

Pencadlys yr Heddlu Gwent | Gwent Police Headquarters
Ffordd Parc Llantarnam | Llantarnam Park Way
Llantarnam
Cwmbrân | Cwmbran
Torfaen
NP44 3FW

Ffôn | Tel: 01633 642 200
E-bost | Email: commissioner@gwent.police.uk
Gwe | Web: www.gwent.pcc.police.uk



Comisiynydd Heddlu a Throseddau Gwent | Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent: Jane Mudd

The Rt Hon Yvette Cooper
Home Secretary
Home Office
2 Marsham Street
LONDON
SW1P 4DF

23rd July 2024

State of Policing: The Annual Assessment of Policing in England and Wales 2023

As required by statute, I am writing to you to respond to His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary Fire & Rescue Service (HMICFRS) report entitled, 'State of Policing: The Annual Assessment of Policing in England and Wales 2023'.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome this report, which provides a helpful overview of the current situation within policing in England and Wales, including the positives but also the challenges we all face. Many of the issues raised in the report are also issues we are trying to manage locally.

In relation to public trust and confidence, I recognise the picture outlined in the report and it is one we face in Gwent. Improving trust and confidence were key pledges in my manifesto and as I develop my Police and Crime Plan this will be a key feature that I am committed to improving. We have already seen improvements in things like vetting practices, and my office has recently commenced a focused scrutiny approach to standards and conduct, which will be reviewed in line with my new Police and Crime Plan.

Through secured Government funding, initiatives such as 'Operation Lumley', Gwent's response to antisocial behaviour hotspot patrolling, are also having an impact. This operation involves enhanced uniform presence in areas identified as hotspots for high levels of antisocial behaviour and serious violence. Through this, I continue to feel reassured that our police officer's effective street presence can build upon the trust in our communities and ultimately, keep our streets safe.

It is also my commitment to continually enhance the Criminal Justice response to violence against women and girls (VAWG). My office, in conjunction with Gwent Police, have commissioned and trialled numerous services aimed at addressing VAWG. Among these initiatives is the Multi-Agency Tasking and Coordination (MATAC) team, dedicated to supporting and disrupting high-level domestic perpetrators in Gwent. Additionally, Gwent and South Wales PCCs have uniquely commissioned a new domestic abuse advocacy service to specifically support victims of police perpetrated domestic abuse. This is already proving it's worth supporting victims who have come forward.

Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg, a phan ddaw i law, byddwn yn ateb yn y Gymraeg – ni fydd hyn yn gohirio ein hymateb. Os hoffech dderbyn gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg o hyn ymlaen, neu os ydych wedi cael eich gwahoddi gyfweiliad neu gyfarfod ac yr hoffech ddefnyddio'r Gymraeg, anfonwch e-bost at: Commissioner@gwent.police.uk. Darperir gwasanaethau cyfieithu.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh and where received, we will reply in Welsh - this will not delay our response. If you wish to receive correspondence in Welsh hereafter or if you have been invited to an interview or meeting and you wish to use Welsh, send email to: Commissioner@gwent.police.uk. Translation services will be provided.

Victims and the most vulnerable will always be at the forefront of my time as Gwent PCC and as stated above and within the report, my focus will very much be on the overall Criminal Justice response. In my role as chair of the Local Criminal Justice Board, I will aim to improve the whole system on behalf of victims to ensure they get the outcomes they deserve. On that note, I welcome the call for a Royal Commission into the criminal justice system, as I believe there is a need for more fundamental reform.

Regarding the workforce and funding, along with the force, my office and I are committed to maintaining or increasing officer numbers to maintain public safety and build trust within the community. Initiatives like the Police Uplift Program have contributed significantly to returning officer numbers to 2010 levels and now above, and I am highly committed to ensure that these officers, along with our staff and volunteers, can continue to protect the public, prevent crime and antisocial behaviour, keep our communities safe and improve the confidence of our communities. I support the proposal to give Chief Constables greater control over this funding and the removal of the current restrictions. Without this, and with challenges to budgets, we will see an increase in Police Officers having to take back-office jobs, which is counter to the needs of our communities.

With regard to a review of the funding formula, again I support this taking place as I believe this is long overdue, particularly with an added focus to introduce a capital funding commitment for police forces. The increased burden on local people at a time of high inflation has been a significant challenge and my requirement as PCC to keep increasing the precept to maintain an effective policing service due to shortfalls in central funding are always a difficult balancing act. I am ready and willing to engage in a conversation on what a fair funding formula would look like.

I note the position of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary to increase his funding and powers. It will not be surprising to hear that I do have some concerns about his request to be able to inspect aspects of PCC funding and activity. I think a more comprehensive discussion is needed on this, as this fundamentally impacts on the wider policing protocol order in relation to local PCCs' roles, democratic accountability and scrutiny, and the role of Police and Crime Panels. I welcome further engagement and consultation on this.

Overall, I continue to feel reassured that the issues flagged in the report are taken seriously by the Chief Constable, as re-iterated in her comment below:

State of Policing 2023 highlights some of the many challenges facing the police service, such as restoring public trust and confidence, providing a service to victims and the most vulnerable and supporting an inexperienced workforce. As Chief Constable, I value the work of the inspectorate and will continue to work closely with them to make improvements to the service provided to the communities of Gwent.

Further to the comments made by the Chief Constable, I am confident that we can continue our focus on the challenges facing the police service today to improve the safety and service for the communities of Gwent. I am currently looking to recruit a new Chief Constable and I look forward to working with them, partners locally, across Wales and nationally to further enhance the quality of policing for the public.

Yours sincerely,



Jane Mudd
Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent