



Home Office

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Rt Hon Yvette Cooper MP
Chair, Home Affairs Select Committee
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10 July 2019

Dear Yvette,

I am writing to inform you on the publication of the Front Line Review of Policing which I am launching today (10 July).

The Front Line Review is a Home Office initiative launched by the Home Secretary, the Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP, at the Police Federation Conference in May 2018. The Review was designed to capture ideas for improvements and change directly from the front line - from constable to superintending ranks, police staff, community support officers and members of the special constabulary.

The Front Line Review initially used digital communication channels to engage with the front line. The Office for National Statistics who facilitated 28 workshops across England and Wales involving all 43 forces to inform the Review. Academic contributions from Dr Les Graham and his team from Durham University Business School and from Dr Laura Knight and her team at the Institute for Public Safety, Crime and Justice, University of Northampton, were also incorporated into the evidence base in addition to documentation provided by organisations representing police officers and staff.

The Home Office has today published the evidence and findings of the Review including the:

- The Front Line Review: Recommendations Report
- The Front Line Review: Technical Report
- Leadership, wellbeing, professional development and innovation for the police front line: an evidence review
- Home Office Police Front Line Review: Workshops with police officers and police staff - Summary report

- Home Office Police Front Line Review: Workshops with police officers and police staff
- Research into Workplace Factors, Well-being, Attitudes and Behaviour in Policing: Summary of Evidence and Insights
- Key themes in qualitative research projects with police forces in England and Wales
- Key themes in qualitative research projects with police forces in England and Wales - Appendix

We have also published a joint statement of cooperation which has been agreed by all policing partners who will work to implement the recommendations and fully consider the findings from the Review.

I have attached to this letter a summary of the key findings and the recommendations from the review. I will be placing a copy of this letter and the above-mentioned reports in both House Libraries.

I am copying this letter to the Shadow Home Secretary and the Shadow Policing Minister.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nick Hurd". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'N' and 'H'.

RT HON NICK HURD MP
Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service

Annex A: Front Line Review: Summary and Proposals

Summary of Findings

The Front Line Review (FLR) highlights a number of areas of concern to frontline staff, officers and volunteers. The key issues include:

- a) a feeling that demand is increasing while capacity is decreasing;
- b) a general feeling that frontline officers, staff and volunteers feel undervalued by the wider policing system;
- c) a feeling of disconnect between the front line and senior/national decision makers;
- d) a profound scepticism about the ability of the front line to make change;
- e) frustrations caused by unnecessary demands on time that are seen to get in the way of core policing, including:
 - internally generated demands on time, such as disproportionate administration, overly bureaucratic processes, ineffective IT and difficulties in sharing best practise and learning; and
 - externally generated demands on time, such as mental health and social services-related demands and the reliance on police to provide out of hours cover;
- f) a scepticism about the authenticity of the emerging wellbeing agenda and a desire to see it embedded in a consistent way to ensure that it has a lasting impact on the front line;
- g) a feeling that the front line are not afforded sufficient time or space for activities that positively impact on their wellbeing, such as time for decompression; adequate debriefing; discussions with colleagues; training and development; counselling; and physical activity;
- h) a feeling that the front line are not afforded sufficient time with line managers for personal development and performance reviews;
- i) a feeling that there is a lack of transparency in the leadership and development offer for the front line;
- j) a view that the current approach to recruiting and developing talent is not fit for purpose, with particular criticism of the Professional Development Review (PDR) system, and online learning methods.

Proposals

The Home Office has discussed the findings of the Front Line Review with the FLR steering group who have acted as an advisory panel to the Review. The Steering Group and Front Line Review Team have developed the following recommendations to drive immediate action and deliver change in response to the findings.

1. The Front Line Innovation Project:

We will create a space for the front line to directly influence innovation and change. Working with NHS Horizons we will ensure a national infrastructure is in place and embed this process into policing.

- Rob Flanagan, a former police officer and innovation manager at Lancashire Constabulary, is working with the Home Office to drive national action on police change and innovation, based on the Front Line Review findings.
- The aim of this work is to ensure we can explicitly use and value the professional expertise of the front line by ensuring that we directly engage them in solving the problems that matter to them most.
- This will mirror the successful work conducted by NHS Horizons with the ambulance service. NHS Horizons is a small, specialist team within NHS England who support the sector to think differently about large-scale change (accelerating the process through a system of 'co-creation') and improve collaboration by:
 - Convening spaces (both face-to-face and virtual) where people with diverse views and experiences share learning, and plan for large scale change in complex environments.
 - Building the capability of change agents across the system focusing on "change agency" (the power to make a positive difference) .
 - Promoting the spread and scale of specific innovations, new ways of working and new methods/frameworks for change, in line with the priorities of NHS England and the other organisations that commission their work.
- NHS Horizons started with a series of Twitter chats to garner ideas for change. This produced 31k interactions which were later drilled down (working in collaborating with Chief Executives) into 12 ideas for testing through 'Innovation Bust' events.
- This work culminated in the joint design of 'Project A' (i.e. 'Project Ambulance') which focused on 5 change projects that mattered to the front line (e.g. coordinated action to reduced patient falls)
- The approach taken by NHS Horizons has assisted in them simultaneously securing both senior leadership and grass roots support to deliver change. The Front Line Review findings highlights a desire for officers, staff and volunteers to have a structured space in the landscape where they can be consulted and engaged in change in development and we believe the development of this convening space in policing will benefit innovation and change in policing.

What will we deliver for policing?

- Rob Flanagan will work to create the policing equivalent of this work by:
 - **On Launch:**
 - Identifying individuals at superintending rank within your forces with the power and influence to support and enable the existing network of 43 innovation leads that has been successful established to drive local and national change.
 - This expanded network will be engaged to begin a national conversation with officers, staff and volunteers (mostly online to begin with) to rapidly identify the existing good work within forces to address some of the perennial problems identified by the Front Line

Review and how they can be addressed in a consistent way. This work will compliment and build upon the College of Policing's ongoing work to develop the network of innovation leads and to ensure that they are supported within forces to share localised innovation and harness the ideas of their peers.

- **Post launch:**

- The Home Office will support Rob and the Front Line Innovation Network to design both the virtual and face to face capability to support you (chiefs) and the wider policing sector create a space for national level co-creation. We would seek to replicate the approach taken by the NHS but in a way that is tailored to the needs of policing.
- We are planning an event in the Autumn to bring you (chiefs) and officers, staff and volunteers together to design our policing equivalent of 'Project A' (named and designed by the front line).

2. Ensuring that the operational system achieves the right balance between meeting demands and supporting the individual.

- The FLR evidence is clear that officers, staff and volunteers are not afforded sufficient time or space for activities that positively impact on their wellbeing, such as time for decompression; adequate debriefing; discussions with colleagues; training and development; counselling; physical activity; and time with line managers for personal development and performance reviews.
- While it is accepted that this is impacted by demand and capacity there is more we can do to ensure rostering and shift pattern systems in all forces adequately balances demand requirements with the need to support and develop individuals. I will use the Front Line Review to call for commitment across all forces to consider the balance between these 'core activities' alongside your activity to manage demand but will also ensure, through the work of Rob Flanagan and the College of Policing, that best practice can be identified and there is an opportunity to co-create solutions with the front line.

3. Management of External Demand

- I will give my Ministerial commitment to ensuring that good practice guidance is provided to enable policing to more effectively manage cases that should not involve them - commencing with 'safe and well checks', where there is no immediate threat to life, but with a view to expanding to other issues in future.
- This is not about the police leaving vulnerable people at risk, but rather, ensuring individuals get the most appropriate and effective response.
- I will ask chiefs to consider and promote this approach within their forces, both for the benefit of members of the public and to free police officers up to pursue their core roles.

4. Management of Internal Demand:

- The FLR evidence is clear that there are frustrations caused by unnecessary demands on time that are seen to get in the way of core policing, including internally generated demands, such as disproportionate administration, overly bureaucratic processes, ineffective IT and difficulties in sharing best practise and learning.
- I recognise that many of you are already focused on addressing much of this within your own forces but the FLR provides an opportunity for us to address these issues in a consistent way.
- I want your commitment to identify and address these issues locally and where there is a need for national action, flag that directly to me and I will commit to working with you to address it.
- I will support you by ensuring that you can leverage the work of the Front Line Innovation Network to resolve local issues and share national solutions.

5. Wellbeing

- Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) has committed to review the way that it inspects the extent to which wellbeing is embedded within day to day policing so that inspections reflect the findings from the FLR. In the medium to longer term they will consider whether a spotlight report or thematic inspection on 'wellbeing and inclusion' is the best way forward.
- The Front Line Review evidence highlights a clear scepticism on the delivery of wellbeing improvements in all forces. We will therefore commit to provide officers, staff and volunteers with a direct means to evaluate national and local progress on wellbeing working with police staff associations to identify the best way forward. This work will drive further improvements to the National Police Wellbeing Service.