

BEV HUGHES
DEPUTY MAYOR
OF GREATER
MANCHESTER

Rt Hon Priti Patel,
Secretary of State for the Home Department
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

May 2022

Dear Home Secretary,

SUBJECT: Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Crime and Fire and Rescue Service (HMICFRS) State of Policing: The Annual Assessment of Policing in England and Wales 2021

I am writing to comment on the HMICFRS Annual Assessment of Policing in England and Wales 2021 report.

I agree with many of the points made in the assessment and in-particular: -

- Prevention – there remains a need to shift resources towards prevention and to get upstream of crime. I agree that this is not the sole responsibility of the police, although the report does little to recognise the financial constraints of partners to get upstream of these issues.
- Unreported crime – the police need to proactively pursue under reported crimes including domestic abuse and sexual offences and devise ways to increase confidence in reporting by victims.
- Violence against women and girls (VAWG) – I welcome the policing focus on VAWG and the vast improvements that need to be made in improving how the police respond. I am pleased to see this being made a priority by the police service and wider criminal justice partners and I will continue to drive improvements through the Greater Manchester Gender Based Violence Strategy.
- The dysfunctional criminal justice system and rehabilitation of offenders - the systematic under resourcing of criminal justice systems is letting victims and vulnerable people down. There is also a need for increased investment in wider mental health, drugs, and alcohol services to break the cycle of re-offending which has also been impacted by cuts elsewhere in the system.
- Culture and behaviour – I agree that we need to improve recruitment, vetting, training, and the continuous monitoring of our workforce to root out toxic culture and behaviours.
- Diverse workforce – I also agree that increased focus should be given to the retention and progression as well as recruitment of officers from diverse communities. The magnitude of recruitment does pose risks in this area.
- Understanding demand – The HM Chief Inspector comments that more needs to be done to understand current and critically future demand including the significant increases in internet

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fraud and whether we are doing enough to get upstream of this. I support this view and would advocate that Policing needs to be supported better in making technological advancements to get ahead of internet fraud, on-line harms, and the collection of digital evidence.

The report acknowledges the increased risks and demands on police officers, but the report could go further. Staff morale and wellbeing is concerning. The recruitment of quality candidates to the police force continues to be a challenge and retaining good and experienced staff is also becoming more difficult as the physical and mental demands of the job increase.

The report talks at length about the operational independence of Chief Constables. It is important to acknowledge that a relationship needs to be built between Police and Crime Commissioners/Mayors and Chief Constables that is open, transparent, people centred and accountable.

The report (and previous ones) emphasises that other public services must do more but does not recognise the budget and resource constraints put on these public services by central government. Local authorities for example have experienced much larger cuts in real terms than policing, and it is how we work as one public service system that matters.

In respect of future inspections, I would like to make the following points: -

- I welcome the move to more partnership inspections, and particularly found the recent joint inspections between the police and Crown Prosecution Service on their response to rape extremely useful, but more could be done to expand joint inspections into other areas.
- I agree with the recommendations from the VAWG inspection, and we are already working with Greater Manchester Police in these areas.
- I welcome the new emphasis on victim experience as part of the victims' services assessments, as more needs to be done to understand vulnerability and get better results for victims.
- The report does not mention the Home Office national outcomes and measures. Clarity on how these will lead to future inspection themes would be welcome.

Yours sincerely



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Police, Crime, Criminal Justice and Fire

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