



Rt Hon Priti Patel MP
Home Secretary
Home Office
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF

Cc: HMICFRS

Our Ref: JC/jpi

December 2021

Dear Home Secretary,

Police response to violence against women and girls

I am writing to you in response to the findings and recommendations set out in the HMICFRS interim and final inspection reports on the police response to violence against women and girls.

We shouldn't live in a world where women and girls feel intimidated or unsafe, however this is sadly still the case. It is a deep societal issue, with devastating effects, and it requires everyone to play their part. I welcome this report for highlighting the need for an 'immediate and unequivocal commitment' across government, policing, the criminal justice system, and public sector partnerships to address the issue.

The report contains 5 overarching recommendations for the Home Office, NPCC and the police, each underpinned by more detailed recommendations. A number of these require a policing response.

The first recommendation requires that police forces should ensure information on the protected characteristics of victims is accurately and consistently recorded. Since publication of the interim report West Mercia Police has continued its efforts to improve how it collects protected characteristics data. As a result, ethnicity recording is now at 86.2% (Oct 21) compliance. A 60 second learning product on how to ask for a victim's ethnicity has been developed using embedded video technology and circulated to all operational staff to assist in driving up compliance rates further. Similar 60 second learning products are being developed on other protected characteristics where improvements in compliance rates are also required.

Now compliance is improving in key areas, the force has the opportunity to consider how analysis of this data can be used to inform force strategy, policy and practice. It is of note that, in relation to how the force engages with women and young girls, the recording of date of births is at 100% compliance and Gender recording is at 98.59%.

While the report recommends the Home Office and NPCC should introduce a single national survey to measure victim satisfaction, locally West Mercia Police survey the following victim groups: burglary residential, violent crime, hate crime, road traffic collisions domestic abuse and rape. Results from the survey feed into a variety of reports and products. In depth analyses are undertaken in order to identify possible causes of low or high, increasing or decreasing satisfaction, with results informing a tactical action plan overseen by a Victim Satisfaction Delivery Group. This is one way in which the force strives to better understand the victims' voice through every stage of the case.

West Mercia Police is taking steps to develop a Violence against Women and Girls Strategy and supporting action plan which will steps the force will take to improve and standardise its approach to responding to violence against women and girls offences, with the aim of ensuring policies, processes and practices are effective, actively monitored and managed, and meeting national standards.

As Police and Crime Commissioner I have invested extensively to ensure West Mercia Police have the resources to relentlessly pursue offenders, victims get the right support at the right time and to tackle offender behaviour at the earliest stage and I will continue to hold the Chief Constable to account for ensuring we can continue to make improvements so that women and girls can be safe and feel safe.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John Campion". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

John Campion
Police & Crime Commissioner
West Mercia