



Meeting	Policing Performance Committee
Date	12 March 2024
Location	MS Teams
Title of Paper	Benchmarking Progress Update
Presented By	Nerys Thomas, College of Policing
Recommendation to Members	For Discussion
Appendix Attached	Full List of Measures of Success

PURPOSE

This paper provides the final update of the Benchmarking Short Life Working Group, detailing the key achievements of the group and outlining how benchmarking and comparative analysis is now embedded in the Police Scotland performance, underpinning ongoing continuous improvement activity.

1. Background and Context

- 1.1. In April 2020 the Authority and Police Scotland co-hosted a discussion on performance benchmarking, bringing together experts and advisors from across both organisations as well as a number of external participants. The purpose of the seminar was to explore how the Authority and Police Scotland could develop a framework and approach to benchmarking, taking account of learning, experiences, and best practice from elsewhere.
- 1.2. The Committee, at its meeting of 28 May 2020, reflected on the main outcomes from the seminar, and requested that Authority staff and Police Scotland establish a multi-agency working group to produce a proposed framework. It was agreed that a more systematic benchmarking approach would further enhance the capabilities of the Scottish policing system to promote organisational learning and support continuous improvement.
- 1.3. The Benchmarking Short Life Working Group (SLWG) was established, meeting for the first time on 16 July 2020. A [terms of reference](#) was developed, which included the following key outputs:
 - An optimal set of external data sources and measures and indicators against which benchmarking will be conducted.
 - A proposed lead agency for the collection and collation of data included relative responsibilities and relationships.
 - A proposed reporting frequency and format and arrangements for data quality assurance.
 - A proposed supporting insight and analysis mechanism to support taking learning from the presented data.
- 1.4. The SLWG was chaired by Nerys Thomas from the College of Policing, with representation from the Authority, Police Scotland, HMICS, the National Police Chief's Council's Performance Management Co-ordination Committee, and the Scottish Government's Justice Analytical Services.
- 1.5. This paper marks the completion of the extensive programme of activities completed by the SLWG to investigate and develop the delivery of a benchmarking approach, providing detail of the work carried out and the approach now agreed and being embedded as part of ongoing performance reporting to Committee and the public.

2. Guiding Principles of the Benchmarking Framework

- 2.1. The following six guiding principles of the benchmarking framework have been developed and agreed by the SLWG:
- 1) The framework is a tool to identify best practice and improvement activity in policing.
 - 2) The selection of metrics to be benchmarked should be evidence based and robust.
 - 3) Context must be applied to inform meaningful analysis and insight.
 - 4) The benchmarking framework will evolve over time (refreshed annually) as new areas of interest are identified.
 - 5) Use of data for benchmarking purposes must not knowingly create perverse incentives or lead to negative behaviours.
 - 6) No assumptions will be made on other forces' performance.

3. Benchmarking Tiers

- 3.1. The SLWG have also agreed that all benchmarking measures will be assigned to a tier, to determine how appropriate the comparisons are and whether they should be reported publicly or only used internally.
- 3.2. To determine the tiers, six data quality dimensions were used, as defined by the Data Management Association and detailed in The UK Government's (2020) [Data Quality Framework](#). These are as follows:
- **Completeness**
 - All data items are recorded.
 - **Uniqueness**
 - Unique records have no duplicates.
 - **Timeliness**
 - The degree to which data represent reality from the required point in time.
 - **Consistency**
 - Data is consistent if it doesn't contradict data in another data set.

- **Validity**
 - Valid data is stored in a data set in the appropriate format for that type of data.
- **Accuracy**
 - The data reflects the 'real world' and is an accurate comparison.

3.3. The tiers for Police Scotland benchmarking comparisons have been agreed as follows:

Tier	Explanation	Sharing Status
A1	Data that is deemed of the highest quality and is comparable. Qualitative Benchmarking (i.e. best practice).	External
A2	Data/information that is deemed of a high quality but is not allowed to be shared externally.	Internal – <i>Data/information</i> External – <i>Insights/Learning</i>
B	Data that has a couple of differences in comparability and/or small caveats (i.e. missing a division).	External
C	Large differences in comparability and/or data concerns. However, the data in this Tier can be used to help drive qualitative benchmarking for the subject area.	Internal
D	Aspirational data/information, data that does not exist or extremely differing comparability and/or large data concerns.	N/A

4. Most Similar Groups

4.1. The assignment of most similar groups (MSGs) to be used for comparative analysis of performance is critical to the success of the benchmarking approach because it:

- Ensures efficiency of the benchmarking process.
- Avoids unintended negative behaviours around comparators with other police forces in the UK and beyond.
- Allows for suitable benchmarking between similar forces in terms of demographic, economic and social characteristics.

4.2. The SLWG used the variables recommended by HMICFRS as a template to compile MSGs from forces across the UK. These were gauged against the availability of corresponding data in UK and Scottish Censuses 2011:

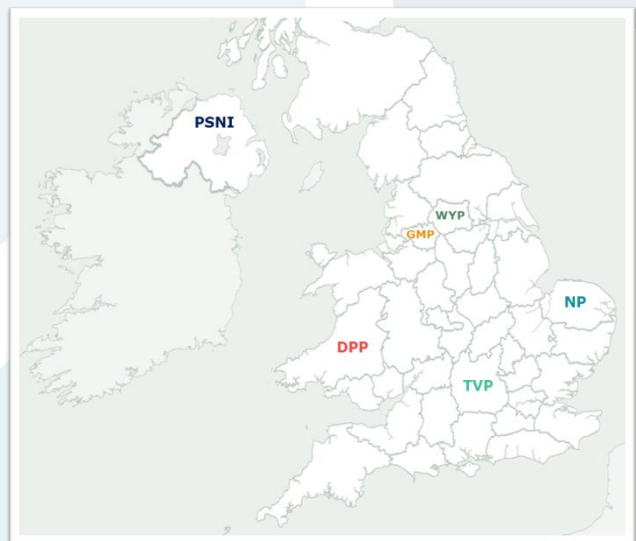
- Percentage of ACORN 5 households - "Hard Pressed" neighbourhoods.
- Percentage of terraced households.
- Output Area (OA) population density.
- Percentage of single parent households.
- Long-term unemployed per worker.

4.3. A number of other variables were also considered:

- Number of police officers/staff.
- Annual budget.
- Force area.
- Population size.
- 999/101 call demand.

4.4. Through this approach, the SLWG have agreed the following police forces as the most useful comparators for Police Scotland:

- Dyfed Powys Police
- Greater Manchester Police
- Norfolk Police
- Thames Valley Police
- West Yorkshire Police
- Police Service of Northern Ireland



4.5. This grouping will be revisited every 3 years, or before if any restructure of forces or responsibilities/functions takes place.

5. Benchmarking Measures

- 5.1. A set of 44 strategic measures of progress have been identified in Police Scotland's Performance Framework, designed around the five main strategic outcomes set out in the Joint Strategy for Policing (2020). The full list is provided in Appendix 1.
- 5.2. The SLWG has agreed that a smaller set of comparative measures and data points from the 44 will be used for benchmarking purposes each year as identified in the annual Performance Framework, with a balance across the three themes of effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy, and in line with the benchmarking tiers described above.
- 5.3. Comparative figures already used in quarterly reporting to Policing Performance Committee include 999 demand and performance, Your Voice Matters survey results, and stop and search data.

6. Data Sources

- 6.1. For police forces elsewhere in the UK there is no centralised database of all of the data sought for comparative analysis. The SLWG have therefore identified a variety of sources suitable for use. These include:
 - Office of National Statistics
 - Home Office
 - Force websites
 - Police and Crime Commissioners
 - National Crime Agency
 - Police Oracle
- 6.2. The focus has been on publicly accessible datasets, therefore removing any issues with sharing of the data in our reports and briefings.
- 6.3. The Authority and Police Scotland have also built relationships with the APCC, NPCC and the College of Policing, who have provided assistance and advice on accessing data sets, including the [HMICFRS Digital Crime & Performance Pack](#).

- 6.4. Even with this assistance there are substantial gaps in the data required to compare the 44 measures of success, or even on smaller subsets. For 12 of the 44 measures complete datasets have been accessed for the list of MSG forces, with partial datasets found for 14, and incomplete datasets for the remaining 18 (see Appendix 1).
- 6.5. The Authority has therefore made direct contact with the six MSG forces in an attempt to access additional information. One force has already provided additional data by email, three have committed to doing this, and the other two forces have not yet responded.
- 6.6. It is important to recognise that sourcing appropriate datasets has been the most complex and challenging of the SLWG's activities. Engagement with other forces and oversight bodies will continue. To support this a presentation was delivered to the 2023 AGM of the Association of Police and Crime Commissioner Chief Executives (APACE) Group, outlining the aspirations of the work and seeking support from PCCs and other oversight bodies to access and utilise suitable datasets.

7. Notes on Comparability

- 7.1. The work of the SLWG has also recognised the importance of accompanying any benchmarking comparisons with appropriate caveats and notes on comparability. In particular, the recorded crime statistics for Scotland are collected on the basis of the Scottish Crime Recording Standard (SCRS), which was introduced in 2004 aiming to achieve improved consistency in crime recording.
- 7.2. While the main principles of the SCRS are similar to the National Crime Recording Standard for England and Wales, there are various differences between the respective counting rules that specify different approaches for counting the number of crimes that should be recorded as a result of a single incident.
- 7.3. For example, crimes recorded in England and Wales tend to be incident based, where the rules state that if the sequence of crimes in an incident, or a complex crime, contains more than one type of crime, then the most serious crime should be counted. This means that an incident where an intruder breaks into a home and assaults the sole occupant would be recorded as one crime, the assault, in England and Wales, but the same incident would be recorded as two crimes in Scotland.

- 7.4. Differences in legislation and common law also have to be considered when comparing the crime statistics for England and Wales and Scotland, and will often be topic specific.
- 7.5. This does not mean that comparative benchmarking is not possible, but it does require a level of explanation and the application of reasonable judgement in applying adjustment to the source data to allow a comparison to be made.
- 7.6. The SLWG has agreed that any such differences, limitations and adjustments will be clearly noted when comparisons are reported whether these reports are public or internal.

8. Embedding the Benchmarking Approach

- 8.1. With the key outputs of the SLWG now met the group itself has now concluded and benchmarking activities have moved to business as usual. This will be led by Police Scotland, with support from Authority staff, with comparisons in different areas of focus reported to Policing Performance Committee as part of existing performance and operational reports.
- 8.2. This reporting will focus on what can be learned from other forces performing well in specific areas, to inform continuous improvement. Benchmarking measures will be identified in each refresh of the annual Performance Framework.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. There are no direct financial implications in this report.

10. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. There are no direct personnel implications in this report.

11. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1. There are no direct legal implications in this report.

12. REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1. There are no direct reputational implications in this report.

13. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

13.1. There are no direct social implications in this report.

14. COMMUNITY IMPACT

14.1. There are no direct community implications in this report.

15. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

15.1. There are no direct equalities implications in this report.

16. ENVIRONMENT IMPLICATIONS

16.1. There are no direct environment implications in this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are invited to discuss the content of this report.

Appendix 1 – Full List of Measures of Success

Key

Complete dataset available
Partial dataset
Incomplete dataset

Area	Measures
1. Overall violent crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of crimes - Percentage detection rate
2. Non Sexual Crimes of Violence (Group 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of crimes - Percentage detection rate
3. Overall Sexual Crime (Group 2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of crimes - Percentage detection rate
4. Rape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of crimes - Percentage detection rate
5. Child Sexual Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of crimes - Percentage detection rate
6. Domestic Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of incidents - Percentage of incidents resulting in a crime - Number of crimes - Percentage detection rate
7. Total Drugs Supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of crimes - Percentage detection rate
8. Drugs Possession	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of crimes - Percentage detection rate
9. Missing Persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of missing person investigations
10. Road Casualties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of people killed (adult / child) - Number of people seriously injured (adult / child)
11. Hate Crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of crimes - Percentage detection rate

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Area	Measures
12. Anti-social Behaviour and Disorder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of antisocial behaviour incidents reported by the public - Number of complaints regarding disorder
13. Acquisitive Crime (Group 3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of crimes - Percentage detection rate
14. Fraud	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of crimes - Percentage detection rate
15. Stop and search	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of searches carried out
16. Arrested Persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Total number brought into custody - Number of under 16s brought into custody
17. Vulnerability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of persons arrested with alcohol / drug addiction issues - Number of persons arrested with mental health issues
18. Confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Percentage of respondents that agree or strongly agree they have confidence in local policing - Percentage of respondents who feel 'very safe' or 'fairly safe' in their area - Percentage of respondents that agree or strongly agree the police listen to concerns of local people
19. Satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Percentage callers saying it was easy or very easy to contact the police - Percentage callers satisfied or very satisfied with initial contact method - Percentage callers feeling the police provided the appropriate response - Percentage callers feeling satisfied with the way they were treated by the officers who attended the incident - Percentage callers feeling they were adequately informed about the progress made (where applicable)

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Area	Measures
20. 999 / 101 calls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of 999 calls & average answer time - Number of 101 calls & average 101 answer time
21. Incident Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Total number of incidents - Percentage of incidents requiring police attendance
22. Call Handling Complaints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Level of complaints received relative to call handling of 999/101 calls
23. Other Complaints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Total number of complaints from the public
24. Allegations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Total number of allegations from the public - Percentage of allegations which were upheld
25. Police Investigations and Review Commissioner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of Complaint Handling Reviews - Percentage assessed as handled to a reasonable standard
26. Assaults on Emergency Workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of assaults on Police Officers - Number of assaults on Police staff - Percentage of assaults leading to injury
27. Police Officer & Staff Short Term Absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Percentage of available days lost due to ST absence for POs / staff
28. Police Officer & Staff Long Term Absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Percentage of available days lost due to LT absence for POs / staff
29. Psychological Illness / Stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of Police Officers (FTE) / Police Staff (FTE) absent through psychological illness and stress related conditions
30. Restricted / Adjusted Duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Percentage of police officers (headcount) on recuperative/adjusted/ restricted duties by gender
31. Occupational Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of OH Referrals
32. Employee Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of Employee Assistance Programme Referrals

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Area	Measures
33. Force Profile	- Sex, Race, Disability, Sexual Orientation, Age
34. Promotion Profile	- Sex, Race, Disability, Sexual Orientation, Age
35. Recruitment Profile	- Sex, Race, Disability, Sexual Orientation, Age
36. Transformation	- Percentage capital and reform funding available in year to meet our change / transformation plans
37. Asset Replacement Programme	- Funding available to meet projected programme needs
38. Size of fleet	- Number of vehicles
39. Average age of fleet	- Average age of vehicles
40. Fleet Sustainability	- Percentage of the Fleet that is ULEV
41. Vehicle Availability	- Percentage of vehicle availability against size of fleet
42. Shared Occupancy	- Percentage footprint of the Estate which is co-located / shared with our partners
43. Condition of Estate	- Percentage footprint of the Estate that is in "good" or "better" condition
44. Carbon emissions	- Total carbon emissions per m2 of our estate - reduction in Co2 emissions