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

My Reference: OPCC/MBW/NF

Your Reference:

19th June 2020

Dear Home Secretary,

HMICFRS Inspection Report: Counter-terrorism policing - An inspection of the police's contribution to the government's Prevent programme.

I am writing in response to the recent HMICFRS national inspection report: Counter-terrorism policing - An inspection of the police's contribution to the government's Prevent programme.

Here in West Yorkshire, I maintain a close interest in the work to address extremism. West Yorkshire Police operate as the lead force within the Counter Terrorism Policing North East (CTPNE) region. I am also a member of the National Counter Terrorism Collaboration Agreement Strategic Board, which brings together senior leaders to discuss developments in the fight to tackle extremism in our communities.

Within this office, my Safeguarding Advisor's remit includes building links between our partners who work in the safeguarding and Prevent arenas. The advisor's role encompasses the responsibility to attend the West Yorkshire CONTEST board, representing myself at this strategic partnership group.

Beyond this work, I continue to fund many locally supported, third sector and voluntary groups through my Safer Communities Fund (SCF). The SCF provides grants up to £6k for qualifying organisations, many of which focus on work to tackle hate crime, boost community cohesion, or divert people from extremist behaviours.

In reading this report I note your national findings on delivering appropriate training for Prevent strategic leads, the inconsistent links between Prevent and Safeguarding teams, and whether the police are providing appropriate support to local Channel panels.

I reviewed West Yorkshire Police's (WYP) work on Prevent at the March session of my Community Outcomes Meetings – our public-facing forums through which I hold the Chief Constable to account on matters of concern to West Yorkshire communities.

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At that meeting, WYP were able to feedback on a positive review of their support for Prevent by HMI's inspectors, who felt that local partnership working arrangements in West Yorkshire were very good. Identified areas for improvement included inconsistencies in training and intelligence grading, and concerns from frontline neighbourhood staff about the lack of resources and competing priorities which challenged their Prevent work.

WYP's Prevent Business Plan has been bolstered by a number of new actions that have originated from the inspection, combined with an internal audit of Prevent which has been carried out by the OPCC's Audit Team. As a result, all WY District Commanders have appointed senior-level counter-terrorism SPOCs who are brought together as a 'Silver' group to promote consistent joint-working between the police and CTPNE. These groups cover community engagement, training, dissemination of intelligence, action planning, governance and performance management, and will help to embed Prevent in districts as an additional strand of Safeguarding.

On support for Channel meetings; West Yorkshire Police recognise that these groups are owned and coordinated by the five West Yorkshire local authorities, and that it is for the Channel Chair to decide the make-up of their respective group. Police attendance is made up of CTP Prevent Officers as well as representatives from local policing (for example Neighbourhood Policing supervisors), and varies depending on the cases that are currently being managed. Correct and appropriate police representation at West Yorkshire's five local authority panels is monitored by each district through a dedicated Prevent Sergeant.

The recommendation that vulnerability to radicalisation should be added to become the fourteenth component of the College of Policing's 'core disciplines of public protection' is being supported in West Yorkshire through measures to embed closer working between Prevent and the force's Safeguarding Central Governance Unit. Delivering this will be heavily dependent on the support of the police's statutory partners; I would recommend to the Home Office that this important objective should not be seen purely as a police endeavour.

Our commitment to training our officers and staff to recognise the threat of racialisation is supported by our links to CTPNE, who will deliver a round of training to all West Yorkshire Police officers and staff within the 20/21 training schedule, followed by further support at district level through WYP's 'Local Accountability Meetings'. During 2019, our Carr Gate training facility at Wakefield hosted two regional 'Prevent Champions' conferences, which included inputs from academics from the University of Bradford, the National Counter Terrorism Policing Operations Centre (NCTPOC), and from a local Imam. Other presentations included an insight into digital investigations, the impact of social media on those vulnerable to radicalisation, and the growing threat from extreme right-wing groups.

Finally, working closely with partners, WYP have updated their Counter-Terrorism Local Profile document. This will ensure that local Prevent action plans reflect the level and nature of threat within respective districts.

I am grateful to the inspectors for this report which formally highlights the complementary objectives of safeguarding and counter-radicalisation work in our neighbourhoods. I hope this document outlines how we are working to strengthen our commitment to Prevent across West Yorkshire.

Yours sincerely



Mark Burns-Williamson
Police and Crime Commissioner for West Yorkshire