

Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP  
Home Secretary  
2 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DF

Please ask for:                    Mr. Martin Surl  
Our Ref:  
Your Ref:  
Direct Dial:                         (01452) 754348  
Email:                                 pcc@gloucestershire.police.uk  
Date:                                    21 May 2017

Dear Home Secretary,

**RESPONSE TO HMIC INSPECTION “PEEL: Police effectiveness 2017”**

I write in respect of the HMICFRS Police effectiveness report for 2017 for Gloucestershire Constabulary. I have carefully studied its findings and take this opportunity to comment on its conclusions and recommendations.

In summary I am disappointed that the Inspectorate's overall judgement was that the Constabulary "requires improvement" in spite of the many positive findings in her inspection and subsequent report which would suggest that the Constabulary has, in the words of the report "made a great deal of progress since 2016" in terms of its effectiveness and looks set to improve further in all those areas where it is not already meeting the Inspectorate's expectations. I am particularly concerned to see that despite the level of crime in Gloucestershire being shown as 53 per thousand which is below the England and Wales average (77 per thousand) and the increase in recorded crime in the county over the period examined being only 11% compared to the average of 14%, the force was still found to require improvement. Similarly the report states that Gloucestershire is impacted by only 19 Organised Crime Groups per million population compared with the average of 47. While no doubt all forces could do better, on that basis none would ever be found to be "good" let alone "excellent".

Neighbourhood policing has been a particular concern of mine over the last year or so and I am pleased that the Constabulary has now sought to address the matter by launching its "neighbourhood offer" in January this year. This initiative has significantly addressed many of the Inspectorate's concerns in relation to crime prevention and anti-social behaviour as officers and staff have sought to re-engage with their local communities supported by the Community Harm Reduction Team. I continue to monitor the Constabulary's progress in this regard and regularly discuss such developments and the results of this work with the Chief Constable.



In the area of investigating crime and reducing offending, the HMICFRS has again focussed on the existence of processes rather than the outcomes achieved. For example there is reference to an absence of monitoring the quality of information recorded by officers in less serious cases but there is no suggestion that such investigations are less effective than those conducted by comparable forces. In fact the report goes on to say that "the force has achieved good investigative outcomes since 2015 in comparison with other forces".

I was pleased to see that the Inspectorate has recognised the Constabulary's improved response to serious and organised crime and has now adopted the processes that were said to be missing in the previous year's inspection. While there is some criticism that the low number of OCGs identified in the county is due to the Constabulary's failure to identify them properly, the data in the report suggests that the figure for Gloucestershire is not so different from that recorded for other forces in the South West and indeed in Southern England. The Constabulary has a positive relationship with the regional organised crime unit from which it receives good support within the constraints of its resources and the dictates of the regional threat assessment.

Finally, I note the Inspectorate's remarks concerning the joint arrangements for armed policing with Wiltshire Police and Avon & Somerset Constabulary and their reference to difficulties in relation to duties management and ICT operating systems. Both are now being addressed as part of our Collaborative Approach along with the strengthening of PCCs' and Chief Constables' scrutiny and oversight of this critical area of police activity.

I have discussed the report and its findings with the Chief Constable and have formally sought his written comments on the report and in particular the HMICFRS's recommendations and these are now to be found on my website at [www.gloucestershire-pcc.gov.uk](http://www.gloucestershire-pcc.gov.uk).

In summary, I consider the latest report to be encouraging in its recognition of the improvements the Constabulary has made and is continuing to make which is at least in part due to my emphasis on tackling crime and disorder at the local level and getting upstream of criminality by working with the voluntary sector and other agencies to reduce the volume of crime in the county. I am confident that despite the financial and other challenges that we continue to face, the outcomes for the people of Gloucestershire will continue to improve and I look forward to seeing this confirmed in next year's report.

Yours faithfully,



**Martin Surl**  
Police and Crime Commissioner