**PEEL: Police Effectiveness 2017**

I welcome the findings of the ‘PEEL: Police Effectiveness 2017’ report for South Wales Police. The force has been rated as ‘good’ and the report recognises that South Wales Police has performed consistently well in effectiveness inspections.

The report notes that the force has ‘a comprehensive understanding of vulnerability’. Vulnerability is a real priority for me and features heavily in my Police & Crime Reduction Plan. Chief Constable, Matt Jukes, is positively driving forward this commitment to vulnerability through the force Delivery Plan and I am not surprised to find this is leading to a comprehensive understanding of the issues. I am pleased to be jointly delivering a number of South Wales projects that aim to deal with vulnerability, not least the Transformation Funded projects in relation to Violence Against Women & Girls and the jointly funded All-Wales Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) work that is being supported by Public Health Wales.

As Police & Crime Commissioner I see it as a duty and privilege to work with the many partner agencies we have in the South Wales area. I am pleased that the report acknowledges the positive way in which South Wales Police works with partner agencies to protect vulnerable people. It is not a matter for the police alone and I know how actively the Chief Constable and I work with partners to make this point.

I am proud of our record with Multi Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH) and Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs), both of which are commended in the report. I was keen to ensure enhanced effective roll-out of these mechanisms in my South Wales Police ‘Joint Plan for Tackling Violence Against Women & Girls’, which was launched in 2014. Since then we have moved forward positively in this area of vulnerability and my commitment to the agenda remains unchanged. The South Wales Police approach to positive action in domestic abuse incidents has also enabled a higher rate of arrest for domestic abuse-related offences than the England and Wales average rate, which I feel is something the Chief Constable should be proud of and the report rightly notes.

The report acknowledges that South Wales Police is good at investigating crimes involving vulnerable victims, which is not a surprise to me. Our improving technology, including in our Public Service Centre, is helping to identify vulnerability at an early point and importantly to protect victims and repeat victims.

I note that the report identifies a need for the force to do more to support those experiencing a mental health crisis when they first contact the police. A very large proportion of our police incidents are mental health-related and I am continuing to work hard to ensure our partners understand this and can support our service in providing effective and appropriate mental health responses to those that need it. We are making progress in this area but as Commissioner I am keen to reinforce the need for mental health understanding to be addressed through staff and officer awareness and training. I will look for updates from the Chief Constable throughout the year.

I am pleased that you have found the force’s specialist capabilities to be positive in the areas you considered. With national threats as they are at the current time, I feel that South Wales Police is well-placed to work collaboratively and nationally against the challenges. I am pleased with your finding that South Wales Police has arrangements in place to fulfil its national policing responsibilities. Through my governance arrangements I will continue to seek assurance that we are effective in this ever-changing area.

Overall I welcome the assessment of South Wales Police as a good force in relation to this inspection. I will continue to hold the force to account for improvements, whilst rightly commending the Chief Constable and his team for the positive developments taking place.

**Rt Hon Alun Michael**

**Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales**