

Force Management Statement 2023

Strategic Overview



#TeamLeicestershire



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Force Management Statement 2023 - Strategic Overview

Introduction

The annual Force Management Statement (FMS) is an extensive internal self-assessment produced by Leicestershire Police. It is based on guidance by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire Services (HMICFRS).

This Strategic Overview considers and summarises the key findings from the FMS process in 2023 and considers them alongside external factors affecting Leicestershire Police.

The FMS and external factors have been brought together to inform the force's strategic direction.

The strategic direction sets out areas of focus for Leicestershire Police and informs plans to deliver an effective, efficient and legitimate police service for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. They align with the Police and Crime Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan. They also help prepare our budget build in 2023 and Medium-Term Financial Plan.

This overview sets out:

- the key external factors we have considered
- what the FMS consists of and its key findings compared to last year, and
- the strategic direction we are taking to deal with the issues identified.

The FMS is a moment in time. Leicestershire Police has built live systems and processes to analyse our capability and performance on an ongoing basis. We use these systems throughout the year to evaluate progress, to inform decision-making, and to provide transparency across the organisation about performance.

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland and HMICFRS have access to our performance data. This provides transparency and accountability on a continual basis. It means they are able to look at force performance and provide scrutiny in a timely, regular way. The force is therefore better able to make continuous improvement as part of day-to-day governance in addition to scheduled inspections and formal reporting.

The force checks and challenges the strategic direction annually. This allows us to respond to, or realign with, any significant changes to our capability over the year as well as any new or emerging external factors. It also allows us to learn from and improve what we have found during the year to strengthen our planning.

Improvement is continuous. The force is building on a positive HMICFRS PEEL (policing effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy) assessment published in April 2022 and preparing for another full inspection in 2024. In 2022 HMICFRS assessed Leicestershire Police as outstanding in three areas, good in four areas and adequate in two. These independent findings informed our strategic priorities at the time, particularly with regard to responding to the public and investigating crime. What we are doing in these areas is an important feature of this FMS.

What are the external factors?

To inform our strategic direction, we considered a range of different types of external influences affecting Leicestershire Police's work in the medium-term.

Type	External factors in brief, as at May 2023
Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - UK government's "Beating Crime Plan" - City Council, County and Mayoral election results in May 2023 - Police uplift programme - Latest census, increasing our young and diverse population - Disorder in east Leicester in summer / autumn 2022 - International politics affecting our local communities
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National economic conditions and inflationary pressures - Potential procurement and supply chain disruption - NHS, City and County Council budget pressures - National pay awards and cost of living rises for officers and staff
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Damage to trust and confidence in policing: impact of Sarah Everard murder, police misconduct cases, misogyny and racism - Expectations of the police service's ability to deliver (when policing is not the lead provider) - Changing demographics in Leicester and housebuilding in Leicestershire - Employment offer and conditions: hybrid working, wellbeing, digital access, competition for specialist roles, salary levels
Technological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raised expectations of police engagement on digital channels - Expectation of efficiencies through technology - Hybrid working practices - Pressure on supply of skills and some hardware - Complex data management
Legal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 - College of Policing, HMICFRS and NPCC professional practice - Changes to public order and protest legislation - Accreditation processes - Criminal justice system requirements
Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PCC's Police and Crime Plan - UK Government's commitment to net zero by 2050 - Fuel costs

The table above summarises the key external factors affecting Leicestershire Police at a strategic level.

However, it is important to highlight three other external factors which have shaped preparations of this FMS. Public disorder and tensions in east Leicester in 2022 had a political, economic, social impact on the force. Secondly, a strongly competitive employer market has put pressure on recruitment for specialist roles in information technology, human resources and some police staff functions. Thirdly, external inflationary pressures and pay awards agreed nationally have prompted the need for internal rationalisation, further prioritisation, and may lead to reductions to services in some areas and a smaller organisation at a time of higher demands and expectations.

In combination, these factors have added to significant challenges to the public's trust and confidence in policing nationally and the service Leicestershire Police provides.

Addressing trust and confidence in our service locally is our top priority.

The force has carried out a detailed Strategic Threat and Risk Assessment to mitigate external factors. This identified particular operational risks and threats the force might experience. This assessment is reviewed internally and scrutinised by HMICFRS, the Police and Crime Commissioner and other relevant agencies.

The force has also assessed and reviewed its internal capabilities through a rigorous process. In 2022/23 our processes were further developed using new methodology and data. The FMS now uses data, interviews and analysis to present a comprehensive picture of the demands on the force, both operationally and on its support functions. This informs strategic decision-making as a whole, and means Chief Officers and senior responsible officers are able to prioritise to provide the best possible service to the public.

What does the FMS consist of?

The Force Management Statement (FMS) is a detailed self-assessment of:

- the demand the force expects to face in the future;
- the current performance, condition, composition, capacity, capability, serviceability and security of supply of its workforce, and the extent to which current force assets will be able to meet expected future demand;
- how the force will change and enhance its workforce, policies, practices and other assets to cope with future demand;
- the impact the Chief Constable expects those changes to have and the effect of any residual risk of service failure; and
- how the force has aligned its current financial profile and developed its medium-term financial plan to prioritise and achieve the areas for investment highlighted within the FMS.

This detailed internal assessment includes an Organisational Risk Assessment (ORA) using the national MoRILE team's guidance.

In 2022's FMS, the force identified five strategic themes. They were:

- workforce development
- the post-pandemic operating environment
- financial sustainability
- digital capability
- collaboration

This built on the year before which saw the same strategic challenges emerging. Significant transformation and focus had been given to those areas to mitigate risk and manage demands. Understandably, many of those challenges were not resolved in-year completely and feature again.

This year, supported by stronger data and mapping, the focus of the FMS has been refined.

The strategic themes for 2023 are:

- digital capability
- workforce development
- volume and complexity of demand at first contact and at neighbourhood level
- financial sustainability
- collaboration and partnership

Digital capability

The importance of digital investment and delivery to manage demand and find efficiencies has continued to be very high. It is an enabler and key to the requirements of other strategic themes.

Investment across the force has introduced new capabilities and efficiencies but complexity and demand remain very challenging. Prioritisation and availability of key skills in information technology are most challenging. There are continuous efforts to prioritise, horizon-scan and manage out systems reaching end-of-life. There is a challenging balance to strike between sustaining business as usual on existing systems and infrastructure and the time and resource required to bring on board new or more efficient systems or infrastructure. A comprehensive review of Information Technology services and a new digital governance structure is being rolled out to maximise the level of service and prepare for the future. A competitive labour market for many of the specialist skills required is an additional factor which the force is seeking to manage. Retaining and attracting people to the relevant roles is key and part of the force's plans.

Digital capability and capacity continue to be enablers for some of the efficiencies and productivity changes the force wants and needs to make. It remains deeply interwoven with workforce development as we look to retain and attract the right skills in support functions and upskill the frontline. Finance considerations are important to digital because of the scale and rolling nature of investments.

Regarding the public's trust and confidence in our service, digital capabilities and solutions play a significant role, particularly with regard to contact and the quality of our service, victim updates, and accessibility.

Our considered view based on evidence is that digital capability has moved to become the highest priority within the FMS, closely tied to workforce development. It attracts very close scrutiny by force leaders.

Workforce Development

The force recognises that its second biggest challenge and opportunity is a once-in-a-generation turnover of staff and officers in the short-term. The force successfully met its force recruitment and uplift target, but the departure of officers at the end of their service and heightened competition for some specialist roles mean risk and reward are finely balanced.

New recruits are bringing new experience, skills and diversity. The national recruitment drive has accelerated the force's progress to being more representative of the people it serves. The latest census data showed that there is more to do, despite progress, to recruit officers from ethnic minority backgrounds.

The force has recognised the risk of potentially losing the skills and knowledge of officers and staff with long service. It has updated how progression and professional development will be led across the force, with a renewed emphasis on developing supervisory, management and leadership skills.

As seen in 2022, the functions which support a larger frontline (HR, IT, planning, diversity & inclusion, fleet etc) have seen increased demand and pressures. Risk in these areas is higher in 2023. This is being mitigated through streamlining of processes and overall demand reduction (more below). Investment has been earmarked for human resources to maximise support to the frontline and strengthen the service. Wellbeing and Occupational Health have been prioritised in a revised local provision under new leadership.

The force continues to carry a higher than normal vacancy rate in staff positions. This is partly to offset financial pressures in-year, but also because some roles have proven difficult to fill. Competition for specialists, in particular in digital, is strong in both the public and private sector. This has a knock-on impact on capability and capacity to support the frontline and is being scrutinised very carefully by Chief Officers.

Workforce development continues to be a constant focus for risk assessment and gap analysis. Work development still has critical importance to delivery and is interdependent on other priorities, notably finance, digital capability and demands on the frontline.

Developing and building the capacity and capability of the force's people runs deeply through the FMS. A strong and motivated workforce is essential to deliver a service which holds the trust and confidence of the public and can help manage or mitigate some of the risks identified in high priority areas.

Volume and complexity of demand at first contact and at neighbourhood level

The latest census confirmed a rise in the population in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. Notably, it recorded an even more diverse city and significant house-building in the county of Leicestershire.

The force's Targeting Operating Model (TOM), implemented in 2020, put more officers, including investigative/CID capability, into local areas in preparation for the uplift and to strengthen our impact in neighbourhoods. Assessment of the model this year has identified many benefits but also indicated that demand is still very high where the force deals with first contact and at a neighbourhood level. This has rolled additional pressures and challenges into other parts of the force.

The TOM's aim was to meet the demand and expectations of local communities and provide a scale-able and flexible framework on which to rollout new officer numbers. This model is still relevant and valuable. However, the force is exploring adjustments in 2023, based on the FMS, internal audit and review, and external factors in 2022/23 to reduce demand in key areas. Productivity and efficiency may be found in these service improvements but the core objective will be to improve and strengthen the quality of the service to the public.

Similar to last year, FMS 2023 indicates high levels of demand to protect vulnerable people e.g. mental health, domestic abuse and criminal exploitation. Demand on investigators, in specialist units or in local police stations, is significant. We found much of this comes from stretched resource at contact and in neighbourhoods. This therefore links directly with a wider challenge of mobilising the capacity and support of partners – local authorities, NHS trusts, criminal justice agencies, other emergency services - to lead or provide joint-efforts when policing is not the lead agency. Managing, preventing or signposting this demand to the most appropriate agency is key.

How the force builds on its operating model at a local level and manages demand is central to trust and confidence. It is where the public is most likely to experience police services. A renewed focus on standards and good service in these areas relies heavily on the other strategic themes of finance, workforce development, collaboration with partners, and digital capability.

Financial sustainability

In FMS 2022, financial sustainability was a strategic theme because there was a requirement to demonstrate sustainable investment to support increased officer numbers, improvements to technology, and to maintain Value For Money for the public. The force was able to report the healthiest financial position for a decade.

The force maintains good financial management by developing a medium-term financial plan (MTFP) that covers a period of at least four financial years, and this provides a longer-term view which enables informed decision-making to take place for the period of the plan.

In 2023, however, the financial challenges are greater and the risks are higher. This is due to an unfunded pay award from central government for 2023/24 and additional inflationary pressures. Local funding has needed to meet a shortfall of £9.9m (figures submitted to the Police and Crime Panel in January 2023) in the immediate term to cover an unfunded pay award (£4.8m), an IT inflationary increase (£1.5m), utilities and fuel (£2.1m), and other expenses including overtime (£1.5m). Managing this shortfall in the short-term is important in order to protect and limit any additional gap in 2024/25 and future years of the MTFP.

The 2023/24 budget continues to facilitate an increase of police officer establishment to 2,242, where the majority of officers are in Neighbourhood Policing Areas. These numbers are protected but it puts significant pressure on police staff salaries and other expenditure in-year. Sizeable savings are being found through active vacancy control among staff roles and departmental-level reviews of other spending and investment. There is an increased risk that vacancies in staff roles will put further demand on officers or affect levels of service.

In the short-term, a careful balance is being applied when managing vacancies in order to ensure delivery of service, support investment in areas we need (e.g. IT and contact handling), and find savings. In the medium-term, steps to reduce demand and complexity through adjustments to the force's operating model intend to consolidate efficiencies, time savings, and reduce pressures on service.

Financial sustainability is a cross-cutting theme because of its importance to the other strategic themes and risks in the medium-term. The interrelation between finance and workforce development (notably vacancy management and productivity) and digital investment are pivotal.

Collaboration and partnership

Leicestershire Police has a strong track-record in contributing to regional collaboration in order to find efficiency and productivity. Regional collaborations changed in 2022, notably the dissolution of the East Midlands Criminal Justice Service, shared Occupational Health Services and an ongoing review into the East Midlands Special Operations Unit. This was brought about by other forces in the region choosing to disaggregate some collective agreements.

In 2023 the force returned criminal justice services and occupational health in-house, while still maintaining an interest in regional collaboration where we can. This has brought operational benefits but has had a financial impact and has increased risk in criminal justice management in particular. This area continues to be scrutinised with care.

Beyond policing, our collaborations and partnerships with other agencies in the Local Resilience Forum have been brought into sharper focus by external factors. They include the Covid-19 pandemic, dealing with disorder in east Leicester, budget pressures in the public and third sectors, increased calls to manage protest, plus continued high-levels of demand to support vulnerable people. All of these factors have contributed to collaboration remaining a strategic theme in 2023, closely aligned with financial sustainability as well as volume and complexity of demand.

There is a link with public confidence and collaboration which the force is exploring. The force is considering how to make sure that public expectations of police services are met and not conflated with the roles or work of other agencies.

Using the FMS to inform Strategic Direction

We developed our strategic direction from the FMS and other components (see diagrams below). This refines and improves what we did in 2022. In essence, FMS 2023 is the evidence base which has informed how and where the force will strengthen the public's trust and confidence in Leicestershire Police.

We have a clearer holistic view this year, supported by data, insight and risk assessment of both our capabilities but also the external factors affecting delivery. This has helped us identify our highest risks and pressing priorities (the strategic themes developed here), underpinned by detailed analysis department by department.

We have sought to simplify to give greater clarity and accountability to leaders across the organisation.

Our overall aim is to strengthen trust and confidence by delivering a good service through high standards.

Our strategic direction is to:

- Make everyday improvements to our service and standards while investing in the big projects that make a meaningful difference (in IT, workforce development, demand reduction, finance etc), and;
- Seek to deal with demand and other pressures as early as possible following (or before) contact with the public (This is set out in the layers diagram below).

In combination, both will mitigate the risks explored in the strategic themes and build trust and confidence in our service.

The layers and their accompanying workstreams are reviewed and evaluated against specific metrics under the force's governance structures, owned by Chief Officers, and delegated to leaders across the organisation. A force-wide assessment of progress takes place quarterly and is scrutinised on a regular basis by the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Using the FMS and other drivers to strengthen trust and confidence in all we do:



Using layers to deliver our strategic direction



What does the FMS consist of?

This Strategic Overview has set out the key themes of our Force Management Statement 2023. It has shown how this internal assessment has been combined with an assessment of external factors to inform the force's strategic direction.

The full data and underpinnings of the FMS are available to the HMICFRS and the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner so that they can be tested, verified and explored in context.

Leicestershire Police intends to refresh this document in 2024 to evaluate our approach, assess learning and progress, all with a view to strengthening the trust and confidence of the people we serve.

I submit this Force Management Statement on behalf of Leicestershire Police.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Rob Nixon', written over a circular stamp or seal.

Chief Constable Rob Nixon QPM

Date: 12.06.23

Our Duty

is to protect our communities



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Engagement

Respect

Victims

Investigations

Communication

Every time

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