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

My Reference: OPCC/MBW/JAD

Your Reference:

18 August 2017

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

Dear Home Secretary

Response to HMIC/HMCPSP Report: Living in Fear – the Police and CPS response to Harassment and Stalking

The joint inspection report from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) and Her Majesty's Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate (HMCPSP) released on 5 July 2017 was met with great interest not just by me but also by partner agencies who work to serve the communities of West Yorkshire.

Along with many other PCCs and Chief Constables, I have urged HMIC to carry out more joint inspections in order to review the practices and performance of the Criminal Justice System (CJS) as a whole, and so I welcome this initial joint review into the service provided by the police and CPS to victims of stalking and harassment, and the level of depth and detail that the inspection went into.

The report highlighted a number of areas for improvement which will not only require the practices of the police and partners to change, but also suggests the need for legislative changes, including the creation of a single accepted, consistent definition of stalking for use by practitioners, which is something that I would urge the Home Office and College of Policing to develop together. This will help to provide the bedrock of improved practice within the police and CPS around the accurate identification of stalking offences, and aid the development of systems to recognise patterns in offending behaviour which go beyond harassment.

Providing support to victims is a key priority for PCCs and complying with the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime means that victims of stalking and harassment must have access to enhanced services of support throughout their criminal justice journey. I along with other PCCs continue to work to provide services and ensure CJS partners are in compliance with the Code.

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I will continue to work with the Chief Constable in West Yorkshire to ensure that our police service is well trained, prepared, and resourced to identify and support victims of harassment and stalking. I will also work closely with our victim support services to help make sure that the appropriate support is made available for victims in West Yorkshire.

Yours sincerely



Mark Burns-Williamson
Police and Crime Commissioner for West Yorkshire

Copied to:

Chief Constable Dee Collins – West Yorkshire Police