

Rt Hon Amber Rudd MP,
Home Secretary
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

8th January 2018

Dear Home Secretary

SUBJECT: HMICFRS – A progress report on the police response to domestic abuse – November 2017.

I write in response to the above report that was published in November.

Providing an effective response to domestic abuse is a critical and essential function of the police service. Victims need to be effectively protected and supported and offenders need to be made accountable for the harm caused and swiftly brought to justice.

It is encouraging to read that this latest inspection, to review the police response to domestic abuse, does highlight improvements across the police service and is able to demonstrate the progress made since the initial findings in the 2014 inspection report. However, there is no room for complacency and I am keen to ensure that the Greater Manchester Police response is as good as it can be for some of our most vulnerable victims.

The latest inspection report made one recommendation for each police force to update its domestic abuse action plan and determine what more it can do to address the areas for improvements highlighted. The Chief Constable and I accept the findings of the report and action has already commenced to review the areas of improvement, some of which relate to findings from previous reports.

All of the areas for improvement detailed within the report are included within the force domestic abuse action plan and I will continue to monitor the progress of this over the coming months. Work is already underway to ensure this plan aligns to the 13 strands of vulnerability as set out by the College of Policing and that it incorporates any recommendations from the recently published National Vulnerability Plan.

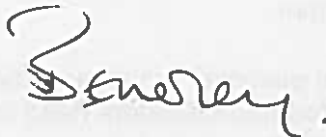
To enable the effective delivery of the plan, the force will continue to prioritise and invest in training to ensure that frontline officers have the knowledge required to provide the best possible service to victims. This is also embedded into the training for new recruits, transferees and the Special Constabulary.

One of the key areas that will assist to improve the policing response to assessing and responding to risk is the effective use of the Domestic Abuse, Stalking, Harassment and Honour-Based Violence (DASH) risk identification, assessment and management model. The inspection reported the inconsistent use of DASH across the police service and the need to review processes locally.

Whilst it is important that police officers are able to conduct an initial risk assessment to safeguard the victim, consideration needs to be given as to whether it is necessary or indeed appropriate to ask 27 intimate questions at that time, which could possibly be better carried out by other agencies.

I am aware that the College of Policing ran a pilot programme with a view of providing a new, improved DASH model, however, to date the Chief Constable and I are yet to receive any detail of the pilot evaluation and next steps. I would urge the College to complete and share this evaluation as soon as possible to ensure that forces have the resources to enable a consistent and effective response. GMP currently uses the DASH model and will continue to do so until guidance and suggested new practice can be provided.

Yours sincerely



Baroness Beverley Hughes
Deputy Mayor of Greater Manchester
Policing, Crime and Criminal Justice