



Rt Hon Yvette Cooper MP
Chair, Home Affairs Select Committee
House of Commons
Westminster
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Cressida Dick
Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis

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12th October 2021

Dear Chair,

I write in response to your recent letter to update you on the work I am leading to rebuild trust in the Metropolitan Police Service. I am committed to keeping the Home Affairs Select Committee updated as this work progresses.

My thoughts and those of everyone in the Met are with Sarah Everard's family and friends and I pay tribute to Sarah's family at this unimaginably difficult time. The horrific actions of the Met officer who kidnapped, raped and murdered Sarah have shocked the whole country and including those who work in the Met. They are a gross betrayal of everything we in the Met stand for. I absolutely recognise the grave levels of public concern about what has happened and other troubling incidents and allegations including those that have caused considerable public concern in recent weeks.

We fully understand the questions being asked of us as an organisation and we welcome that scrutiny to help us do what is needed to improve and rebuild confidence. We know we must do more to insist on the highest professional and personal standards from everyone involved in policing, rooting out those who abuse their trusted position.

To help us achieve this I felt it was important to announce an independent review of the Met's professional standards and culture. I am pleased that Baroness Casey of Blackstock will lead this review, which is a crucial step in our work to rebuild public trust.

Her review will examine our culture and standards of behaviour, and will assess to what extent our current leadership, recruitment, vetting, training, communications and other processes, effectively reinforce the standards the public should expect. The independent review will make recommendations as to what should change and I will make her report public.

I recognise that I have not fully answered a number of the Committee's questions about the review but I wanted to respond to you by the 12th as requested. As you would expect we are working with Baroness Casey quickly to finalise how best the Met can support her work. I am sure you will agree it is important that we get this right. Once the Terms of Reference are finalised I will ensure we share a copy with the Committee.

I also welcome the non-statutory inquiry announced by the Home Secretary. This is a vital inquiry and will play a key role in answering questions the public have. We understand that part 1 of the inquiry will examine Wayne Couzens' previous behaviour and will seek to establish a definitive account of his conduct leading up to his conviction, as well as any missed opportunities. We will support this inquiry in any way we can.

In addition to the Baroness Casey review and the non-statutory inquiry, the Independent Office of Police Conduct (IOPC) is also undertaking a number of investigations. The IOPC recently provided public updates on their progress^{1 2}.

Vetting is quite understandably and properly a considerable focus. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) are currently inspecting the Met's vetting practices. We will respond quickly to the findings or recommendations of the inspectorate.

It is also important to remember that the Met continue to investigate a number of additional allegations of offending where Wayne Couzens is a potential suspect.

This comprehensive package of a review, non-statutory inquiry, IOPC investigations, HMICFRS inspection and the ongoing criminal investigations are all key to answering questions the public have. They will also each play a key role in supporting the Met to make lasting improvements to the service we provide to the public and to help rebuild trust in the Met.

There are also some immediate actions needed to rebuild trust in the Met and we will move to implement them as soon as we possibly can. On Friday, I launched our initial priorities to rebuild trust³. These consist of a range of important commitments that will accelerate the pace of change, including an urgent examination into all current investigations of sexual and domestic abuse allegations against Met officers and staff. We will also dip sample cases from the last ten years of sexual misconduct and domestic abuse allegations where those accused remain in the Met. This will check appropriate management measures (including vetting reviews) have been taken.

I also want to highlight that we have committed to publish in the coming weeks our new action plan for the police response in London to tackling violence against women and girls. I know that more must be done to tackle male violence against women and girls.

Finally I would welcome an opportunity to update you on this comprehensive programme of work should you wish to meet to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cressida". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Cressida Dick
Commissioner

CC - Baroness Casey of Blackstock

¹ www.policeconduct.gov.uk/news/update-iopc-investigations-following-sentencing-former-pc-wayne-couzens

² www.policeconduct.gov.uk/news/update-iopc-investigations-linked-wayne-couzens

³ www.met.police.uk/police-forces/metropolitan-police/areas/about-us/about-the-met/rebuilding-trust/