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

My Reference: OPCC/MBW/NF

Your Reference:

10th September 2020

Dear Home Secretary,

Re. HMICFRS Report: 'Not optional - An inspection of roads policing in England and Wales'

Can I thank HMICFRS for their recent thematic national report on roads policing.

Each year, the results from my West Yorkshire wide 'Your Views' survey of public opinion on community safety identifies that road safety issues are of primary concern for residents. In March of this year, 73% of respondents to the survey said they felt that dangerous driving was an issue in their neighbourhood; the largest response to any topic in the survey.

The degree of public concern about road safety from the outset has meant that I included this theme as a priority in my first Police & Crime Plan, and it remains so today. As a Police and Crime Plan priority, I require West Yorkshire Police (WYP) to regularly report back to me on their road safety work at my Community Outcome Meetings (COM) with the Chief Constable. Recordings of these meetings are then posted on my website to aid public scrutiny of my and the police's work on this topic.

I have raised my concerns about support for the victims of road traffic collisions and their families locally and nationally. The West Yorkshire-based national road safety charity *Brake* - which provides the National Roads Victims Service - was at risk last year as a result of the MoJ's decision to withdraw its grant. Working with the Chief Constable and the APCC, I have been able to influence the decision to transfer the funding of Brake's victim services from the MoJ to the Dept. of Transport. This means that Brake can now support all victims of road traffic collisions (those killed or seriously injured), regardless of whether any culpability has been established. The DfT grant to Brake in 2020/21 is £169k, a significant increase on the £98k provided by the MoJ in 2019/20.

However, I remain concerned about the need for additional national resources for this group of victims. Compared to other victims services, it is still very underfunded. I do not believe the report gives enough emphasis to the vital work Brake and other similar organisations do.

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I welcome the recommendations in the report in respect of the critical role of FLOs (Family Liaison Officers) and support for them. Brake also plays a key role in supporting FLOs and giving them the recognition they deserve.

In recent years I have supported investment in West Yorkshire's regional ANPR capabilities and network, and have contributed to this network at national level as portfolio lead for the Association of Police & Crime Commissioners (APCC), particularly in helping the development and transition towards the National ANPR System (NAS), which should transform ANPR's use and capability around law enforcement throughout England and Wales.

By autumn last year, my Safer Communities Fund (SCF) made up from Proceeds of Crime monies has also funded 20 local projects with over £78,000 in grants to address road safety in our communities. The Safer Communities Fund particularly focusses its support on community-led initiatives, usually developed by small-scale third sector organisations and voluntary groups, in addition to core police budget investment into roads policing.

The report describes a series of recommendations for Chief Constables and three 'areas for improvement'. Responding to specific findings in the report, I would like to draw your attention to the following areas of activity at WYP which are addressing these matters:

Chief Constables should make sure that roads policing is included in their force's strategic threat and risk assessments;

WYP include Roads Policing within their assessment of demand reported in their Force Management Statement (FMS) and from 2019, the FMS has been combined with the service's Strategic Threat & Risk Assessment document.

The force has a Safer Roads Strategic Plan 2020/2021 that details the threats identified in the strategic assessment. With an Assistant Chief Constable acting as Strategic Lead, WYP have a clear strategic direction that is leading operational delivery which I fully support and have provided some additional investment for.

The efficient and effective exchange of all collision data with other relevant bodies;

Four researchers and one analyst have recently been recruited within the WYP ANPR unit, and their introduction has improved Roads Policing tasking against some of our most dangerous drivers.

Our local authority partners do publish collision data figures and some intelligence, but this data needs to be scrutinised to shape an operational direction. Scope exists to integrate not only collision data but police / partner tasking information to truly take a holistic approach to the issues and problem-solve more effectively in partnership.

Force-level support to national roads policing operations and intelligence structure;

WYP support national initiatives, and additional projects are run in West Yorkshire in support of our own districts' road safety plans. Recent examples are the NPCC speeding campaign during the Covid lockdown, and last year's WYP drink and drug driving campaign.

Compliance with the current version of the Department for Transport Circular 1/2007 in relation to the use of speed and red-light cameras;

WYP's Camera Enforcement Unit enforces speed limits on behalf of the Casualty Prevention Partnership in West Yorkshire using both fixed and mobile automated speed detection equipment.

Speed cameras are deployed only to predetermined 'high risk' locations, as per the site selection criteria detailed in DfT circular 1/2007. All enforcement sites comply with signage and requirements contained within the circular.

Costs recovered through NDORS (National Driver Offender Retraining Scheme) course referrals are accounted for separately within the Partnership budget, and reinvestment of any operating surplus into casualty prevention activities is overseen by the WY Safer Roads Executive.

In forces where Operation Snap (the provision of digital video footage by the public) has been adopted, Chief Constables should make sure that the project has enough resources and process to support its efficient and effective use.

The WYP Safer Roads submissions portal went live on 1/7/2020 providing a facility for the public to upload digital media footage of driving offences or anti-social driver behaviour. All submitted footage is triaged by a team of experienced roads policing specialists working within the Digital Submissions and Investigations Team. In the first 2 weeks of operation approximately 60 submissions were received.

A partnership approach is especially important in this aspect of policing, in particular, local authorities have a vital role to play. Together with the Chief Constable, I have advocated the adoption of the 'Vision Zero' approach, which has been developed in London and led by the Mayor. Some progress has been made, but I would like to see the West Yorkshire local authorities (through the West Yorkshire Combined Authority), give a greater focus on road safety. The election of a directly elected Mayor for West Yorkshire in May 2021 should provide more opportunities for greater co-ordination on road safety issues across the Combined Authority.

Looking ahead, I will review WYP's work on this report's recommendations, in particular through the COM process described above.

Yours sincerely



Mark Burns-Williamson
Police and Crime Commissioner for West Yorkshire