



14th January 2022

HMICFRS published their findings in response to a super-complaint made by Liberty and Southall Black Sisters in December 2020. The report found that unreported crime is a significant problem for society, and victims and witnesses with an unsettled immigration status are currently deterred from engaging with the police because of fear. It concerns me that victims are denied justice, and offenders remain a threat to the public.

In my Police and Crime Plan I have committed to delivering justice for victims of crime, and commission services which contribute to this aim. I look forward to the Home Office review and will ensure the Constabulary develop appropriate policy and procedure in response to the anticipated revised protocol.

Below is the response to recommendations in the report:

Recommendation 1: The Constabulary has been advised that the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) has worked closely with the Home Office and relevant agencies in a series of workshops exploring the implications of a firewall and examining all possible solutions with the goal of increasing the confidence to report for all victims with an insecure immigration status. Those workshops have concluded and the Home Office is due to publish its review before Christmas. Once the outcome of the review is known, the NPCC will then continue to work with the Home Office to deliver those outcomes and update the current safeguarding and information sharing protocol with Immigration Enforcement. The Constabulary is therefore awaiting the outcome of the Home Office review and the subsequent update to the safeguarding and information protocol before taking any further action. We will, of course, ensure that the protocol is adopted as soon as it is made available to us.

Recommendation 4: Cheshire Cares is Cheshire Constabulary's commissioned victim support service. It provides victim support for all victims of crime and for those needing more bespoke victim services seeks to signpost them onwards to specialist resources or organisations. There is no disparity in service towards any victims, including those who may have varying immigration status.

Cheshire Constabulary works in close partnership with the four local authority Independent Domestic Violence Advocate Services (IDVA) who are fully cited on the super complaint and the recommendations made therein. They have confirmed that the referral of domestic abuse victims to them for the police and other agencies, and the service they provide thereafter, is in no way influenced by the individual's immigration status.

As per our response to recommendation 1 (above) we are awaiting the outcome of the Home Office review and the subsequent update to the safeguarding and information protocol. We will work with our partners to ensure that the protocol is adopted as soon as it is made available to us.

Recommendation 5: We will await the publication of the Home Office review into increasing the confidence to report for all victims with an insecure immigration status, and then work with the Chief Constable to understand how best we can promote victims' and witnesses' confidence in reporting crimes to the police following the updating of the safeguarding and information protocol. We understand that the review will have concluded by Christmas and therefore we will include this on our workplan for scrutiny in the New Year.

Recommendation 6: Following the publication of the Home Office review, we will work with our commissioned services and relevant local partners to identify how best we can identify resources to better support the confidence in reporting crimes to the police. We are confident that our current provider of victim support, Cheshire Cares, provides such support irrespective of immigration status. We are also aware that the four local authority Independent Domestic Violence Advocate Services are fully aware of the recommendations in the report and would not offer any differing service to an individual, regardless of their immigration status.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Dwyer'. The signature is stylized with a large initial 'J' and a prominent flourish at the end.

John Dwyer

Police & Crime Commissioner for Cheshire