

For Information	
Public	Yes
Report to:	Strategic Resources & Performance
Date of Meeting:	4th November 2020
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Agenda Item:	6

Missing from Home Update

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To update the Police and Crime Commissioner in relation to the performance and situational context of the Missing From Home (MFH) Team. This report covers: HMICFRS findings, recommendations and progress, the demand profile, risk assessment process, force and inter-agency response, and lessons learnt from other forces.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the contents of the report are noted.

3. Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 To inform the Police and Crime Commissioner of the Force activity and progress.

4. Summary of Key Points (this should include background information and options appraisal if applicable)

4.1 HMICFRS Recommendations and Improvement in Service:

The Missing From Home (MFH) team were last subject to an HMICFRS Inspection in 2015. At that time, a number of recommendations were made which related to:

- managing data,
- trigger plans for repeat missings
- improving our response to persistent and repeat missing children by integrated multi-agency responses.

Each of these recommendations have now been implemented (completed) and significant other progress has been made.

We continue to gather information from forces that have been subject to more recent inspections in order to develop this business area, identify best practice and promote organisational learning.

Each piece of information is assessed and where appropriate, is translated into an action and recorded in the '4P' action plan. The plan provides the basis for a monthly performance meeting which is chaired by the Chief Inspector who leads for MFH. This in turn is reviewed by the Force Strategic Lead (Superintendent) for MFH in a quarterly meeting.

One example of an area highlighted from another force, included the limited availability of regional mental health support provision. The team have successfully mitigated this by implementing an "access to support" approach which is either provided to missing people upon their return or by linking with the Street triage team for further input.

The team have embedded a daily multi-agency response at a tactical level through meetings which link vulnerable and repeat missings into social care services (Hotspot meetings) and other relevant partners.

Risks associated with CSE and County-lines are now mitigated by working closely with dedicated teams linked to Modern Slavery, County Lines, SEIU and Child Abuse. The teams have a deeply embedded approach to sharing information and identifying emerging trends that impact this area of business.

Further governance and oversight at a force level is provided under the Children and Adult Safeguarding Boards.

MFH work together in two teams, but with a clear delineation of responsibility: The locate team; who take primary responsibility for finding people when they are reported missing, and the safeguarding team; who focus on prevention, particularly for those who have repeat missing episodes, and intervention, to ensure the appropriate "joined up" safeguarding package is implemented when people are located.

This approach enables us to respond effectively to missing cases of all risks and also to focus on the continuing management of vulnerability and risk in a longer term problem solving approach.

The teams have shared responsibility for the safeguarding oversight of Missing no Apparent Risk (MISNAR). The team review Missing No Apparent Risk Incidents to ensure the information is shared with partners and policies are adhered to, ensuring any discrepancies are rectified, challenged or raised with the appropriate person or department, providing advice and guidance where required.

It is also worthy of note that some of our high risk and repeat missing persons have been quickly located and robustly safeguarded by Nottinghamshire police through the use of police protection and Child Abduction Warning Notices (CAWNs) displaying the pro-active approach the MFH team take in the use of police powers and tools in keeping people safe from harm.

A further key development undertaken this year is the harnessing of new technology (Terragence) to assist in tracing missing people through our ability to process phone data more effectively. This technology reduces the time spent searching and the resources required to do so, representing a cost saving and increase in performance putting us at the forefront nationally when searching for missing persons.

The value of this development is best demonstrated by the month on month improving picture relating to reduction in number of hours missing (see 4.3 below – September’19 vs September’20 as an example)

The success of the overall approach is reflected in demand reduction (year on year) MFH’s – see below.

4.2 Missing no Apparent Risk (MISNAR) approach and performance:

Although the MFH team have responsibility for overseeing safeguarding in respect of Missing No Apparent Risk, MISNAR incidents are managed within the control room, who always assess any associated vulnerabilities before deciding on risk.

The control room review and risk assess these incidents at a maximum interval of every 6 hours. This process repeats up-to a maximum of 72 Hours, at which point the incident will be converted into a “police attend” incident and is dealt with from that point as a MFH.

However, the incident can be upgraded at any point for officer attendance. As such, MISNAR demand does not impact front-line resources unless the incident is re- classified (“up-risked”) to a missing from home case.

MISNAR PERFORMANCE:

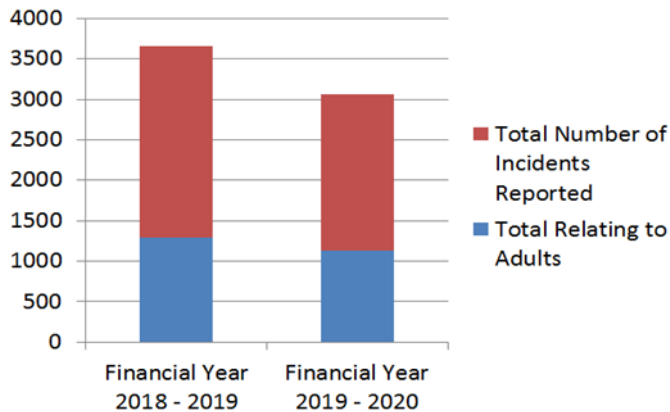
Financial Year	Annual Total	Volume Change	Percentage change
2018/19	2865	-276	-8%
2019/20	2944	+79	+2%

The demand in respect of MISNAR’s is relatively static. Nottinghamshire experienced a decrease in ‘18/19 of 8% and then a very slight increase in the most recent year ‘19/20 of 2%.

The minimal growth reflects an appropriate approach to risk recording in the FCR.

4.3 Missing From Home performance:

DEMAND PROFILE – MISSINGS – LOW/MED/HIGH



The proportion of MFH’s in the most recent performance year is split: 63% are children (red bar chart) and 37% are adults (blue bar chart).

This is generally reflective of a “normal” year and is based predominantly on the fact that we experience more “repeat” reports of missing children.

Comparing the two most recent financial years (in the bar chart above), the data demonstrates an overall demand reduction for both missing adults and children (separately and collectively.)

In ‘19/20 the number of missing Children episodes has reduced from to 2360 to 1933 (18% reduction.) In the same period the number of adult missing reports has reduced from 1291 to 1130 (12% reduction.)

The improved approach described at 4.1 has contributed to this reduction and this has been a consistent trajectory over recent years.

A set of figures that help to support this assertion are shown below (post pandemic lockdown period as an example):

SEPTEMBER 2020 vs SEPTEMBER 2019 PERFORMANCE FIGURES:

- Missing reports – 181 down by 21%
- Under 18 reports – 99 down by 32%
- Average time missing, 7.98 hours, down by 14%
- Reports from repeats – 35 down by 46%

- In care reports – 26 down by 60%
- Police return interview completion rate – 100%

The month of September is an accurate reflection of the improved performance month on month (i.e. when one compares any month this year vs the same month last year – the positive picture is consistent).

4.4 Demand during the Covid Lockdown period:

Like most other areas of business, MFH reports saw a steep reduction at the commencement of lockdown, with a gradual return to normality as the restrictions eased.

Comparing the data from April to August 2020 against the same period in 2019, we have experienced an overall reduction in Missing No Apparent risk reports (MISNAR's) of 39% and a reduction of MFH reports of 23%.

There has been no real change in the proportion of Children to Adult reports during this period.

The average length of time that a reported person remained missing reduced from 32 hours to 14.5 hours (54%).

5. Financial Implications and Budget Provision

- 5.1 Whilst it is difficult to attach a cost to the work undertaken by the MFH team and the costs associated with this type of demand, National statistics indicate the costing of an average investigation based on risk levels are that Low and Medium risk cases cost £2,500 and a High risk case costs £8,500.

Much of this cost can be attributed to the investment of police resources and time allocated to locate MFH's. As such, an initiative that can positively impact these factors is a benefit.

The cost of Terragence is still awaited, but the benefits in terms of reduction of the length of time of a missing episode and the number of staff required is predicted to deliver some substantial efficiencies.

The developments and improvement in approach to MFH investigations (based on time savings made in medium risk cases) is estimated to have delivered a £1.3 million saving across this area of business in the last 12 months, with a combined reduction of 1.75 million over the last 4 years.

This calculation is based on a reduction of 535 reports over a 12 month period, with case costing an average of £2.5K.

The use of new technology is likely to see further cost savings in front line officers search time and in the speed of locating persons, reducing the need to investigate the missing case yet further.

6. Human Resources Implications

6.1 None

7. Equality Implications

7.1 None

8. Risk Management

8.1 There are no risks highlighted in this report

9. Policy Implications and links to the Police and Crime Plan Priorities

9.1 There are no policy implications known or expected. The Force Missing Policy is in the final stages of being updated and we are at the sign off stage. This should be completed by the end of October 2019. The policy has been regularly reviewed or amended where required previously.

10. Changes in Legislation or other Legal Considerations

10.1 None

11. Details of outcome of consultation

11.1 None

12. Appendices

12.1 None

13. Background Papers (relevant for Police and Crime Panel Only)

13.1 None