**19th January 2023**

**Police and Crime Commissioner for Dyfed-Powys response to**

**An inspection into how well the police and other agencies use digital forensics in their investigations**

It is important to note from the outset that Dyfed-Powys Police was not one of the Forces inspected as part of this thematic review. Undoubtedly police forces are presented with significant challenges in keeping abreast of technological advances exploited by criminal activity. However, I have been assured by the Chief Constable that Dyfed-Powys Police is committed to supporting the advancement of this crucial aspect of investigative capability. For example, I am aware that the Force continues to explore Cloud storage solutions and has worked with the National Forensic Capability Network on a cloud-based automation project. I am also encouraged by the Force’s response to each of the pertinent recommendations as detailed below.

**Recommendation 2**

***By December 2023, each force in England and Wales should develop a governance and oversight framework to better understand the local demand for digital forensic services.***

Digital Forensics demand and performance is scrutinised as part of the Force Performance Board with oversight by the Chief Officer Group. Digital demand highlight reports are submitted to the Strategic Criminal Justice, Custody, and Investigation board on a quarterly basis.

A representative of my office attends both fora to provide me with updates on the Force’s progress.

Digital forensics also forms part of the annual Force Management statement which aligns resource against areas of demand and risk. Over the past 12 months, the Digital Investigation Unit has appointed 4 additional Digital Media Investigators, one for each Local Policing Area. This brings their total establishment to 6 Investigators and one Detective Sergeant. Their remit is to offer advice and guidance in respect of digital strategies as well as conducting digital enquiries in support of investigations and crime scenes.

**Recommendation 4**

***By September 2023, the National Police Chiefs’ Council and all forces within England and Wales need to include the management of digital forensic kiosks in their governance and oversight frameworks.***

Dyfed-Powys Police does not have kiosks. However, a Digital Forensic Hub 6-month pilot is underway to assess the viability of providing permanent local digital device examination / extraction capability. In contrast to kiosks, this solution is anticipated to provide a more efficient, in-depth examination performed by a selective group of trained and competent local individuals, with project oversight and submissions managed centrally.

Dyfed-Powys Police has assured that victims devices will be prioritised in line with the new Extraction of Information from Electronic Devices Codes of Practice relating to the exercise of powers in Chapter 3 of Part 2 of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022.

**Recommendation 8**

***By November 2024, chief constables should integrate digital forensic services under their existing forensic science structure.***

The Digital Forensic Unit in Dyfed-Powys Police has been aligned under Forensic Services since February 2021.