

The Rt Hon Suella Braverman MP
Home Secretary
Home Office
2 Marsham Street
LONDON
SW1P 4DF

5th October 2023

Dear Home Secretary,

Homicide Prevention: An inspection of the police contribution to the prevention of homicide

As required by statute, I am writing to you to respond to His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspection report entitled, 'Homicide Prevention: An inspection of the police contribution to the prevention of homicide'.

The loss of life to homicide is a significant tragedy and destroys the lives of family and friends. As such, I was pleased to read that the inspectorate found that most police forces are able to identify patterns and causes effectively which help to prevent this heinous crime although I am aware that areas for improvement remain. I also note that the Home Office is currently investigating concerns that the link between homicide and drugs may have been overstated for a number of years and look forward to reading its findings.

As the Chief Constable states in her comment below, Gwent Police has developed a local homicide prevention strategy and is currently working to align it to the national strategy:

'I welcome this inspection report from His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services which examines the police contribution to the prevention of homicide. As the report highlights, "Effective prevention of homicides saves lives and is better than effective investigation". As a force, homicide prevention is led at a strategic level by the Head of Protective Services. The force has developed a Homicide Prevention Strategy which is currently being reviewed by the Detective Inspector for Major Crime to align with the national strategy. In terms of governance, the Head of Protective Services chairs a Major Crime Oversight Group. As Chief Constable, I am committed to implementing the recommendations regarding the production of an analytical report concerning death investigations and ensuring the force can quickly identify lessons from homicides'.

I share below Gwent Police's response to the relevant recommendations within the inspection report, which detail the work underway to make the improvements called for by the inspectorate:

➤ **Recommendation 2**

By 31st August 2024, Chief Constables in England and Wales should devise an approach to make sure their force can, on a sufficiently frequent basis, produce an analytical report concerning its death investigations. This will help the force to:

- **Better understand the pattern of death reports across the force area, drawing on force data and information gathered by other organisations, including the NHS and local authorities; and**
- **Identify any linked series of death reports.**

Gwent Police plans to produce a homicide profile and will develop terms of reference to ensure it meets requirements. The profile will be refreshed at set time periods to ensure it is up to date.

➤ **Recommendation 3**

By 1st December 2023, Chief Constables should make sure their force can quickly identify lessons from homicides and serious violence incidents. The process should be capable of involving partner organisations where appropriate, so that lessons can be learned more widely.

Gwent Police has a seven day rapid review process in place for homicides. This is managed by the Major Incident Team/Senior Investigating Officer and will include partner organisations where required or appropriate. The process is monitored through the Major Crime Oversight Group where any actions or recommendations will be disseminated.

As evidenced, Gwent Police is already undertaking work to improve the prevention of homicide. It is important that we get it right due to the devastating impact this crime has. I provide my full support to the Chief Constable in ensuring that these recommendations are implemented.

Yours sincerely,



Jeff Cuthbert B.Sc., MCIPD
Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent