



22 April 2021

**POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER RESPONSE TO THE HMICFRS REPORT:
'DISPROPORTIONATE USE OF POLICE POWERS: A SPOTLIGHT ON STOP &
SEARCH AND THE USE OF FORCE'**

I very much welcome this report, which has come at an important time, when communities are rightly asking for more police accountability and action on disproportionality. Whilst I fully support the police's effective use of powers, which are there to protect the public from harm, I also understand the importance of ensuring that the powers are used lawfully, legitimately, fairly and proportionately.

I am pleased that the recommendations in this report align with many of the principles I have already discussed with the Chief Constable and his team in recent years, but particularly in the previous year. The Chief Constable has already committed to taking greater action in these areas and we are working on many of these aims together.

Last summer, my team and I conducted a scrutiny deep dive of racial disproportionality in South Wales Police via my Scrutiny & Accountability Board. This included considering a range of qualitative and quantitative data around disproportionality in the force – including information relating to stop & search and use of force. At the end of this deep dive, my team and I made a number of recommendations to South Wales Police, some of which I am pleased to see are reflected in this report. For example, my team highlighted the need for enhanced interactions between the public and the police when the police are using their powers. This feedback has been given to us by minority ethnic communities in South Wales, and I have requested that the Chief Constable considers the importance of supervision and training in dealing with this point.

Work is also underway to enhance our external/community scrutiny of these topics. I already ensure that my Police Accountability & Legitimacy Group (which consists of partner agencies and independent community members), is involved in oversight of stop search and use of force issues. However, I am working with the force to develop improved ways to share data and video footage with our community groups,

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Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales



so that they can feed in their views and work with us to enhance police accountability. I am therefore, obviously supportive of the external scrutiny and monitoring recommendations in this report.

This year, the Chief Constable and I also launched our new Joint Race Equality Action Plan. It is within this Plan that I have ensured there are a number of actions on improving the accountability of use of police powers and the need to reduce disproportionality, which we know exists. This is a longstanding issue in policing across the country and it cannot be right that we just accept it. The new action plan will look to get to the heart of the issues and consider what needs to change internally for disproportionality to reduce, and for public confidence in these powers to increase.

I am committed to overseeing the progress South Wales Police will make in relation to my own recommendations, our established Plans, and now the recommendations in this report.

Rt Hon Alun Michael
Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales