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Our Ref: - PCC19 04/03

Your Ref: - The Poor Relation

8th August 2019

Dear Inspector / Minister,

As the Police and Crime Commissioner for Warwickshire I am providing the following response to 'Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services' (HMICFRS) and the 'Secretary of State for the Home Office' in respect of the national thematic report '*The Poor Relation - The police and CPS response to crimes against older people*', published on the 18th July 2019. This action is pursuant to my obligations under Section 55(1) of the Police Act 1996.

1. LOCAL POLICING BODY'S COMMENTS

I welcome the report and would like to convey my thanks to HMICFRS and HMCPSI for its production and recommendations. The report expressed clear concerns over the police's understanding of the nature and extent of crimes against older people, which often results in a poorer service to older victims. Also, that the police and Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) lacked any joint cohesive and focused strategy to deal with older victims of crime.

I note that the report praised the work of police officers in their initial dealings with older victims of crime, including attending promptly to reports of crime from older victims. But afterwards, officers struggled to deal with some of the complex needs of older people.

I also note the recent statement on the report from DCC Janette McCormick, the College's Director for Policing Standards, "The report highlights the importance of identifying vulnerable adults at the early stages of investigations, to ensure victims are protected and have the right support throughout

any court process. It is encouraging that areas of good work by forces were identified by the inspectors and the improvements in training and the response of officers and staff who come into contact with vulnerable adults were recognised. It is concerning the inspectors found the service to some elderly people fell below expected standards. We will be working with agencies, including the National Police Chiefs' Council and Crown Prosecution Service, to examine the report and its recommendations in detail and continue to support policing to improve the protection of vulnerable people, whatever their age."

In summary, I concur with the Inspectorate's observations and support the view that action is required to improve the service provided to this vulnerable section of our communities.

2. COMMENTS FROM THE CHIEF CONSTABLE

Warwickshire Police supports the recommendations contained within the report, in particular the four recommendations for the attention of all Chief Constables that are listed below: -

Recommendations for Chief Constables

- **Cause of concern**

The police don't consistently assess the needs of victims as set out in the relevant codes of practice and so the needs of victims aren't always met.

1. Recommendation

Within six months, chief constables should make sure that victim needs assessments are always completed

- **Cause of concern**

Chief constables don't understand well enough the current demand for adult safeguarding arrangements, and haven't considered the likely future demand and the implications for forces.

2. Recommendation

Within three months, chief constables should conduct analysis of the current and future demand for adult safeguarding, including the gap in knowledge that may exist from those cases where referrals aren't made because of errors or omissions. This analysis should be incorporated into force management statements (FMSs).

- **Cause of concern**

Some victims may not be receiving support services, and some support services don't work as well as they could. This is because the police don't always refer victims when they should, support services

don't have ready access to police information, and witness care arrangements are sometimes provided separately.

3. Recommendation

Within six months, chief constables should work with police and crime commissioners and their mayoral equivalents, and other relevant organisations, to review whether victim support services can be provided in a better way.

For Chief Constables and the National Police Chiefs' Council

- **Cause of concern**

Some adults who need safeguarding are being put at risk because the police aren't always referring cases to partner organisations, and there are no effective measures to ensure that referrals have been made.

4. Recommendation

Within three months, chief constables should ensure that adult safeguarding referrals are always made when appropriate, with effective processes in place to make sure this happens. The NPCC lead for adults at risk should advise chief constables as to how this is best achieved.

- **Area for improvement**

Within six months, chief constables should find good ways to assess the current demands on the police made by older people. These assessments should include a prediction of future changes in demand, account for the work of other organisations, and be incorporated into FMSs.

Warwickshire Police

All these recommendations have been brought to the attention of the relevant business leads and it has been requested that the recommendations requiring completion within three months be prioritised.

The recommendations have also been placed on the HMICFRS 'tracker' and appropriate governance will be provided through the Warwickshire Police HMICFRS Assurance Board.

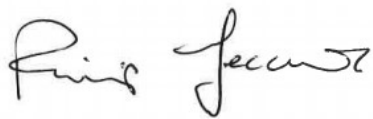
3. ANY COMMENTS FROM THE LOCAL POLICING BODY ON THE CC'S COMMENTS.

The Chief Constable is supportive of the report and the recommendations contained within and has provided his assurance that the recommendations will be implemented within the suggested timescales.

I will scrutinise the progress made by Warwickshire Police in achieving these recommendations, through representation at the force's HMICFRS Assurance Board and at my weekly 'holding to account' meetings with the Chief Constable.

This response will be published on the website of the Warwickshire Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) within the proscribed 56 day timeframe starting from the day on which the report was published.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Philp Seccombe', written in a cursive style.

Philp Seccombe. TD

Warwickshire Police and Crime Commissioner