

Rt Hon Suella Braverman MP  
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Your ref: n/a  
Our ref: SH  
Date: 23 December 2022  
Enquiries to: Suzanne Harris  
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Dear Home Secretary

I write in response to the HMICFRS inspection report: **An inspection of vetting, misconduct, and misogyny in the police service.**

I acknowledge the 43 recommendations made in this report and the 5 areas for improvement identified. I understand that 29 of the recommendations are applicable to all Forces, including Essex Police.

The Chief Constable has provided a detailed response to me regarding each of the recommendations, which includes a RAG rating to show which areas Essex is already compliant in, and where work is still ongoing. I have been assured that Essex is compliant with 15 of the recommendations and partly compliant with a further 12. The force is also fully compliant with one of the Areas for Improvement (AFIs) and partially compliant with a further three of the AFIs. The force continues to work towards full compliance with all recommendations made and all AFIs identified, acknowledging that in some cases they are subject to procurement decisions and/or national advice and guidance from other agencies including the College of Policing and National Police Chief's Council.

Ensuring that high standards are maintained within our police forces is a vital component to maintaining public confidence. It is essential that the public are able to trust police forces and their individual officers, so that they engage with us to report crime, provide evidence and support us in gaining justice. The few who undermine the trust that is placed in them as representatives of the police do an immense amount of damage to public confidence, which impacts our ability to deliver effectively. It is paramount that we do everything within our power to strengthen the processes which prevent unsuitable candidates from entering police service, and to enable their swift expulsion when wrongdoing is identified.

Professional Standards is part of my regular scrutiny programme. I receive an annual report to my Performance and Resources Scrutiny Board from the Professional Standards Department and hold quarterly scrutiny meetings with them to ensure I have good knowledge and understanding of the activity within the Essex Police. The remit of these meetings includes public complaints as well as misconduct, and they provide me with an overview of cases which are being handled. In my most recent meeting I was given an in-depth briefing on Police Perpetrated Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). A quarterly report on all Human Resources (HR) matters is also presented to my Performance and Resources Scrutiny Board. The next quarterly PSD scrutiny meeting is due to be

held in February, with the quarterly HR paper due to my Performance and Resources Scrutiny Board in January and the annual PSD report due to the same Board in May. This scheduling ensures that I receive regular updates and that any issues can be highlighted in a timely manner. I will receive an update on all outstanding recommendations due in March and April 2023 at the February meeting with PSD, which will include recommendations 8, 11, 15, 20, 33, 34, 37, 42 and 43. Recommendations due for compliance from October onwards will be monitored at the various meetings which take place throughout the year.

I am pleased to have the support of the Ethics & Integrity Sub-Committee of the Police, Fire and Crime Panel, who provide a useful sounding board around specific issues in this area.

Whilst I recognise that the majority of officers and staff within Essex Police uphold the values expected of them, it is no less important that we continue to identify and eradicate any inappropriate conduct.

Essex Police has introduced a Professionalism Strategy which sets out five pillars of professionalism and the standards expected, and is establishing a Professionalism Engagement Team to reinforce positive messages within the force.

I am pleased to see Essex Police responding in a positive way to the recommendations within the report and to the challenge of eradicating all inappropriate behaviour within the force. I am not, however, complacent and fully appreciate the importance of this subject having a continued focus on it. I look forward to seeing the report which will follow the recent inspection of Essex Police and which is expected to provide a more locally focussed review of this topic.

I will continue to maintain close scrutiny of the work of Essex Police in this regard, and to hold the Chief Constable to account to ensure that Essex is a force that can be proud of all members of its workforce.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roger Hirst', written in a cursive style.

Roger Hirst  
Police Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex  
c.c. Ben-Julian Harrington, Chief Constable, Essex Police