

Swyddfa Comisiynydd yr Heddlu a Throseddu, Gwent

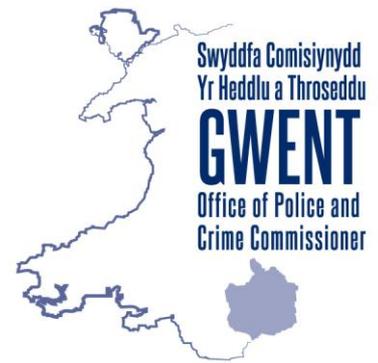
Office of Police and Crime Commissioner, Gwent

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Comisiynydd yr Heddlu a Throseddu ar gyfer Gwent | Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent:
Ian Johnston QPM

The Rt Hon Teresa May MP
Home Secretary
Home Office
2 Marsham St
LONDON
SW1P 4DF

23 August 2013

Dear Home Secretary

**HMIC Valuing the Police Thematic and Force Reports
HMIC Policing in Austerity**

As required by statute, I am writing to you with my comments on the HMIC report “Gwent Police’s Response to the Funding Challenge”, issued following the Valuing the Police Thematic report.

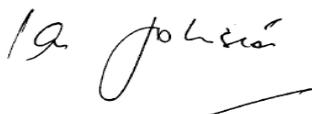
I welcome the report, which generally supports the progress in Gwent in addressing the difficult challenge to save significant money whilst continuing to strive to improve the service to the public. I am particularly pleased that HMIC has recognized that the reshaping of the organization started early in Gwent and has progressed with the full support of the workforce. HMIC also acknowledges that against an assessed requirement to save £23.5m over the four years to 31 March 2015, £22.9m has already been saved or identified.

HMIC expressed the view that the recent departure of the Chief Constable brings a level of instability at a critical time for the force and sought reassurance that this will not create a leadership gap at a time when the force is managing change. On the departure of the former Chief Constable I immediately promoted the Deputy Chief Constable to Temporary Chief Constable and shortly after, he and I addressed a meeting of more than one hundred senior managers in the force to apprise them of developments and outline our agreed plans for the future. The feedback from the senior managers and the representatives from the Federation and other workforce associations was positive and the working relationships remain good. The recruitment process for the appointment of a permanent Chief Constable has already commenced.

Earlier this week I received a letter from HMIC Sharpling following up the publication “Policing in Austerity: Rising to the Challenge”, which also addresses the challenges facing the police service as a result of reducing funding.

The recommendations attached to the letter are a useful reminder of the areas to be addressed in order to ensure the continuation of an efficient and effective police service, despite cuts in grant funding. Recommendations one and four were drawn to my attention as being particularly relevant to Gwent and I am pleased to confirm that the Temporary Chief Constable and I are continuously reviewing our plans to deliver savings and exploring all options for collaborative working.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'I Johnston', with a horizontal line underneath.

I Johnston, QPM
Police & Crime Commissioner for Gwent

Copied to: Dru Sharpling - HMI