

Rt Hon Alun Michael JP OStJ FRSA

Comisiynydd yr Heddlu a Throseddu De Cymru
Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales



16 April 2019

POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER RESPONSE TO THE HMIC REPORT:
THE POLICE RESPONSE TO DOMESTIC ABUSE: An Update Report

The HMIC update report on policing domestic abuse outlines a number of positives as well as some continuing areas of concern in this area. The report confirms the growing demand on policing in terms of domestic abuse. It is extremely positive that more and more people are reporting domestic abuse incidents to the police, including to South Wales Police, and I do all I can to encourage people to do so. However I am equally keen to ensure that the services available are able to cope with demand and that police officers and staff are well placed to respond to victims in the most appropriate ways and to investigate cases thoroughly.

The report notes the importance of the police working with other organisations to provide the best possible response to victims. I am very pleased that we have made some excellent progress on this in South Wales. We are fortunate to work in an area where our partner agencies are very keen to work together and with the police for the benefit of victims. You will be aware of the success of our existing Multi Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASHs) and the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs) that operate in our area. We work very well with the voluntary sector in South Wales and I have an appointed Strategic Lead for Vulnerability in my own team who works to bring partner agencies and the police together to achieve the best results around domestic abuse and other areas of vulnerability. It is impossible for the police to tackle the huge priority of domestic abuse alone and I make it my duty as Commissioner to emphasise this to external partners.

I note that the report refers to the need for the police to improve understanding of coercive and controlling behaviour and I agree that this is current priority. In South Wales Police over 1,000 officers have recently been trained on recognising the signs of coercive and controlling behaviour and this has been conducted in conjunction with Women's Aid. Our Public Service Centre (control room) staff are also well equipped and trained to identify domestic abuse victims and put in the most appropriate response but I remain committed to ensuring that this continues.

Ty Morgannwg, Pencadlys yr Heddlu
Pen-y-Bont ar Ogwr, CF31 3SU
f: 01656 869366
e: commissioner@heddlu-de-cymru.pnn.police.uk
g: southwalescommissioner.org.uk

Ty Morgannwg, Police Headquarters,
Bridgend, CF31 3SU
t: 01656 869366
e: commissioner@south-wales.pnn.police.uk
w: southwalescommissioner.org.uk

Mae'r Comisiynydd a'i dîm yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg
The Commissioner and his team welcomes correspondence in Welsh or English

Rt Hon Alun Michael JP OStJ FRSA

Comisiynydd yr Heddlu a Throseddau De Cymru
Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales



I agree with the report's comment that seeking feedback from domestic abuse victims is important and I am very pleased to report that members of my own team meet regularly with survivors of abuse to inform the South Wales Police approach to tackling abuse and supporting victims in the future.

I share the Chief Constable's view of the report in his comment below:

Protecting the vulnerable is the priority of all priorities for South Wales Police. Domestic abuse is a stain on society and South Wales Police work closely with our statutory partners and voluntary agencies to try to prevent all forms of domestic abuse and support those who are sadly affected by it.

We welcome this thematic inspection by HMICFRS which rightly recognises the importance which the police place on dealing with domestic abuse. It is encouraging that victims and survivors have more confidence to report cases to the police and a recent survey conducted with victims of domestic abuse showed that 90% were satisfied with the services that they received from South Wales Police and 93% were satisfied with how they were treated.

We will never rest on our laurels, however, and we recognise that there is always more that we can and will do. We will continue to deal with domestic abuse as an absolute priority.

Later in 2019 my team will conduct a 'deep dive review' of the vulnerability issues that are identified in my Police & Crime Plan, and this will include domestic abuse. I will ensure that the issues raised in this report are included as part of our review so that I can identify progress and areas of concern in the force if needed.

Rt Hon Alun Michael
Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales

Ty Morgannwg, Pencadlys yr Heddlu
Pen-y-Bont ar Ogwr, CF31 3SU
f: 01656 869366
e: commissioner@heddlu-de-cymru.pnn.police.uk
g: southwalescommissioner.org.uk

Ty Morgannwg, Police Headquarters,
Bridgend, CF31 3SU
t: 01656 869366
e: commissioner@south-wales.pnn.police.uk
w: southwalescommissioner.org.uk

Mae'r Comisiynydd a'i dîm yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg
The Commissioner and his team welcomes correspondence in Welsh or English