

STALKING AND HARASSMENT - AN INSPECTION OF SUSSEX POLICE COMMISSIONED BY THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER, AND AN UPDATE ON NATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS IN HMICFRS'S 2017 REPORT

Chief Constable's comments

The Chief Constable intends to use the learning from this inspection of Sussex Police to ensure the best possible service is being delivered in Devon and Cornwall in this priority area.

The force responded quickly following the Living in Fear report and inspection. A force wide plan was developed, including partners, with a dedicated lead. This has resulted in the early termination of Police Information Notices (PINS), establishment of investigation Single Points of Contact who have particular expertise, implementation of the joint CPS/Police protocol, enhanced training for key officers/staff and wider guidance for all staff. In addition, we have held a multi-agency seminar surrounding stalking which gained high levels of media coverage and we have launched our pilot multi-agency stalking clinic which has seen funding committed from the force and OPCC. The force has seen a rise in reporting and prosecutions around stalking and offences.

Recommendations	D&C Response
Within six months chief constables should ensure that forces record stalking or harassment crimes if appropriate when victims report breaches of orders.	<p>In D&C stalking offences are reviewed through a daily tasking process. This includes where any breaches of orders (DA) are reported, they remain as open 'logs' until the offender is processed.</p> <p>We will commission an audit of the recording of these crimes to offer assurance this process in D&C.</p> <p>Force Lead for Stalking and Harassment</p>
Within six months chief constables should ensure that officers are aware of the importance of treating breaches of orders, where appropriate, as part of a wider pattern of offending, and ensure that force policy and guidance helps officers to do this.	<p>All officers are due to receive the recent College of Policing training modules. The Force is investing further in bespoke training for its network of stalking SPOC's who sit within the investigation and crime management functions. In addition the force has just begun a stalking clinic pilot, where breaches/offenders actions will be considered alongside key partners such as mental health and probation in order to ensure a wider understanding and a 'joined up' response. Force policy and guidance reflects this on a dedicated web page, which is open to all offices and staff and includes the link to referring to local SPOC's.</p> <p>Force Lead for Stalking and Harassment</p>

Police & Crime Commissioner's comments

I am pleased to see that Devon and Cornwall Police has taken a number of the steps that HMICFRS identified from its inspection of Sussex Police.

Having been a victim of this crime myself, I am well aware of the anxiety and sense of helplessness that victims are subjected to over a long period of time.

It is really important that people who come forward to seek help or advice whether this is from the police or a charity such as the Suzy Lamplugh Trust.

In its 2017 report 'Living in Fear', the HMIC reported that the police service and CPS needed to do more to prevent and respond to incidents of stalking.

Since then the service has made significant strides in encouraging victims to come forward and regionally there have been some high profile successes, with stalkers convicted and victims protected. This has been supported with some important legislative changes such as the Stalking Protection Act, introduced by Devon MP, Dr Sarah Wollaston.

In February to support National Stalking Awareness Week, I co- hosted a seminar with Devon and Cornwall Police to hear of recent progress to improve the response to stalking where we heard moving statements from those who had been personally affected by this crime. We need to continue to improve our understanding of how we work together to support victims.

Finally, I would applaud Katy Bourne the PCC for Sussex for commissioning this inspection which has helped improve the way all victims of stalking and harassment are served by the police wherever they live.



Alison Hernandez
Police and Crime Commissioner
Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly