



WEST YORKSHIRE POLICE

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Mark Burn-Williamson, OBE
Police and Crime Commissioner
Ploughland House
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Dear Police and Crime Commissioner

HMIC INSPECTION – RESPONDING TO AUSTERITY

The Force has now had the opportunity to consider in detail the HMIC Responding to Austerity Report in relation to West Yorkshire Police, and in particular the broader context when considered against the recommendations in the National Report – Policing in Austerity – Meeting the Challenge.

The Force would like to put on record our thanks to the Inspection Team for acknowledging on more than one occasion in the force report the not insignificant challenges that are faced by West Yorkshire Police. The level of savings required by the Force are in the top quartile in the country and well above the average of other forces in England and Wales. These level of savings are unprecedented in recent times and the impact should not be underestimated, when considered against the broader picture in policing and ever increasing priorities.

Against this backdrop, and also acknowledged in the report, performance continues to improve, and West Yorkshire Police has made significant reductions in overall crime and in particular acquisitive crime, in most cases above the national average.

Going forward the Force now plan to build on the successes of the past 12 months and push ahead with the Programme of Change in a way that will deliver the savings required whilst delivering against the priorities within the Police and Crime Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan.

The New Operating Model for the delivery of policing across the county is now well into implementation, with the Force moving from eight divisions to five policing districts which are aligned to the local authorities. The key element of the new model is to deliver policing

at the very local level, and to this end we have aligned neighbourhood policing resources to work even closer with key partners and the public. In most cases this means co-location of resources with partner agencies to ensure a joined up approach to problem solving. In terms of the recommendations within the National Report, only one applies to West Yorkshire Police (Recommendation 3), which requires each force to have a savings plan which assumes that the level of year-on-year funding restrictions from 2015/16 will continue as the same rate as those in the current spending review period. As Police and Crime Commissioner, you will be aware the Force has already extended our savings plans beyond 2015/16 to 31 March 2017, with the Force savings plans including a blueprint of where the savings for the financial year 2016/17, which are estimated to be £26.5M, could be delivered from.

Work is now underway with the development of the Medium Term Financial Forecast to cover the period up to 2018/19 and this will be discussed in detail with you and your staff at the Budget Seminar in September. Once this work is complete it will be shared with HMIC so they can assure themselves that we have taken full cognisance of the recommendation in the national report.

The key to the delivery of the savings plan, both in the near future and then in the longer term is the Force's Programme of Change (PoC), which is personally led by myself. As you will know ACC Guildford, who was leading this work, has now left the Force and after consultation an outside consultant, Mr Roy Toner, was appointed to be the Strategic Director for PoC.

As Mr Gilmore explained at the time, the rationale for appointing an outside consultant was twofold. Firstly, there is a plan to reduce the size of the Chief Officer Team and it was not considered prudent to appoint a new ACC at this time with this longer term plan in mind. Secondly, and by far the key driver, was to appoint a person who had the professional skills and expertise to drive forward such an ambitious and ultimately critical programme.

As previously acknowledged by HMC, West Yorkshire Police has been very successful in achieving the savings targets that have been set, and to date overachieving, which has allowed reserves to be accumulated which have been critical to delivering both the New Operating Model and future transformational change by allowing investing in technology. The savings to be achieved in the coming years will be more difficult to achieve than has been the case in the early years of the CSR. The quality of staff in place to drive forward the PoC is therefore crucial.

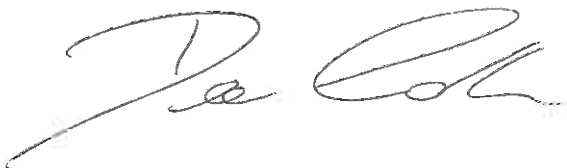
As you will be aware Mr Gilmore structured the PoC around eight distinct challenges, which are aimed at not only achieving the savings required but also at changing the culture, service delivery and performance of the Force. The changes resulting from the New Operating Model will not on their own deliver the changes to performance that are a keystone to moving West Yorkshire Police from its national position in terms of performance across most crime types. We need to change the way that our people deliver policing, and think about delivering policing, to the public of West Yorkshire by actively engaging with partners, from across the wide spectrum of agencies, both public and third sector.

Moving forward the PoC Team, and working with other force staff, has developed a new Prioritisation Matrix which will be used to ensure a more robust approach to the delivery of transformational and sustainable change across the organisation. The approach is one of continuous improvement directly supported by the application of a whole system approach to the delivery of change. Such a change will mean that going forward, beyond PoC, continuous improvement will become part of day to day business and will allow for further efficiency savings to be found as we move forward without the need for ongoing reviews of the same areas of service delivery.

Another key element to the success of the PoC is to develop and implement sound programme management principles. To this end Mr Gilmore instigated a Peer Review, carried out by staff from Bradford MDC, and following their report an action plan is being taken forward that will see strict programme management across the whole spectrum of reviews that are being undertaken. Many of the elements are already in place with the PoC Board now able to have greater access, and therefore scrutiny, to the necessary information in order to ensure appropriate programme management.

The challenges still facing the Force should not be underestimated, but it is strongly believed, (and this is supported by the findings of the HMIC Report), that we are now in a much better place to meet these challenges. We recognise the need to work closely with the Commissioner's staff and fully involve them in Program of Change.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dee Collins', written in a cursive style.

Dee Collins
Temporary Chief Constable
West Yorkshire Police