

Rt Hon Priti Patel MP  
Home Secretary  
2 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DF

13 February 2020

Dear Home Secretary

**Response to the joint report by HMCPSI and HMICFRS - Evidence led domestic abuse prosecutions**

In line with my statutory responsibilities as Police and Crime Commissioner and following consultation with the Chief Constable, I am pleased to provide the following response to the HMICFRS and the Secretary of State for the Home Office in respect of the above report by HMCPSI and HMICFRS – “Evidence led domestic abuse prosecutions”, which was published on 23 January 2020.

The Chief Constable and I welcome the report and support the conclusions that the handling of evidence led domestic abuse prosecutions requires improvement; also that if a Domestic Abuse victim decides not to support a prosecution, police and prosecutors should consider whether it is possible to bring an evidence led prosecution without that support.

We agree with the recommendations identified in the report.

In addition we note the report raises questions as to whether the police and CPS lawyers fully understand guidance, policy and the importance of evidence led prosecutions when dealing with domestic abuse cases.

Dorset Police Specific Actions

Dorset Police have an ongoing domestic abuse plan which has been updated to incorporate a number of recommendations for improvement in the treatment of vulnerable victims.

It is pleasing to report that work has already significantly progressed in relation to these recommendations and to improve the volume and quality of evidence led prosecutions in particular.

Guidance and a checklist in relation to evidence led prosecutions has been provided to all Officers and staff involved in investigating domestic abuse or supervising such investigations.

The Office of the Dorset Police & Crime Commissioner

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Dorset Police's 'Make the Difference' team are carrying out reviews of domestic abuse investigations to ensure that evidence led prosecutions are considered and applied consistently.

Improving in this area is a key part of Dorset Police's mission to provide outstanding service to vulnerable people.

This response will be published on the OPCC website.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Martyn Underhill', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Martyn Underhill  
Police and Crime Commissioner