



RESPONSE OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER OF WILTSHIRE AND SWINDON TO THE HMICFRS & HMCPSI REPORT: THE POOR RELATION – THE POLICE AND CPS RESPONSE TO CRIMES AGAINST OLDER PEOPLE (JULY 2019)

Chief Constable’s comments

The Chief Constable of Wiltshire is committed addressing the recommendations highlighted within the HMICFRS report. Wiltshire Police has a well-established specialist Safeguarding Adults Investigation Team and the force ownership for the delivery of the response to safeguarding adults sits under a tactical lead Detective Inspector and a strategic lead Superintendent within the Public Protection portfolio.

Recommendations	Wiltshire response
<p>Within six months, chief constables should make sure that victim needs assessments are always completed.</p> <p>Within three months, chief constables should conduct analysis of the current and future demand for adult safeguarding, including the gap in knowledge that may exist from those cases where referrals aren’t made because of errors or omissions. This analysis should be incorporated into force management statements (FMSs).</p> <p>Within six months, chief constables should work with police and crime commissioners and their mayoral equivalents, and other relevant organisations, to review whether victim support services can be provided in a better way.</p>	<p>Work is already underway to address the issues regarding thresholds and within the Wiltshire Council local authority area, an Adults MASH has been established with a number of co-located as well as virtual partner agencies embedded within the MASH.</p> <p>Wiltshire Police sit on the local safeguarding adults boards whose objectives are to protect all adults in Wiltshire and Swindon who have care needs and support and who are experiencing, or who are at risk or, abuse or neglect against which they are unable to protect themselves because of their needs.</p> <p>The recommendations from the report have been populated into an improvement plan and delivery against these improvements will be overseen by the strategic lead.</p>

Police and Crime Commissioner's comments

I welcome the "*The poor relation: The police and CPS response to crimes against older people*" report which provides an overview of an inspection which brought together the views of victims; senior and operational lead officers; frontline officers, staff and partner organisations as well as national leads from the NPCC, Home Office, Welsh Government, College of Policing and CPS. The aim of this joint inspection was to investigate how the police and the CPS respond to crimes against older people.

The report has concluded that there are national shortcomings in supporting victims of crime over 60. Findings include a lack of consistency across the criminal justice system and that despite an aging population there was no national police focus on older victims, of whom many are vulnerable. The report did however highlight that the police are usually good in their initial dealings with older people and recognised the investment that has been made in training to help officers recognise vulnerability. Concerns were raised over the accessibility of the criminal justice system to older victims and that investigations were often not of the standard they should be.

Ensuring that victims of crime receive a high standard of support remains an absolute priority for me and that's why I continue to allocate funding to a number of victim services including Victim Support and Wiltshire Police's Horizon Victim and Witness Care Hub. This report highlights that more can be done nationally to support older victims of crime and tailoring safeguarding to their individual needs. A number of recommendations have now been made for the CPS, College of Policing, National Police Chiefs Council and Chief Constables and I will be raising these with our Chief Constable directly to ensure our victims receive the best service possible.

In Wiltshire and Swindon, I commission victim services which offer support to all victims including the highlighted age category. The current service provides an overarching umbrella service to all victims as well as an enhanced service for the victims of the most serious crimes and those who are vulnerable as defined by the Victims Code. The Horizon Victim and Witness Care Unit, which I fund, helps the most vulnerable victims through the criminal justice process across the County.

The Wiltshire Criminal Justice Board, which I chair, has set up Victim, Witness & Most Vulnerable Group in order to monitor and promote the proper care and treatment of victims and witnesses. The key objectives of this group are aligned to the National Strategy & Action Plan as well as my Police and Crime Plan. The group reports their progress to the Wiltshire Criminal Justice Board which brings together key partners including a Chief Crown Prosecutor who represents the CPS and aims to deliver local improvements by working together.

I will continue to put victims, witnesses and communities at the heart of everything we do whilst ensuring that improvements continue. I have also been re-assured by Assistant Chief Constable Mark Cooper, Chief Officer Lead for Crime, Justice and Vulnerability at Wiltshire Police that Wiltshire Police's response to crime, including vulnerability, will continue to be prioritised on the threat, harm and risk involved.

Cc: Wendy Williams, HMI
Chief Constable Kier Prichard, Wiltshire Constabulary