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Office of the
**Police & Crime
Commissioner**
West Yorkshire

My Reference: OPCC/MBW/JAD

Your Reference:

20 April 2018

The Rt Hon Amber Rudd MP
Home Secretary
Home Office
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DP

Dear Home Secretary

I am writing to you in response to the HMICFRS PEEL Effectiveness assessment for West Yorkshire, which was released in March 2018.

First of all I would like to acknowledge and recognise the hard work of the Chief Constable of West Yorkshire, Dee Collins, and all of the Police Officers, PCSOs, staff and volunteers who make up the West Yorkshire Police family. I am pleased that HMICFRS also recognised this commitment and effort which was reflected in an overall grading of GOOD. West Yorkshire Police has continued to receive GOOD gradings throughout its PEEL assessments despite increasing pressures and reducing resources.

HMICFRS assessed West Yorkshire Police as GOOD in two out of the three areas graded. In preventing crime and tackling anti-social behaviour, recognition was given to the improvements made in this area with particular reference to the focus on neighbourhood policing. Whilst the report notes the need for the force to standardise its sharing of good practice across the five districts, I am satisfied that the Chief Constable is already working hard to remedy this. I am confident that the introduction of the new Neighbourhood Policing Model, additional information sharing meetings, and an innovative online discussion forum will provide the platform for building a more effective policing service across all of our communities.

The Effectiveness inspection did highlight areas regarding the quality of investigations for “low-level” crimes and the need to rebuild capacity and capability in this area of policing. Whilst this is acknowledged, it is also a reflection of the pressures placed on policing over the past few years. The budget cuts to policing have resulted in a reduced workforce and although we are now able to recruit, the police service is in a position whereby a significant proportion of the workforce has less than two years’ experience. Nevertheless, I am encouraged by the energy and commitment shown by the Chief Constable and her team to overcome this issue, a full review of the investigative processes is underway and the training

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programme is being revisited to ensure that officers are trained and able to carry out investigations to the highest standard across all crime types. I will continue to support the police and other criminal justice partners in working better together to carry out investigations and manage offenders in a more coordinated and effective way. In the last 12 months I have taken over as Chair of the Local Criminal Justice Board in West Yorkshire and will ensure that full scrutiny and support is provided through this forum in holding other key partners to account.

An area of focus for West Yorkshire Police in recent years has been on safeguarding vulnerable people from harm and a great deal of resource has been put into embedding this across all areas of the service. I was pleased to see that HMICFRS graded West Yorkshire Police as GOOD in this area which was an improvement from the previous grading. It is clear however that increasing demands are placing a great deal of pressure on those in the specialist safeguarding units, and whilst the report noted impressive levels of dedication from these officers and staff, I will support the Chief Constable to ensure that changes are made to reduce their workloads and prioritise their wellbeing. The role and commitment of safeguarding partners in the multi-agency hubs is also key.

Both I and Chief Constable Dee Collins are committed to making West Yorkshire Police the most effective service it can be. I will continue to work together with the police and with partners to direct and support our collective efforts. Within West Yorkshire Police I will be closely monitoring the progress made against each of the areas for improvement in this report to help the Chief Constable lead a service which is consistent, capable and effective in keeping the people of West Yorkshire safe.

Yours sincerely



Mark Burns-Williamson
Police and Crime Commissioner for West Yorkshire

Copied to:

Chief Constable Dee Collins – West Yorkshire Police