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

My Reference: OPCC/MBW/JAD

Your Reference:

3 October 2014

The Rt. Hon Theresa May MP
Home Secretary
Home Office
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DP

Dear Home Secretary

Response to HMIC Core Business Report

I am writing to you in response to the HMIC report on Core Business released on 4 September 2014.

The HMIC report, which involved West Yorkshire Police being inspected in January this year, quite rightly highlights the good work being done day in day out by officers and staff including Police and Community Support Officers (PCSOs). PCSOs play a vital role in keeping people safe and that is why, with council leaders, I have ensured that funding is in place to protect those numbers in West Yorkshire for the next two years.

Members of West Yorkshire Police do an excellent job of keeping people safe against a backdrop of severe Government cuts which continue to impact on our policing service and wider community safety partners. I have been assured by the Chief Constable that the concerns highlighted and the recommendations contained within the report will be implemented, where applicable, in the timescales outlined by HMIC. I am awaiting sight of the action plan being currently drawn up and will monitor progress against this.

Crime prevention is a key theme in the Police and Crime Plan, as is working with victims and witnesses to ensure they feel supported. I am working with Victim Support and other partners to provide increased help and support for victims, from those who just want to access information easily to protecting the most vulnerable. I am also launching the Help for Victims website in October, which will assist victims around the Victims' Code and Witness Charter, will provide a frequently asked questions facility and a facility for answering other questions victims may have, and will include a directory of victims' services. This website will also be readily scalable into a national platform to deliver one of the strategic ambitions recently announced by the Ministry of Justice in a policy paper.

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I will be asking the Chief Constable what training is being offered to ensure officers and staff are preventing crime rather than just reacting to it. The way to best protect victims and witnesses is to prevent them from becoming so in the first place and crime prevention is everybody's business. PCSOs, police officers and all those whose job it is to keep us safe working closely with our communities is vital in raising awareness, putting measures in place and preventing crime.

More joined up, integrated working with other agencies is key to tackling problems upstream and downstream and I continue to encourage close partnership working here in West Yorkshire and once again urge HMIC inspections to reflect more the need to collectively deliver local solutions to local problems. We need to ensure we are doing all we can with the resources we have to maintain public confidence in policing.

Where the police get it wrong we will try to put things right and I would urge anyone to contact my office if there are any instances of poor practice in West Yorkshire such as those highlighted in the report.

Yours sincerely



Mark Burns-Williamson
Police and Crime Commissioner for West Yorkshire

Copy to:

Mike Cunningham, HMIC