. Their findings are used in monthly briefings and the annual problem-solving conference. The force plans to create an intranet portal to record what works well in problem-solving.

Problem-solving training has been given to officers and staff across differing areas of policing, to promote a problem-solving culture. The roads policing group, working with local councils and road safety groups, has successfully used the problem-solving approach to reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured on the roads in North Yorkshire.

The force has a good understanding of antisocial behaviour and vulnerability, and works well with partner organisations to address them

In the year ending 31 March 2023, North Yorkshire Police recorded 16,786 incidents of antisocial behaviour. This is a rate of 20.5 per 1,000 population and is similar to other forces across England and Wales. It is a reduction from the 20,918 incidents recorded in the year ending 31 March 2022.

In the year ending 31 March 2023, the force issued 18 community protection notices, 12 [Criminal Behaviour Orders](#) and used dispersal powers 151 times. The force works well with partner organisations, including local councils and health and fire services, and it shares information to prevent crime, antisocial behaviour and vulnerability. Its approach focuses on a location where problems occur, those likely to be victims and seeks to identify offenders who cause harm.

An example of this is Operation Beat (Bespoke Early Action Together), a partnership approach to tackling antisocial behaviour in Scarborough town centre. Young people accounted for 34 percent of reported incidents of antisocial behaviour. These young people were identified and worked with through a co-ordinated partnership approach. Key locations in the town centre were identified and supported with increased multi-agency patrols. Enforcement action using police and other agency powers was taken when required, including Criminal Behaviour Orders and health and safety legislation. This operation resulted in a 31 percent reduction in crime and antisocial behaviour reports involving young people.

The rural task force identified a growing trend in theft of high-value GPS systems from tractors. Through Operation Walrus, it worked with local farmers, the National Farmers' Union, the National Vehicle Crime Intelligence Service, the national rural crime unit and other police forces to focus on this criminality. The sharing of information identified a vehicle used by the offenders and they were subsequently identified and arrested. During April 2023, 15 GPS systems were stolen in North Yorkshire; this reduced to 0 in June and 1 in July.

The force works well with local communities, including new communities and those who are isolated

The force works well with local communities, in person and through social media, both in terms of sharing information and having two-way discussions. The force is using community messenger, a system that communities can subscribe to so they receive information that is relevant to them. Communities can also ask questions using this platform. Force data shows that the membership of this system has increased from 8,243 in October 2022 to 17,648 in October 2023. The force evaluates its online interaction with communities to identify the themes of most interest. This information is used to tailor future messaging.

The force identified the need to work with a new community from Albania. The neighbourhood teams have worked with this community, resulting in improved relations with local officers and police community support officers.

The rural task force has worked to develop links with rural communities, which can be isolated. To maintain and improve relationships with this community, the force uses WhatsApp and community messenger, and has visited farms and attended a variety of local events. This has resulted in greater local involvement in Rural Watch, a neighbourhood watch-style scheme set up to support communities in tackling rural crime.

The force supports local people to volunteer and become involved in local policing activities

The force has a small team of staff who look for roles that can be carried out by volunteers and then find people to fill them. They have made sure that volunteers are supported, and the most recent survey of volunteers has shown that they feel valued.

The special constabulary receive the same degree-level training as paid officers. The force is increasing the opportunities for special constables, which will include increased specialist training.

The force has an active volunteer police cadet scheme with young people from under-represented backgrounds.

The Rural Watch scheme benefits from 130 volunteers across its 30 rural watch groups. The force has shown that, during 2023, it was on track to benefit from 10,000 volunteer hours that are contributing to policing in North Yorkshire.

Responding to the public

Adequate

North Yorkshire Police is adequate at responding to the public.

Areas for improvement

The force should continue to improve how quickly it answers 999 calls

North Yorkshire Police has improved how quickly it answers 999 calls since [our last inspection](#). In the year ending 30 June 2023, data from BT shows that the force answered 60.6 percent of its 999 calls within 10 seconds. This was below the expected standard of answering 90 percent within 10 seconds. More recent data shows that this increased to 85 percent in September 2023. However, this is still below the expected standard. The force should continue to improve this performance.

The force should continue to improve its initial triage of calls for service

The force has improved its initial triage of calls, and the reassessment of incidents when attendance is delayed. Our audit found that a structured triage was correctly used in 84 of the 88 relevant calls. Since this audit, the force has adopted an enhanced tool for triaging initial calls for service, but our inspection found that this new approach to triage wasn't consistently being recorded by staff. The force is working to address this, and has scheduled further training.

Main findings

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to how well the force responds to the public.

The force has made significant improvements within its control room

The force is focused on the performance of its control room. It has increased the number of officers and staff that work in this area. This has been achieved through a sustained improvement in recruiting new staff and retaining existing skilled staff.

The force has adopted [Single Online Home](#), an internet-based tool that the public can use to report incidents to the police. This is well managed and provides the public with an alternative way to contact the police. The force plans to increase its digital options for the public to improve accessibility.

The force benefits from mental health services working within its control room during busier times. A 24-hour contact number for mental health specialists is available to provide advice to responding officers. This results in timely information from specialists being shared with officers to help them to reach better-informed decisions for people whose mental health conditions make them vulnerable.

The force has a structured approach to assuring the quality of the response to calls for service. This involves peer review – call-takers work with a supervisor who reviews how a call was handled and provides feedback. This approach benefits both the original call handler and the person undertaking the review, as they try to improve the quality of their services. The results from our audit were positive. We found that call handlers provided advice about crime prevention in 24 out of 25 cases, and advice about preserving evidence in 16 out of 18 cases.

The force has improved how quickly it attends emergency and priority calls

The force has reviewed its approach to attending emergency and priority calls. It has considered the numbers of officers that are required, their shift patterns and where they work from. The review has identified that once all officers are trained, the force will have the correct number to respond to calls. The force has amended its shift patterns to make sure it has enough officers working at times when it anticipates an increase in incidents. The force has created two new sites where responding officers will be based. This will further improve the speed of attendance, especially in rural settings.

The force has agreed standards for response times for emergency and priority calls. It aims to arrive at an emergency in an urban location in 15 minutes and a rural setting in 20 minutes. For a priority call, the force aims to arrive within one hour. Our audit found that attendance at incidents was within the required time frames in 51 out of 61 cases. The force told us that in October 2023 it attended 76 percent of rural emergency calls, 83 percent of urban emergency calls and 73 percent of priority calls within its time frames. This is a significant improvement from November 2022, where patrols attended 62 percent of rural emergency calls, 65 percent of urban emergency calls and 60 percent of priority calls within the force's time frames.

The force should reduce the number of non-emergency calls that the caller abandons because they aren't answered

The force has focused on improving its performance in answering calls for service. The force has told us that average answer time to its non-emergency 101 calls has reduced from 3 minutes and 29 seconds in October 2022 to 1 minute and 50 seconds in October 2023. The inspection found that this was due to increases in the number of people answering the calls and improvements in the management of the control room.

The force told us that the percentage of calls abandoned by the caller has reduced from 25 percent in October 2022 to 19 percent in October 2023, with an average rate of 23 percent. This is an area where the force should continue its efforts to make improvements.

Investigating crime

Adequate

North Yorkshire Police is adequate at investigating crime.

Areas for improvement

The force doesn't consistently achieve appropriate outcomes for victims

The force isn't always achieving acceptable outcomes for [victims](#) of crime. The number of crimes that the force solves following investigations is low. The force needs to understand the causes of this, and work to achieve better outcomes for victims.

In the year ending 30 June 2023, North Yorkshire Police recorded 40,415 victim-based crimes. Of these recorded offences, 8.9 percent were assigned an 'offences brought to justice' outcome. This is within the normal range compared to other forces in England and Wales. More specifically, 5.7 percent were assigned a 'charged/summonsed' outcome. This is within the normal range compared to other forces in England and Wales.

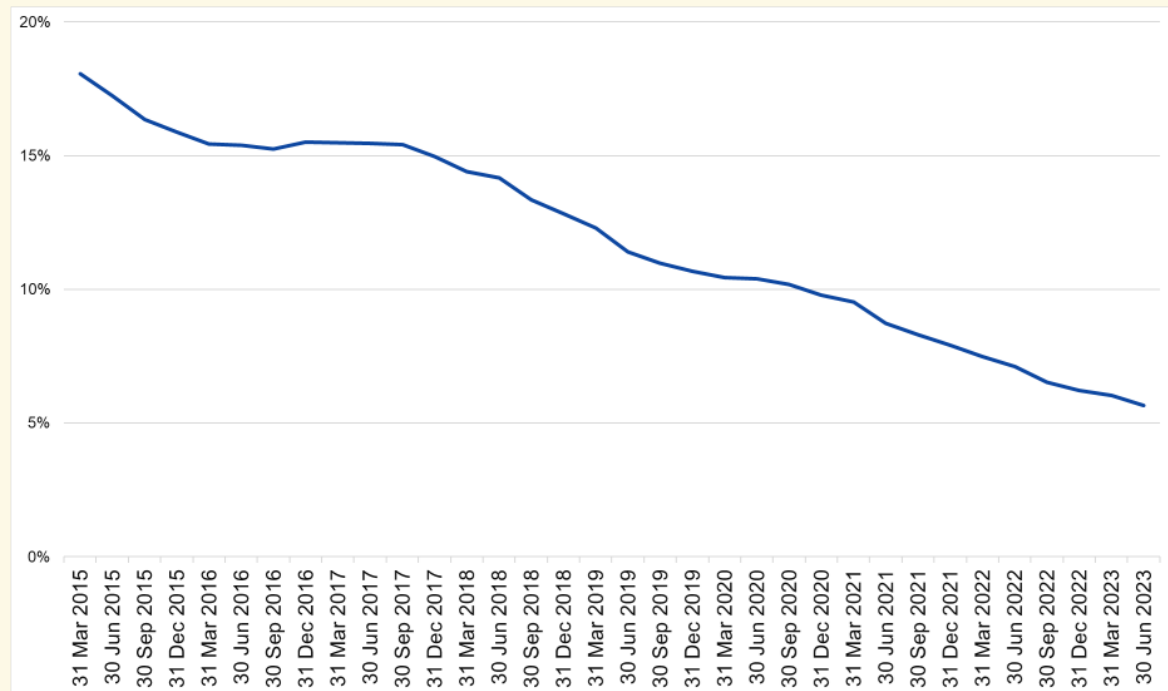
Figure 1: Percentage of victim-based crimes assigned specified crime outcomes by North Yorkshire Police compared with all forces in England and Wales in the year ending 30 June 2023

Outcome type	North Yorkshire Police outcome rate	England and Wales outcome rate
1 – Charged/summonsed	5.7%	4.8%
2 & 3 – Caution – youths & adults	0.9%	0.7%
8 – Community resolutions	1.4%	1.4%
9 – Prosecution not in the public interest (Crown Prosecution Service decision)	0.1%	0.0%
10 & 21 – Prosecution not in the public interest (police decision)	2.5%	0.9%
14 – Evidential difficulties (suspect not identified but the victim declines or is unable to support)	5.9%	5.7%
15 – Evidential difficulties (suspect identified; victim supports police action)	9.0%	12.2%
16 – Evidential difficulties (suspect identified; victim does not support or withdraws support)	27.6%	21.3%
17 – Prosecution time limit expired	0.3%	0.2%
18 – Investigation complete – no suspect identified	29.8%	42.1%
20 – Action undertaken by another body/ agency	0.9%	1.4%
22 – Diversionary, educational or intervention activity	0.7%	0.4%

Source: [Police recorded crime and outcomes open data tables](#) from the Home Office

In the year ending 30 June 2023, North Yorkshire Police assigned 5.7 percent of victim-based crimes a ‘charged/summonsed’ outcome. This was a decrease from 18.1 percent in the year ending 31 March 2015.

Figure 2: Proportion of victim-based crimes assigned a ‘charged/summonsed’ outcome (outcome 1) by North Yorkshire Police between the year ending 31 March 2015 and the year ending 30 June 2023



Source: [Police recorded crime and outcomes open data tables](#) from the Home Office

Between the year ending 30 June 2022 and the year ending 30 June 2023, the proportion of victim-based crimes assigned outcome 15: evidential difficulties (suspect identified; victim supports police action) by North Yorkshire Police has decreased from 10.4 percent to 9.0 percent. This value is lower than expected compared to other forces across England and Wales.

The force needs to make sure it assesses the needs of all victims so they can be properly supported

Under the revised [Code of Practice for Victims of Crime](#), all victims of criminal offences are entitled to a needs assessment. This identifies at an early stage any special measures that may be required to support them throughout the investigation and subsequent court case. In the 51 relevant cases reviewed, we found 26 without a clearly recorded victim’s needs assessment. In June 2023, a new victim template was implemented on the force crime recording system. The force told us that this has increased the completion of these assessments from 49 percent in June 2023 to 76 percent in August 2023. However, this is a new approach, and the force should maintain its focus on this area.

Main findings

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to how well the force investigates crime.

The force has improved its governance and oversight of investigations

The force has effective governance in place, with an investigation and crime standards board chaired by an assistant chief constable. The force has reviewed where it places its officers and staff to complete investigations. This has resulted in the creation of a safeguarding investigation team which will complete vulnerability-related investigations. The force has assessed the time needed to complete the differing investigations and has used this to allocate its investigating staff: 70 percent will be within the safeguarding investigation team and 30 percent in the criminal investigation department.

As part of the review of investigations, the force has identified the need to increase the number of accredited detectives. The force currently has places for 120 accredited detectives, and it is increasing this number to 148 [professionalising investigations programme 2 \(PIP 2\)](#) investigators – a combination of detective constables and PIP 2 police staff investigators. The force now has plans that will help it to recruit and train this additional number of officers. This increase in investigators will be welcomed by existing detectives and increase their capacity to meet the demands placed upon them.

The force has adopted quality assurance thematic testing, a structured approach to dip sample its investigations. This approach involves trained inspectors and chief inspectors who review investigations to establish the quality of service provided to victims of crime. The results are brought together to identify themes and areas where services to victims could be improved. The findings are presented at performance meetings, and activities are agreed to address areas in need of improvement.

The force generally carries out thorough and timely investigations

Our victim service assessment found that in 85 of 100 cases we reviewed, effective investigations were carried out. In 80 of 92 relevant cases reviewed, appropriate investigative opportunities were taken from the outset and continued during investigations. In 53 of 60 cases, staff completed appropriate investigation plans in line with the [College of Policing's authorised professional practice](#) guidance. This means that in most cases staff were identifying opportunities to collect evidence from the start of an investigation.

Out of the 100 cases reviewed, we found 6 cases that had been delayed. Often delays in investigations occur due to the technical work required to examine telephones or computers. The force has improved the time it takes to carry out this work, and this is reflected in our audit, which found that only two of the six delays related to examining devices.

The force pursues evidence-led prosecutions on behalf of victims whenever possible

Our victim service assessment audit found evidence that the force considered evidence-led prosecutions when victims didn't support police action. Investigators aim to make best use of all evidential opportunities, such as CCTV, witness testimony, body-worn video footage and initial call recordings. We dip sampled seven cases where an evidence-led prosecution would be appropriate, and in all seven cases this had been considered by the investigating officers. The force has given training to officers and staff about evidence-led prosecutions. Officers and staff told us of successful prosecutions where victims of domestic violence had been too frightened to provide a witness statement or go to court. We found that staff pursued evidence-led prosecutions whenever possible in order to safeguard victims and reduce crime.

The force has worked in collaboration with the Open University to successfully complete a bid for [Police STAR funding](#) to understand the impact of evidence-led prosecutions on victims. The force described this research as a further opportunity to tailor its services to meet the needs of victims.

The force's policy on allocating investigations would benefit from a review

The force has a policy that determines who carries out different investigations. This approach is overseen by a detective sergeant who records the reason why an investigation was allocated to a particular officer or team. Our audit of 100 cases found that 98 were allocated in line with the policy. However, following the restructure of the force investigation teams, and considering frustrations that staff shared with us, this policy would benefit from a review to make sure that investigations are allocated appropriately.

Protecting vulnerable people

Good

North Yorkshire Police is good at protecting vulnerable people.

Innovative practice

Tilly's story: building confidence to report serious sexual assault

In 2021, 14-year-old Tilly was subjected to a serious sexual assault by a person in a position of trust. This was reported to North Yorkshire Police, and following an investigation the suspect was found guilty at court and sentenced to ten years in prison.

Tilly wrote a poem about her experiences and the impact this had on her. She agreed for North Yorkshire Police to use this poem to help other victims build the confidence to report serious sexual assaults. The force has created [animation to work alongside Tilly's poem](#), and this has been shared with [safeguarding](#) organisations to help other victims.

The force has developed a service directory to help officers and staff to signpost people to appropriate services

The force has designed a directory that is available on officers' mobile devices. This lists over 500 support organisations that work in North Yorkshire. If a member of the public requires support, this can be accessed immediately by officers and staff, and the person can be referred to the most appropriate service.

Main findings

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to how well the force protects vulnerable people.

The force has improved its approach to reducing vulnerability

The force has identified vulnerability as a priority, and it has a vulnerability strategy to address this. The vulnerability board, chaired by an assistant chief constable, oversees the implementation of the strategy through an improvement plan. The force has fully reviewed its approach to reducing vulnerability and has created safeguarding investigation teams. These teams are made up of accredited investigators, who will carry out the more complex vulnerability investigations. The force believes this will improve its service to victims. At the time our inspection, the constabulary told us that the final safeguarding investigation team would be in place by December 2023. This has since been implemented.

As part of its review, the force identified a need to make more training available to make sure that officers and staff have the training and skills to carry out their role. The vulnerability board has maintained oversight of this, and it has resulted in a greater number of accredited investigators who can carry out complex investigations.

The vulnerability board uses a range of performance data to highlight areas for improvement. The board also acts on the results of the victim service surveys, which are carried out by the University of Leicester. The three police area leads are responsible for progressing any improvement actions that have been agreed, and for providing updates at subsequent meetings.

An example of the force taking action following feedback is its improvement in responding to reports of children who are missing from home. The force has moved to an IT system to record the actions following this kind of report. Officers and staff have received training to improve the force's response to these calls. We found that these reports were receiving much closer scrutiny. The critical incident inspectors that we spoke to confirmed this focus, and described the clearer direction that was being given to officers and staff in order to reduce the vulnerability of the missing person.

The force has an established [domestic abuse](#) scrutiny panel, which works to improve public confidence in the approach to domestic abuse and rape. The panel is independently chaired and reviews investigations to improve the quality of service to victims and the quality of the approach to these crimes. A range of partners including the Crown Prosecution Service and victim support are involved in the panels. We saw that these panels were identifying areas for improvement and, on occasion, reopening investigations.

The force has invested in accredited [SafeLives](#) DA Matters training for officers and staff. This is designed to improve the approach to domestic abuse and help victims to become safer sooner.

According to the results of the force's quality assurance thematic testing, a crime is more likely to be detected if an investigation plan was included at the start of the investigation. The force has updated officers and staff about this link and has encouraged them to carry this out. Our victim service assessment found that an investigation plan was completed in 53 out of the 60 cases audited, and in 49 of the 53 cases this plan was followed.

The force makes good use of the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme

The force makes good use of the [Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme](#), which it uses to protect people. The force has made more right to know and right to ask applications. In the year ending 31 March 2021, North Yorkshire Police recorded 364 right to know applications and 203 right to ask applications. In the year ending 31 March 2022, the force recorded 390 right to know applications and 346 right to ask applications.

We carried out a review of the backlog of Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme cases. We identified 22 cases awaiting a disclosure to the applicant, and found that in each case an attempt had already been made to disclose the information. The force has also outlined its plan to work with partner organisations, such as social care, when deciding whether to disclose an offender's history of domestic abuse. We found evidence of visits being made with a partner organisation, such as social care, to make disclosures. This joint working provides additional specialist support to those who are at risk of becoming a victim of crime.

The force understands the risk associated with serial perpetrators of domestic abuse. Where the same offender is involved in three or more domestic abuse incidents, they are identified by the domestic abuse officers. This allows for preventative activity to be planned to stop further repeat offending, and also to reduce the potential harm caused to those close to them.

The force has adopted the multi-agency tasking and co-ordination (MATAC) process to identify and tackle serial perpetrators of domestic abuse. We found that this approach has had a positive impact. The MATAC co-ordinator has successfully worked with the prison service to prevent those prisoners convicted of domestic abuse offences from making unwanted contact with their victims. Previously, serving prisoners could send letters to their victims. Under this approach, if it is confirmed that this contact is unwanted, the letters aren't sent to the victim, preventing further harm.

The sharing of information with safeguarding partners is being carried out well

[Multi-agency safeguarding hub](#) units are well structured and share workplaces with partner organisations, which creates an effective working relationship. Processes are well understood, staff are suitably trained, and safeguarding practices for the protection of adults and children are carried out in a timely manner.

The force has established processes within the [multi-agency risk assessment conference](#) function. A good range of partner organisations attend meetings to develop harm reduction plans to protect high-risk victims and children and to manage perpetrator behaviour. When partners fail to attend, we found evidence that this was being appropriately addressed.

The force has provided training to officers and staff to improve the quality of referrals to safeguarding partners. It has emphasised the importance of capturing the [voice of the child](#) while at incidents. It has adopted the AWARE principles to record information about a child's vulnerability: Appearance, Words, Activity, Relationships and dynamics, and the Environment.

We visited each of the three multi-agency safeguarding hubs in North Yorkshire. There were no backlogs or delays in referrals. We dip sampled a selection of police referrals and they provided the necessary information to inform safeguarding partners.

The force makes good use of preventative orders to safeguard the public

Our inspection found that the force makes good use of preventative orders such as Domestic Violence Protection Notices and Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPOs). We found that staff had been trained and understood when to use these powers. We also found that where these powers had been used, there was good follow-up to make sure offenders complied with the conditions. Where the conditions were breached, we found that enforcement action was taken against the suspect.

In the year ending 30 September 2022, North Yorkshire Police applied for 368 DVPOs at court, which equates to 4.5 applications per 10,000 population. This was higher than expected compared to other forces in England and Wales.

In the year ending 30 September 2022, North Yorkshire Police recorded 118 DVPO breaches, which equated to 1.4 breaches per 10,000 population. This was higher than expected compared to other forces in England and Wales and made it the second highest number of breaches recorded across forces during that period. This high number of breaches demonstrates that the force is proactive in enforcing the orders to protect victims.

In the year ending 30 September 2022, North Yorkshire Police recorded 351 DVPOs granted at court, which equated to 4.3 orders granted per 10,000 population. This was higher than expected compared to other forces in England and Wales. The force has carried out a review of its approach to DVPOs. It is seeking to improve its performance further, reflecting its improved approach to performance management.

Managing offenders and suspects

Good

North Yorkshire Police is good at managing offenders and suspects.

Main findings

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to how well the force manages offenders and suspects.

The force has clear policies on arresting wanted suspects

The force has clear and appropriate policies on the pursuit of people who are suspects of crime and listing them as wanted on the [Police National Computer](#). This allows officers in other forces across the country to see if a person is wanted when carrying out interactions such as stop checks or making arrests.

The force uses local daily management meetings to monitor how it pursues suspects. It briefs staff effectively at the start of their shift with details of people who are wanted. Higher-risk suspects, such as those involved in domestic abuse incidents, are escalated so that further action can be taken if they aren't apprehended swiftly. This helps to make sure victims are safeguarded at the earliest possible opportunity. The force has a clear understanding of exactly how many wanted people it has outstanding at any one time. This includes how long they have been wanted for and the nature of the offence they allegedly committed.

Our victim service assessment found that arrests of suspects were made promptly in 24 of the 25 relevant cases reviewed. The inspection also found there had been a reduction in the number of suspects who had been wanted by North Yorkshire Police for up to six months, from 229 on 12 October 2020 to 119 on 1 March 2022.

The force uses bail as an effective safeguarding tool to protect vulnerable victims

[Bail](#) is a tool used by police to protect and safeguard vulnerable people and locations by imposing conditions on suspects or offenders. Officers can use a wide range of bail conditions, for example to prevent suspects from approaching or contacting victims, or to prevent them from entering particular locations. This helps to prevent further crime being committed and to safeguard vulnerable people.

The force has good governance and oversight of its use of bail. It has a good understanding of its performance through its performance management dashboard. It has seen an increase in the use of police bail with a corresponding decrease in the use of [released under investigation](#) without the restriction of bail. For the year ending 31 March 2022, 30 percent of arrests used pre-charge bail. On 31 March 2023, this figure increased to 32.9 percent. Additionally, for the year ending 31 March 2022, 28.6 percent of arrests used released under investigation. For the year ending 31 March 2023, this figure decreased to 23.3 percent of arrests.

Where suspects have been released under investigation, a superintendent reviews the case after six months to make sure that the investigation is being carried out efficiently and effectively. The superintendent completes a written review which is shared with the officer investigating the case.

The force has improved its governance and performance oversight of the management of sex offenders and violent offenders

Since our last inspection, the force has made significant changes to way it approaches the [management of sex offenders and violent offenders](#). The development of performance dashboards has allowed supervisors to effectively oversee officer and staff workloads. The force has developed Operation Ankle, which is designed to reduce the risk to the public by preventing cases from being delayed and backlogs forming. When cases have been open for nearly 28 days, they are identified for Operation Ankle, which considers the use of overtime or other staff to complete visits. We found that cases were being managed within the required time limits.

The recruitment of additional staff into this area is already showing benefits to the management of offenders. The force told us that the average caseload for an offender manager is 45 cases. Some currently have higher caseloads, but the force anticipates that this will reduce when the new staff are in post. The force has also recruited two specialist digital media investigators to work with the management of sex offenders and violent offenders team. This has increased the capability to carry out investigations that are focused on digital media.

The force has also invested in the use of polygraph tests, which it is using creatively to increase its understanding of the risks posed by different registered sex offenders.

The force risk assesses registered sex offenders effectively and manages them in compliance with authorised professional practice

The force uses a nationally recognised risk-assessment tool for managing registered sex offenders. The risk assessments are completed by trained staff, and we found that they were detailed and identified potential risk areas to monitor. The quality of the risk assessments and the risk management plans showed a considerable improvement compared to our last inspection. We found a robust approach to proactively enforcing orders and making arrests for breaches, and a clear improvement in the quality of offender management.

The force has improved the quality of its offender management visits

During our last inspection we found that the force allowed officers to announce visits in advance and visit offenders on their own. This was a regular practice. The visits are now carried out unannounced with two officers present. The second officer is sometimes from the local neighbourhood team. In cases where two visits have been made without success, a supervisor will consider whether an announced visit should be made to make sure that the offender has been spoken to. An additional benefit of this approach is that local neighbourhood officers have a better awareness of registered sex offenders living in their area. Overall, the force's latest approach has resulted in improved offender management.

The force has a team dedicated to dealing with online child abuse

The force has a dedicated team dealing with all online child abuse. The team is able to carry out research and develop intelligence about suspects. The team told us that their caseloads are manageable. They are proactive in arresting suspects, which has resulted in there being no backlog in cases.

The force told us it is seeing increases in online child abuse cases referred to it. In 2018 it had 158 referrals and in 2022 it received 272. Due to this increase, which the force says has continued in 2023, it is recruiting two additional detectives to the team. The force monitors these investigations, so that the level of risk and the speed of enforcement action can be managed.

The force has worked to reduce the delay in examining suspects' computers and phones. A suitably accredited external company has been used to complete examinations of a large backlog of devices involved in lower-risk cases. This has significantly improved the force's performance compared to our last inspection. In high-risk cases this can be done on the day the request is made. The force has recruited new staff into this area and has managed to retain existing skilled staff, which it anticipates will prevent backlogs from forming again.

The reduction in the backlog of such examinations has resulted a large number of cases being passed back to investigators and increasing the demands upon them. This is being managed by the force and it is anticipated that this will resolve quickly.

We identified that the force doesn't have a policy for deleting the content of mobile phones, where indecent images of children may have been present, before they are returned to the owner. The force has already responded to this feedback, and told us it now has a policy in place for this.

The force has improved information sharing with safeguarding partners

In our previous inspection, we identified delays in sharing information with safeguarding partners. In this inspection, we found that this had been addressed by the force and that once a child was linked to an investigation, this was being promptly shared with social care.

The force makes good use of preventative orders

The force makes good use of preventative orders to manage the risk posed by suspects while on bail or after being released under investigation. The offender management unit has a bespoke civil orders officer who considers whether to impose a [sexual risk order](#) or [sexual harm prevention order](#). The force told us about one suspect under investigation who moved to Scotland, where bail conditions aren't enforceable. The civil orders officer obtained a sexual risk order, which allowed Police Scotland to manage the risks associated with the suspect while he resided in Scotland.

Building, supporting and protecting the workforce

Adequate

North Yorkshire Police is adequate at building, supporting and protecting the workforce.

Areas for improvement

The force needs to improve the effectiveness of its professional development reviews, which should be consistent across the workforce and valued by all

Professional development reviews (PDRs) should be an effective tool for officers and staff to record their objectives and achievements. PDRs are essential to helping supervisors understand the development needs of their officers and staff.

For the year ending 31 March 2023, the force's PDR completion rates were 81 percent for police staff, 87 percent for police officers and 92 percent for police community support officers (PCSOs). We found that officers and staff were positive about their monthly meetings with supervisors, but the majority we spoke to didn't value the annual PDR process.

Our PEEL workforce survey ran from 26 June 2023 to 21 July 2023. It found that, of those who had a PDR in the last 12 months, 54.4 percent (353 of 649 respondents) agreed that they value the process of these reviews. Just under half (47.1 percent; 306 of 649 respondents) of those who had a PDR in the last 12 months agreed that they were an effective tool in their development. But the force has more work to do to make sure the process feels meaningful for its workforce. It should make sure staff feel invested in the PDR process and that it is seen to add value to personal and professional development.

The force should improve its understanding of why officers and staff are planning to leave

Our PEEL workforce survey (which ran from 26 June 2023 to 21 July 2023) was open to all members of the workforce. Only 41.2 percent of new recruits said they see their career continuing in North Yorkshire Police past the next three years. Around a third (33.9 percent; 303 of 893 respondents) said they want to stay working for the force past the next three years. The force told us that no student officers have resigned since 31 January 2022. While this is the case, the published [police federation survey](#) identified that 19 percent of the force's officers wanted to leave as soon as they could or within two years, a substantial increase from 8 percent in 2021. The force has reviewed what happens when people announce their intention to resign from the force, and has introduced its 'say to stay' scheme. When someone says that they are thinking of leaving, a manager from a different area contacts them to address their reasons for leaving and encourage them to stay.

For officers and staff who continue with their plan to leave, there is now an exit questionnaire to better understand their reason for leaving. Previously, the officer or member of staff was asked whether they would like an exit interview. Now, there is a presumption in favour of staff having an interview before they leave, and they are asked to nominate their interviewer.

The force hopes that these recent changes will help it to retain skilled officers and staff.

Innovative practice

The force is reviewing the fitness test requirements of specialist posts

The force is working with the [College of Policing](#) to understand the fitness requirements for specialist roles such as firearms and public order policing. It is leading a review and pilot to establish the entry and ongoing fitness requirements of specialist officers.

If necessary, the force will then work with other sectors to design fitness tests to demonstrate the operational requirements. It is looking to explore whether the existing fitness standard is too high, preventing the recruitment of skilled, diverse officers to specialist roles.

Main findings

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to how well the force builds, supports and protects the workforce.

The force has improved governance in building, supporting and protecting its workforce

The force has improved its governance and oversight of its workforce since our last inspection. It has established strategic boards to be responsible for strategic plans. The boards include diversity, equality and inclusion, well-being, and strategic workforce planning. Each board has a delivery plan with clear actions that are regularly updated. The staff associations, networks and unions are involved in co-ordinated activity to make improvements for the workforce. The force has developed performance dashboards so the boards can identify themes and areas for improvement.

The force is improving how it supports the well-being of officers and staff in high-risk roles, and those experiencing potentially traumatic incidents

The force's well-being board has overseen a review of roles categorised as high-risk. The force has a comprehensive policy and process to screen those in high-risk roles and raise their awareness of the issues they may face. Officers and staff in these roles receive annual questionnaires. They are also offered annual meetings with the occupational health team, although take-up for these sessions has been low. The force explored a range of other ways to engage with these officers and staff, such as workshops and training sessions, but these had little effect. It has now made the occupational health meetings mandatory – staff in high-risk roles can only opt out with approval from their manager.

We found good evidence that the force values and promotes [trauma risk management](#). We found that officers had a good understanding of the trauma risk management scheme and of the force's commitment to promoting it.

Operation Hampshire is a nationwide strategy that has processes and guidance to help police forces understand, support and respond more effectively to assaults on police officers and staff. The force has adopted this approach, and we found that officers had a good understanding of this. In our PEEL workforce survey 72.9 percent of respondents (651 of 893 respondents) told us that North Yorkshire Police has a protocol to support officers and staff who have been assaulted.

The force has improved its preventative and reactive well-being measures but some of the workforce don't feel their well-being is supported

The force has worked quickly to respond to the areas for improvement we found during our last inspection. We found that the pace of change within the force has made many officers and staff uncomfortable. They understood the need for change, but many didn't feel involved in the changes that have been made. In our PEEL workforce survey, 72.2 percent of respondents (645 of 893 respondents) disagreed that change is managed well in North Yorkshire Police. Some officers said that the force hasn't considered or supported their well-being through this time, and that this needs to be addressed to make sure the changes and improvements are effective and sustainable.

The force has a shared well-being strategy with the North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service. This benefits both organisations through the sharing of well-being practice between the emergency services.

The force has used surveys to better understand what is affecting the well-being of officers and staff. The survey results have then been used in workshops with officers and staff to explore the themes that have been identified. They also inform sessions for officers and staff, which focus on the agreed themes, such as anxiety, sleep and depression.

The force has developed a well-being dashboard, which shows information that could have an impact on the well-being of officers and staff. This includes working hours, workloads, sickness, overtime worked and whether rest days have been taken. This information is shared with leadership teams, to identify any officers, staff or teams who may need additional well-being support.

In the year ending 31 March 2023, North Yorkshire Police had a 3.6 percent rate of long-term sickness absence among police officers as a proportion of the full-time equivalent staffing level. This was higher than expected compared to other forces in England and Wales. The force told us that this had since reduced to 2.2 percent in August 2023.

The force is making efforts to support new recruits and understand the issues they face

The force has retained its professional development hub, which is designed to provide ongoing support to student officers. The force has held focus groups with student officers to identify opportunities to remove frustrations and improve the experience of future student officers. The groups have identified that the shift patterns aren't fit for purpose. Student officers should finish their day at 4pm, but frequently this is the time when calls for service increase and the students are kept on overtime to assist with this. As a result of this feedback, the force has changed the shift pattern, allowing the students to start their shift later and finish at 7pm, which reduces the need for overtime.

The student officers also identified that it was challenging to find time to work on their university assignments, due to the operational demands placed on them. The changes to the shift pattern have allowed the student officers to have one day in every eight shifts to complete their university assignments while working in the professional development unit. The force has informed us that no student officers have resigned from the force since 31 January 2022.

The force has committed to developing its supervisors

The force has identified a need to develop its first-line leaders. This has resulted in the roll-out of the First Line Leaders Programme. The force told us that, by 30 October 2023, 90 percent of first-line leaders had attended the first two modules of the programme. Our PEEL workforce survey found that 81.8 percent of new recruits (139 of 170 respondents) agreed that their supervisor nurtures an environment of trust and confidence. In contrast, the survey found that only 59 percent of respondents with line manager responsibilities (154 of 261 respondents) felt equipped with sufficient training to carry out their line manager role. These survey findings highlight that the force must do more to develop its first-line managers.

The force is committed to supporting the development and career progression of officers and staff from under-represented groups

The force has a good positive action strategy, with strong governance and drive behind it. We found that the diversity, equality and inclusion lead (an assistant chief constable) has strong personal drive, and the feedback about them from staff and networks was positive. Between February and June 2022, the force invited the College of Policing to carry out a peer review of its approach to diversity, equality and inclusion, the findings of which have been used to inform the force's plan.

The force has taken various steps to better understand the barriers to progression for under-represented groups – for example, it has worked with staff networks and surveyed staff.

The force is progressing a lot of positive action work, and has good supportive measures in place to develop and support members of under-represented groups. It has developed positive action champions, from a variety of ranks and grades across the departments. Their number continues to grow.

The force is also supporting under-represented groups through mentor and coaching schemes. It holds a range of masterclasses, covering topics such as promotion preparation. It is identifying people who have shown an interest in promotion or more senior roles, and using this information to track whether people then apply for roles and if they are successful. The force sees this an opportunity to understand the barriers to applying for different roles and to understand why people have been unsuccessful. The force intends to identify barriers so they can be addressed.

Leadership and force management

Adequate

North Yorkshire Police's leadership and management is adequate.

Areas for improvement

The force needs to better understand its demand, so it can manage it more effectively

The force has invested in IT to introduce new digital processes to reduce some of the demands placed on the workforce. It has made some positive steps, such as providing laptops so operational staff can work on the move, and using digital solutions like Microsoft Power BI to automate data presentation. But the force isn't maximising the potential of the technology it has available to enhance productivity, hindering its overall progress. For example, we found that inefficient internal processes were still creating hidden demand for the workforce.

It is important that the force invests in its ability to explore and implement process improvements, such as using automation and robotics to replace repetitive manual tasks. But the force currently lacks the capacity it needs to fully develop these technologies. This investment would make the force more efficient and increase productivity and workforce capacity. This would help the force to be much more effective in meeting the challenges posed by rising demands.

The force also needs to develop a better understanding of unlogged external demand. This includes contact from the public which isn't recorded as an incident or crime. While the force has started to consider these demands, it currently lacks a good understanding about their causes. This understanding is crucial to address them, which will help it to reduce future demand.

The force needs to develop its organisational change processes and effectively engage with its officers and staff to improve its performance

Since [our last inspection](#), the force has rapidly introduced organisational changes to help it improve performance and provide a better service. The force has made substantial progress, but now needs to refine its business change processes to support continued improvements. For example, staff in some areas of the workforce told us they feel disconnected from the ongoing change programme and were unclear about what the force planned to do and how they could contribute.

Effective communication with the workforce is an important part of business change and will make sure ongoing and future plans are implemented successfully. The force needs to make sure it has a clear focus on improving workforce engagement and providing effective support after plans have been implemented.

In addition to addressing workforce-related concerns, the force must also prioritise the development of its processes for evaluating the benefits of its plans. This involves better understanding how investments are providing value for money. By improving the way it assesses and measures project outcomes against expectations, the force can learn lessons and make sure that improvements can be made when projects haven't worked as well as intended.

Main findings

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to leadership and management.

The force has an effective strategic planning framework, making sure it tackles what is important locally and nationally

The force has developed a clear 'plan on a page' which reflects the North Yorkshire [police, fire and crime commissioner's *Police and Crime Plan 2022–25*](#). During our inspection, we assessed how the force manages its performance to help it meet those priorities. The force has successfully introduced a new strategic planning framework, changing its governance structure and the way that it scrutinises performance. Its governance arrangements make good use of quality data, and this allows it to accurately measure its performance. These measures are strategically aligned with the force's 'plan on a page', which makes sure that it effectively addresses local and national priorities.

The force has also made significant progress by restructuring enabling services (such as HR, IT, finance, estates and vehicle fleet) to provide greater clarity and accountability. The force has also introduced a strategic workforce plan, which is overseen within the new governance structure to make sure that resourcing decisions are effective and align its capacity with its priorities. As a result, we saw evidence of sustained improvements in performance, enabling the force to respond more effectively to its priorities and meet its community's needs.

There is a good level of investment in leadership

The force's senior leadership is actively working towards increased visibility and engagement with the workforce. But there is still room for improvement in internal communications and gathering views from the workforce. This will provide the force with a better understanding about how its leaders are perceived and what the workforce needs, so they are able to perform their roles efficiently and effectively.

The force has made significant investments in developing its leadership, and has recently introduced the first-line leadership development programme for its sergeants. It plans to introduce a similar programme for its inspectors, and to make further investments in the development of leaders at all levels to make sure they have the skills and abilities they need to lead high-performing teams.

The force recognises the value of external perspectives and actively recruits talent from outside the organisation into its senior roles, bringing new thinking and diverse experience to the force. This is helping it to be more creative, and supports its commitment to continuous improvement.

The force's financial plans, including its investment programme, are affordable and will support it to continue to meet future demands

The force displays an effective approach to financial management and its plans are prudent. The forecasts in its [medium-term financial plan](#) are based on realistic assumptions about future funding and expenditure.

In the year ending 31 March 2023, North Yorkshire Police received £179m in funding. In line with other forces in England and Wales, it receives a combination of core grant from central government and a percentage that is raised through council tax [police precept](#). The force received a total of £87m of funding through its precept. This is 48.8 percent of the force's total funding and is higher than most other forces.

North Yorkshire Police has received help from a 4.99 percent increase in precept for 2023/24. This provided an extra £14.03 per band D property and was allocated to supporting the force's plans, including investment in the control room and an extra 25 police officers. Despite this increase, the force estimates that it still has a budget deficit of £8.7m in the current financial year. However, this is due to the scale of investment it is making to improve the service provided to the public. The force has identified areas where it can make efficiency savings, and is confident that its plans are achievable and will help it to maintain a balanced operational budget over the years ahead.

Capital expenditure for 2022/23 amounted to £6.2m of new investment, which the force used to make improvements in performance. These included investments in IT and vehicle fleet, and improvements to police buildings to help the force operate more efficiently. The force uses its reserves prudently, but budgetary pressures mean it has needed to draw on them frequently. The force holds general reserves in the region of 3 percent of its net revenue budget, which is considered an adequate amount.

In the year ending 31 March 2023, 13.5 percent of North Yorkshire Police's officers were in support roles. This was in line with other forces in England and Wales.

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