



19 April 2017

Nicola Blackwood MP
Parliamentary under Secretary of State for Public Health and Innovation

Sarah Newton MP
Parliamentary under Secretary of State for Vulnerability, Safeguarding and Countering Extremism

Dear Ministers,

The Policing and Crime Act 2017: Mental Health Provisions

Thank you for your letter of 28 March 2017 to all PCCs highlighting upcoming changes to the Mental Health Act 1983.

Further to our correspondence, letters and conversations with yourselves and Home Office officials over the last two years, and, taking into account the views of those working at the frontline of mental health provision, this letter is to formally record that over two thirds of PCCs oppose the use of police stations or police cells as places of safety for people in mental health crisis, under any circumstances.

While we welcome the changes with respect of persons under 18 years of age, we do not believe these changes go far enough towards addressing our concerns, and that the same protection should be afforded to all. We do not agree with the view that police custody can be used in exceptional circumstances. These policy settings place too much pressure on front line officers, and create perverse incentives that will result in vulnerable individuals being managed by staff not in a position to offer them the requisite care, and the inappropriate criminalisation of mental health. This policy is flawed, and we are concerned it will lead to other situations similar to those that led to the tragic deaths of Thomas Orchard and Sean Rigg.

In addition, and as we raised with you recently, it is our belief that in some areas of the country, front line services are not prepared for the pending changes. This is a matter of great concern to PCCs and we are attempting to gather evidence to inform further policy development and raise awareness via our channels.

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The APCC provides support to all
Police and Crime Commissioners
and policing governance bodies in
England and Wales

We will continue to engage with the Home Office and other partners to ensure implementation of the upcoming changes are as successful as possible. We support your aims, and hope to work with you further to ensure that vulnerable members of society and people in mental health crisis receive the most appropriate support and the best possible outcomes. We believe there is more to be done.

Yours sincerely,



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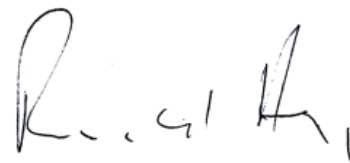
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Police and Crime Commissioner for Derbyshire



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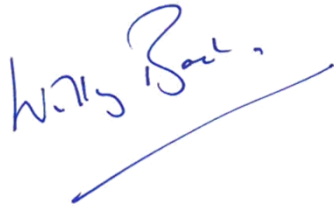
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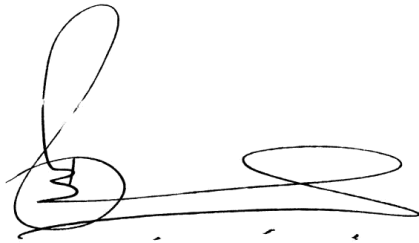
Lord Willy Bach

**Police and Crime Commissioner for
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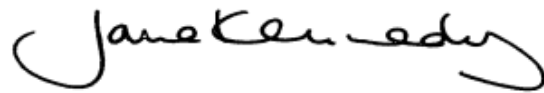
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**Police and Crime Commissioner for
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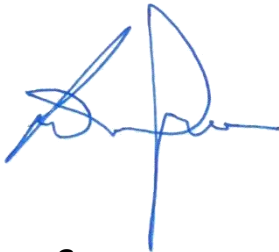
Deputy Doug Barrow

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Committee**



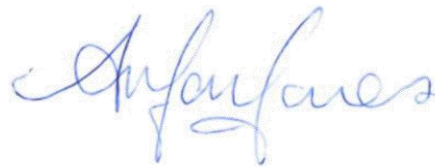
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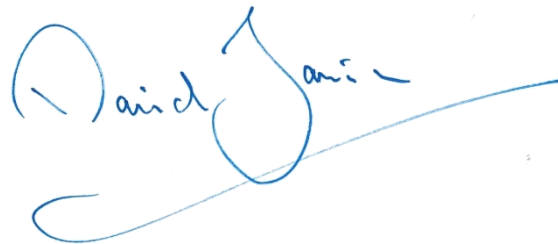
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