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HMICFRS 2017 EFFECTIVENESS INSPECTION

I am writing to express my disappointment that Northamptonshire police force has been graded “requires improvement” in Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary’s (HMICFRSs) Effectiveness inspection for the second year in a row.

I look forward to receiving, within 56 days of publication of HMICFRSs report, your comments in response to the report (including what actions you will and will not take) pursuant to the obligation on you under Section 55 of the Police Act 1996 (as amended by Section 37 of the Policing and Crime Act 2017). I will be interested to hear what steps the force plans to take to improve the service it delivers to the public and put its performance on an upward trajectory.

HMICFRS inspections are a vital part of the policing landscape, which shine a light on both good practice and where improvements are needed. They provide information for the public and for PCCs to use in holding forces to account. I consider the findings carefully and expect all PCCs and Chief Constables to take inspection findings seriously.

The statutory requirement for PCCs to respond publically to inspection reports is important for a number of reasons. It demonstrates that PCCs are fulfilling one of their core functions – i.e. holding forces to account. It also provides transparency for the public so they know what action is being taken and can have confidence in both their PCC and their police force.

Having reviewed recent inspection findings and responses, it is clear that not all PCCs are meeting this requirement. In fact I have seen just 20 responses to HMICFRSs Efficiency report which was published in November 2017 and just 19 responses to HMICFRSs Legitimacy report which was published in December 2017. That is clearly not good enough and does not reflect well on your responsibility for playing a part in delivering improvements in policing or holding forces to account.

I want to reiterate my expectation that all PCCs will provide a comprehensive, action-focussed response to HMICFRSs reports. Should any responses miss the 56 day deadline, or not adequately address any recommendations made, I will require a full and clear explanation why.

RT HON NICK HURD MP