24 June 2015

Dear Home Secretary,

RESHAPING POLICING FOR THE PUBLIC

The advisory group on the national debate on the future of policing is pleased to present the final version of its discussion paper, *Reshaping policing for the public*.

The advisory group (made up of a police and crime commissioner, senior police officers and staff, the College of Policing, staff association and trade union representatives and HMIC) came together in late 2014 in response to HMIC’s report, *Policing in Austerity: Meeting the Challenge*. In that report, HMIC concluded that continuing to administer substantial cost reductions in policing in the same way as over the preceding four years was not an option and that, if forces were to maintain the service they provide to the public, then reform was required in the way the police service was organised and funded. The report went on to recommend that there should be a national debate on these issues.

In the past six months, the advisory group has supported a broad and inclusive debate, listening to as many voices as possible from those with an interest in policing as well as consulting the public through polling and focus groups. In finalising the discussion paper we present today, we have also worked closely with Sara Thornton and the National Police Chiefs’ Council as well as your officials.

As the discussion paper makes clear, the police service and law enforcement agencies in England and Wales are committed to further change so that policing best meets the needs of the public within a climate of continuing budget pressures. In particular, the debate examined how local policing might be protected while enhancing capability and resilience in new and emerging areas of policing, as well as increasing joint-working locally with all other organisations involved in public protection.

The advisory group is keen to stress that *Reshaping policing for the public* is a discussion paper which gathers the thoughts from the national debate and is only the
beginning of what could be a significant piece of work. That is why the paper concludes by recommending the creation of a national reform group or board to oversee the next phase of detailed work. It is suggested that, in time to inform the thinking in this year’s Spending Review, there should be sufficient agreement on the most pressing and immediate reforms, how they are to be achieved and what timescales the police needs to work to in order to make change happen.

We are most grateful for your comments on the paper in your letter to Sir Tom Winsor of 24 June 2015 and look forward to discussing the paper with Mike Penning in due course.

To honour its public commitment to share its thoughts more widely and as a spur for further debate, the advisory group will be publishing this paper at 00:01 on Thursday 25 June.

Yours sincerely,

The Advisory Group on the National Debate on Policing in Austerity