

South Yorkshire
Mayoral Combined Authority
11 Broad Street West
Sheffield, S1 2BQ
October 17, 2025

To: His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services

Dear Chief Inspector

Response from Kilvinder Vigurs, South Yorkshire's Deputy Mayor, to HMICFRS' PEEL spotlight report on: How effectively do the police record crime?

I welcome the findings and recommendations of this report.

It is encouraging to see improvements in crime data integrity across policing. Accurate crime recording is essential for understanding local and national trends, allocating resources effectively, and fostering public trust. The public must have confidence that reported crimes are correctly identified, recorded, and investigated. While accurate crime recording is essential, it must be accompanied by proactive action. Unreported or misrecorded crimes can mean missed opportunities to reduce reoffending and deliver justice for victims. It's vital that police forces consistently recognise and respond to victims' experiences, closing gaps in processing and strengthening public confidence.

There are three recommendations made within this report, and each has been accepted by the Chief Constable of South Yorkshire Police. As Deputy Mayor with responsibility for Police and Crime, I retain oversight of the implementation of these recommendations through established local governance arrangements.

(Recommendation 1) Forces need to improve their recording of all violent crime, in particular conduct crimes such as harassment, stalking and controlling or coercive behaviour and less serious assaults.

I agree with this recommendation in principle. As the findings of this report have highlighted, violent crimes are the least well recorded crime type, and there remains variation in performance across individual forces. We must ensure improvement in this area, to ensure victims are effectively safeguarded.

Accurate data is also critical for early intervention and prevention. It enables police and partner agencies to identify patterns, assess risk, and commission appropriate support services. Without reliable recording, opportunities to disrupt escalating harm and deliver timely, targeted interventions are lost. Addressing these issues will be key to supporting improvements in recording practices and ensuring victims receive the protection and response they deserve. As the 2024 Suzy Lamplugh Trust super-complaint report makes clear, the criminal law surrounding

stalking and harassment remains complex and difficult to apply. The report recommends that the Home Office and College of Policing improve national guidance and review the impact of the principal crime rule on the identification and investigation of stalking.

(Recommendation 2) Forces should make sure they quickly and correctly record crimes related to domestic abuse.

I agree with this recommendation. Prompt crime recording is essential in ensuring victims of domestic abuse receive the support and service they need and have the confidence to report crimes and to remain engaged in the criminal justice process. Efforts to improve efficiency must not compromise the accuracy of data – or the policing response to domestic abuse. Victims may not always be able to disclose the full extent of abuse immediately, and officers must adopt a trauma-informed approach that prioritises understanding the victim's experience alongside accurate and sensitive recording of the crime.

In South Yorkshire Police, the presence of a secondary risk assessing team strengthens this process by enabling more comprehensive risk assessments and safeguarding decisions. This approach also enhances data management, ensuring that information is captured more reliably and used effectively to inform service provision and early intervention.

(Recommendation 3) Forces need to make sure all officers and staff involved in crime recording are appropriately trained and understand their role in recording crime. They should also make sure there is effective oversight and scrutiny of crime-recording decisions and accuracy.

I support this recommendation. Strong governance, including effective oversight and scrutiny, is essential to embedding robust crime recording practices across the organisation. South Yorkshire Police has established quality assurance mechanisms, supported by its Audit Governance Unit, which plays a key role in scrutinising data integrity and ensuring compliance with national standards. This includes dip sampling and internal audits to assess adherence to Home Office counting rules and national data returns. For example, following the introduction of new business robbery recording rules in April 2025, the force proactively monitored the impact on crime trends and conducted follow-up audits to assess accuracy.

Commenting more broadly,

Improvements in recording sexual offences reflect a positive cultural shift toward suspect-focused investigations. This has contributed to more accurate and consistent data recording.

Placing victims and communities at the centre of policing is a core priority in the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Plan. Enhancing crime recording supports this aim by ensuring victims feel confident to report and receive an effective response.

I will continue to monitor South Yorkshire Police' prioritisation of crime data accuracy and recording through established governance mechanisms, ensuring sustained oversight, accountability, and continuous improvement.

We look forward to keeping the dialogue open with HMICFRS.

Yours sincerely

Kilvinder Vigurs

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Deputy Mayor for Policing & Crime