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Das Steve and Clive

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary Report into Domestic Abuse


Thank you for your letters of 2 April regarding Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary's (HMIC) report into the police response on domestic abuse. As you know, I commissioned HMIC to review the police response to domestic abuse because I was concerned that the service being provided to victims was not as good as it should be. The report published on 27 March made for depressing reading. Though I recognise that HMIC highlighted some pockets of good practice, I must focus on the national picture which HMIC concluded is simply not good enough. I am sure you will both agree that this must change.

You are right to be proud of the work you have done in Lancashire, which was recognised by HMIC as some of the best in the country. I was particularly pleased to read that the constabulary has continued to invest in specialist staff to deal with domestic abuse throughout a period of austerity, and that the constabulary works hard to make victims safer from the first point of contact. However, I also note that some of the national lessons identified by HMIC, particularly regarding risk assessment and evidence collection to deliver successful prosecutions, apply equally to Lancashire.

As you know, I have asked Chief Constables to put in place an action plan by September that sets out how local forces will take forward the HMIC recommendations. Police and Crime Commissioners have a vital role to play in making sure that this happens, and that police forces respond appropriately to their own individual force reports. I have been encouraged by the commitment you have shown to ending domestic abuse, but I am sure you will agree that there is still much more to do to protect victims of these appalling crimes.

I am chairing a National Oversight Group to drive delivery against each of HMIC's recommendations. I have asked the national policing leads on crime and domestic abuse - Chief Constable John Murphy, and Assistant Chief Constable Louisa Rolfe - to represent police leadership on the Group, and I am sure they will capture the best practice on domestic abuse in Lancashire.

I look forward to working with the police and Police and Crime Commissioners to deliver the substantial changes that are needed.

Yours sincerely

The Rt Hon Theresa May MP