

19th December 2019

The Rt Honourable Priti Patel MP
Home Secretary
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF

Dear Home Secretary

RESPONSE TO 'LEADING LIGHTS: AN INSPECTION OF THE POLICE SERVICE'S ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SELECTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF CHIEF OFFICERS' PUBLISHED ON 3RD SEPTEMBER 2019

Having read the report I agree with what the Inspectorate is trying to achieve through its recommendations. A move to make the process for selecting, supporting and assessing chief officers more consistent and transparent across all forces will be beneficial at a national level.

I was also encouraged to see a focus on diversity in this report. Avon and Somerset, like other forces, is under represented in terms of ethnic minority officers and this disparity is often more apparent at senior ranks. Like myself, this is a subject which the Constabulary is passionate about and embodies in one of its four values which is inclusive. The Constabulary has recently employed seven new outreach workers in order to better support under-represented groups joining the Constabulary. This report highlights the importance of the College working from the top down (in a hierarchical sense) to supplement diversity work at the entry level which this force, and others, will be supporting.

The only recommendation applicable to the Chief Constable (outside of his function as part of the NPCC) is number 8: by 31 July 2020, the College, with support from the National Police Chiefs' Council, HMICFRS, HMICS and police forces, should establish and begin operation of a national workforce planning function for all chief officer posts in the United Kingdom.

The Constabulary and I recognise the critical importance of workforce planning and this is a core element of the Constabulary's own People Strategy to develop further. Given this understanding I am fully supportive of the need to engage with the College of Policing in developing a national plan for chief officers. When developed this national plan will help ensure forces work together to provide resilience at this critical level and strengthen policing nationally.

This response is published on the OPCC website (<https://www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/Openness/Audits-and-Inspections/HMICFRS.aspx>).

Regards

Sue Mountstevens

SUE MOUNTSTEVENS
Police and Crime Commissioner
for Avon & Somerset

cc. Wendy Williams, HMI
Chief Constable Andy Marsh, Avon & Somerset Constabulary

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