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A review of the police service's leadership and governance arrangements for race-related matters. Response from Simon Foster, West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner.

Published on the 25th of August 2023, this review examines the police leadership and governance arrangements, for race-related matters with several recommendations, although none of these recommendations explicitly address Police and Crime Commissioners or West Midlands Police.

I acknowledge the importance of addressing the findings and recommendations outlined in this review. The paper sheds light on serious issues within policing. It is imperative that we take these concerns seriously and act swiftly, to ensure a fair and just policing system. A diverse and inclusive police force is vital, for building trust and confidence, between police and the public they serve.

The necessity to refresh the 2018-2025 diversity, equality, and inclusion strategy is evident. This revised strategy must comprehensively address the recommendations made in The Macpherson Report. I welcome the additional revisions which will include self-assessment, review processes and the sharing of best practices, to ensure that the strategy is effectively implemented.

In addition, the review focuses on the slow progress in implementing the *Police Race Action Plan*, citing debates around the term "institutional racism". It is essential to focus on finalising and implementing the plan urgently. Institutional racism must be addressed openly and a well-implemented action plan is a crucial step in that direction. Once published, I will ensure West Midlands Police apply this plan and I support the call for Police and Crime Commissioners to prioritise race and policing in their plans. Inclusivity, diversity, and equality must be at the forefront of PCC efforts, to address the concerns raised in this review.

There are concerns, about the lack of accurate data on the ethnicity of people in contact with police, whether as a victim or a suspect. We need to ensure that data collection is consistent and accurate, to assess the impact of crime and improve diversity, equality, and inclusion. The ongoing project to improve data collection should be closely monitored, to ensure it delivers the required improvements within a reasonable timeframe.

In summary, the findings and recommendations in this review, emphasise the absolute necessity of addressing race-related matters in the policing system. I am committed to advocating for and implementing reforms, that will promote accountability, equity, fairness and diversity within police forces. We must all work collaboratively, to build a policing system, that serves all our communities, in accordance with fairness and justice.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Simon Foster".

Simon Foster

West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner

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