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Comisyynydd Heddlu a Throseddau Gwent | Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent: Jeff Cuthbert B.Sc., MCIPD

The Rt Hon James Cleverly MP  
Home Secretary  
Home Office  
2 Marsham Street  
LONDON  
SW1P 4DF

15<sup>th</sup> March 2024

Dear Home Secretary,

**The impact of recruitment and retention on the criminal justice system – joint efficiency spotlight report.**

As required by statute, I am writing to you to respond to the Criminal Justice Joint Inspection efficiency spotlight report entitled, 'The impact of recruitment and retention on the criminal justice system'.

I welcome this report which echoes the concerns shared by criminal justice organisations in Gwent, and are reflected by the Chief Constable in her comments:

*I welcome this report from the Criminal Justice Joint Inspectorate which highlights concerns regarding the recruitment and retention of staff across agencies and the impact on the wider criminal justice system. As Chief Constable, I recognise the importance of retaining the skills, experience and knowledge of hardworking police officers and staff because this supports our wider teams and is key to us delivering the best possible service to our communities. Gwent Police has an established exit interview process and has recently invested in a new initiative called a 'stay interview'. This a supportive and voluntary meeting set up for officers and staff who may be considering leaving the service. This approach seeks to further understand why officers and staff leave and consider any practicable solutions.*

We continue to recognise the challenges of a young in-service police workforce, the increased demand on tutor constables, and the high attrition rates recorded by the police service in the last few years. We also recognise that what initially attracts people to a career in policing may not be enough to retain them, particularly when life circumstances change, or if they feel that they are not able to maximise their potential within the organisation, or that this career pathway is not for them. I support the introduction of the 'stay interview' initiative in Gwent, the impact of which will be reviewed as part of OPCC scrutiny of Gwent Police's workforce management, which takes place at the public facing Strategy and Performance Board. This includes:

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](mailto: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](mailto:Commissioner@gwent.police.uk). Translation services will be provided.

- Gwent Police's People Strategy 2022-25, which sets out how the organisation will ensure workforce readiness and ability to meet the challenges of modern policing as reflected within my Police and Crime Plan and the Chief Constable's Delivery Plan. The strategy contains six pillars, including 'Talent Management' and 'Strategic Workforce Development', underpinned by the principles of equality, diversity, inclusion, and wellbeing.
- The HR Strategy Annual Report, which provides the progress achieved under the People Strategy, and includes updates on workforce planning, retention, and recruitment.
- Workforce representation data.

In addition to my scrutiny, workforce recruitment and retention has been a consideration for the Gwent Police and Crime Panel. Sickness absence and workforce representation form part of the performance pack that my office produces to update the Panel on progress against my Police and Crime Plan.

The challenges seen across the criminal justice system, particularly in relation to the pandemic, have also been a focus for Gwent's Criminal Justice Board, which is chaired by my Deputy. Here, there is both an individual and collective commitment to the effectiveness and efficiency of criminal justice in Gwent. However, we continue to recognise the persistent operational pressures on agencies to provide a high standard of service, and work together to seek suitable mechanisms to mitigate and manage any ongoing and/or new issues. There is also opportunity to escalate any higher-risk or wider-reaching matters to the Criminal Justice Board for Wales for consideration and potential resolution through the partnership.

In addition, the Criminal Justice Wales Anti-Racism Action Plan, to which all criminal justice agencies in Wales have signed-up, provides a further focus on the representation, development, and retention of members of the workforce of an ethnic minority heritage. Both my office and Gwent Police are now represented at the Training, Cultural Competency, and Workforce Representation Subgroup that sits under the Criminal Justice Race Taskforce Wales. As part of its developing work programme, this subgroup will provide a focus on recruitment, retention, and attrition, providing deliverable outputs for consideration and agreement at the Race Taskforce Wales.

I will now continue to work with my office, the Chief Constable, and criminal justice partners on these matters for the remainder of my term. Furthermore, I will be recommending this focus to the new Police and Crime Commissioner.

Yours sincerely



Jeff Cuthbert  
Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent