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8th March 2016

Michael Cunningham, QPM
HM Inspector of Constabulary
Unit 2 Wakefield Office Village,
Fryers Way, Silkwood Park
Wakefield
WF5 9TJ

Dear Michael,

HMIC Inspections of Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy (PEEL) 2015

Thank you for your letters informing me of the results of the recent HMIC PEEL inspections and inviting my comments. I thought it would be sensible to send you a combined response relating to all three inspections.

I am of course delighted with the 'Outstanding' ratings achieved by Durham Constabulary for the Efficiency and Effectiveness inspections. I am particularly pleased that the Force was the only one to receive an 'outstanding' in all three efficiency questions, and for investigating crime. This is a testament to the leadership of the Chief Officer team, and the hard work of the men and women of the Constabulary. I have warmly congratulated the Force on the results and I will continue to work with them, for as long as I am in office, to ensure that their very high standards are maintained and they stay at the very forefront of British policing.

I am also pleased with the 'Good' rating achieved for Legitimacy. I note that the Force achieved 'outstanding' for the engagement element of the inspection, and 'good' for the element relating to having an ethical culture. I have discussed these with the Chief Constable and I am assured that across the Force there will continue to be a commitment to the code of ethics and that that complaints and cases of misconduct for both officers and staff will be investigated fairly and consistently. I am also pleased that the Legitimacy inspection also found that Taser is used fairly and appropriately.

I take serious note of the comments made in relation to stop and search, which have (as with many other Forces) led to a 'Requires Improvement' rating for the third element of the inspection. Whilst it is pleasing that HMIC finds that Durham is complying with most requirements of the Best Use of Stop and Search scheme, there is clearly a need for greater consistency in compliance with the requirement for stop and search records to include the grounds for carrying out the search. This needs to be more robustly checked and effectively endorsed at Supervisor level. I have discussed this finding with the Chief Constable and I am pleased to inform you that the Force has already put in place the following actions:

- a Chief Superintendent has been identified to drive forward the changes required relating to Stop and Search
- a new IT system will go live imminently which will relieve officers of some of the burden of paperwork relating to Stop and Search

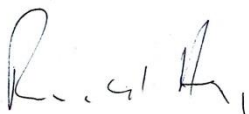
As the Legitimacy inspection report recognises, Durham Constabulary is extremely well led by an excellent Chief Constable and I have every confidence that he will ensure that these actions will improve the Force's approach to Stop and Search to the required standard, as the current grading is entirely unacceptable.

To be awarded seven ratings of "outstanding" out of a possible ten is an extraordinary achievement, but also a platform to enable even greater success in the future.

I hope that this response is helpful to you. If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

I am copying this letter to the Chief Constable, the Home Secretary, and the Chair of the Durham Police and Crime Panel, and publishing it on my website.

Yours sincerely,



Ron Hogg
Police and Crime Commissioner



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