

15th June 2021

Police and Crime Commissioner for Dyfed-Powys response to

Policing in the pandemic – The police response to the coronavirus pandemic during 2020 *and*

Custody services in a COVID-19 environment

It is encouraging that Her Majesty's Inspectorate have recognised the police service's dedication, commitment and adaptability throughout the pandemic.

During April last year, myself and the Chief Constable submitted a joint response to a call for evidence by the Home Affairs Committee regarding the Home Office preparedness for Covid-19. Within it, we highlighted the challenges Dyfed-Powys Police in particular were facing as a result of the confusing and late minute guidance being issued from central Government, which was often at odds with advice and decisions being made by devolved administrations.

Despite this, I am confident that Dyfed-Powys Police responded efficiently and robustly to each of the changes in legislation. I supported the Force's 'stay local' messaging, and am pleased that officers were very visible in our communities, engaging with and educating the public in terms of the Welsh Government guidance and legislation. I personally was at the forefront of the Policing in Wales' response to Covid-19, attending meetings with Welsh Government on behalf of all four Commissioners to discuss with Deputy First Minister and the Chief Whip to ensure that Welsh Government were fully informed of the challenges facing officers as they worked to keep the public safe during the lockdowns.

In order to maintain my statutory oversight duty throughout the pandemic in an appropriate and proportionate way, my office undertook remote reviews of custody records. This was undertaken on a fortnightly basis when physical visits to custody were not taking place, and continues on a monthly basis alongside unannounced phone calls and visits. Particular points of focus include the provision of Appropriate Adults, solicitors and secure accommodation for young people.

My team has continued to work with my Victim Engagement Forum to ensure the voice of those with lived experiences influence the scrutiny of service provision to victims at a time when the most vulnerable have been isolated.

Work is underway on the development of my new Police and Crime Plan and the recruitment of a substantive Chief Constable, who I will challenge to maximise the learning from the changes enforced upon us during the pandemic to improve the quality of service experienced by victims and our communities in the future.

Further detail on my office and the Force's response to the pandemic can be found in a [report I submitted to the Dyfed-Powys Police and Crime Panel in June 2020](#).