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7 March 2017

Dear Stephen,

HMIC Effectiveness Inspection

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) published the findings of its latest PEEL Effectiveness inspection on Thursday 2 March. I was pleased to find that two thirds of forces were graded "good" or "outstanding" for how effectively they keep people safe and reduce crime. However, I was very disappointed to see that your force is among thirteen graded "requires improvement" and that this is the same grade your force received in HMIC's last Effectiveness inspection.

I note that HMIC have indicated that the SARA model of problem-solving introduced by your force is not being used systematically because staff are too frequently taken away from their community policing roles to cover other duties elsewhere. I expect that you are taking these comments seriously and will take the necessary action to address them. HMIC's recommendations that the force should work with local people and partner organisations to improve its understanding of local communities is critical to ensuring an effective and proportionate response to anti-social behaviour. This will help to ensure that the force is able to make best use of all the relevant powers provided by the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 to prevent and respond to anti-social behaviour.

Whilst I note some improvements in your force's ability to protect the most vulnerable, I am disappointed that to see that you are still rated as requiring improvement, especially in

your response and investigation into domestic abuse cases. I trust that you will take urgent action to address HMIC's recommendations in this area.

I am clear that this is about levels of management, and about how police forces use their money locally. Northamptonshire is due to receive £121.2m in total direct resource funding in the 2017/18 police funding settlement, provided precept is maximised. That is £2.0m more than in 2015/16.

Having confidence in your local police force's effectiveness in keeping people safe and reducing crime is profoundly important to communities. I would be grateful if you could set out details of how you intend to address HMIC's findings and make sustained performance improvements as part of your Police and Crime Commissioner's duty to respond to HMIC reports, as set out in section 55 of the Police Act 1996.

Finally, HMIC is a key part of the policing landscape. Its inspections are essential in shining a light on police efficiency, effectiveness and legitimacy, providing transparency for the public and encouraging accountability. I will be monitoring closely the next round of HMIC inspections and will expect to see a marked and rapid improvement in performance, and a positive impact on the people of Northamptonshire.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brandon Lewis', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rt Hon Brandon Lewis MP

