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Chief Constable

Professor Dr Alan P Walsh
HM Area Coroner, Manchester West
HM Coroner's Court
Paderborn House, Howell Croft North
Bolton
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14th Feb 2023

Dear Professor Dr Walsh

Regulation 28 Report following the Inquest touching upon the death of Angeline Marie Phillips

Thank you for your report dated 21st December 2022 in respect of Angeline Marie Phillips (deceased) and pursuant to Regulations 28 and 29 of The Coroners (Investigations) Regulations 2013 and paragraph 7, schedule 5 of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009.

Having carefully considered your report and the matters therein, I reply to the concerns raised as follows.

Extract from Regulation 28, point 2a):

"A review of the Greater Manchester Police Incident Response Policy to consider specific reference in the policy that the attendance must be by a police officer and that the responsibility to attend must not be passed to a 3rd party or another agency"

Greater Manchester Police (GMP) carried out a thorough review of the Incident Response Policy (IRP) following His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services issuing a formal cause of concern in September 2021, where it was identified that GMP was not responding appropriately to victims of crime and safeguarding vulnerable members of our communities.

As a result, on 1st February 2022, GMP implemented the current IRP which incorporates the nationally recognised risk assessment approach to incident grading known as THRIVE (Threat, Harm, Risk, Investigation, Vulnerable and Engagement). The THRIVE process has been implemented since the tragic death of Ms Phillips and represents a significant change from the procedures that were in place at that time.

The THRIVE process is followed by most police forces across the country. Following THRIVE empowers Force Control Centre (FCC) officers and staff to resolve incidents in the most effective and appropriate way.

Force-wide training on the IRP was provided to GMP officers and staff during its initial implementation, to ensure all of those who are required to follow the policy are clear about their responsibilities so that the appropriate grade is applied to each incident.

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GMP undertakes a THRIVE risk assessment for all incidents. The THRIVE assessment process informs the appropriate response. GMP will deploy to an incident where it has been identified that a police response is required. However, there are incidents where GMP is not the most appropriate agency to respond to, or lead on the response to, an incident. Where the THRIVE risk assessment identifies that the response may be better provided by another agency, GMP liaises with that agency to determine how the response will be progressed. This can lead to the other agency taking over the incident or, if appropriate, a joint response may follow. THRIVE risk assessments and the liaison and decision-making in relation to deployments are documented on police systems.

FCC officers and staff responsible for deploying patrols to incidents are required to revisit the THRIVE risk assessment at key points during the life of an incident, including where there is any change of circumstances and when a re-grade is required. FCC officers and staff cannot make changes to an incident, such as re-grading or closing, without a thorough risk assessment being recorded.

GMP has reflected on the concerns raised within the Regulation 28 report and considers that a review of the IRP to direct police attendance at all incidents would not provide the best level of service to the public. The IRP has been reviewed in the period following Ms Phillips' death. The system that is in place now provides a robust risk assessment process which results in attendance by the most appropriate agency.

Identifying the most appropriate agency to respond to an incident ensures that those in need receive the right support from those with the requisite skills at the right time. The desire to further improve the service to those in crisis has led to the design of the proposed Greater Manchester Mental Health Urgent Triage (M-HUT) team. A pilot scheme for M-HUT commenced in January 2023 and is ongoing.

With regard to how the pilot scheme is operating, the M-HUT is a multi-agency team which is working within the Ambulance Emergency Operations Centre. Calls made to blue light services which involve mental health concerns and which meet a set of predetermined criteria are afforded a triage assessment by a mental health practitioner. This specialist will then advise and divert the incident to the most appropriate support to ensure the patient is given the right care at the right time.

Mental health incidents identified as having an immediate threat to life still receive an emergency police or ambulance response in line with current response policies and the M-HUT will not impact on the emergency response to such incidents.

The M-HUT also provides a "professionals' line" for police and ambulance resources at the scene of an incident involving mental health issues; providing advice, information, and guidance to frontline professionals which enables them to deal with the incident in the most appropriate and informed manner.

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Some of the benefits expected to result from the M-HUT pilot are:

- Clear partnership decision-making and clarity of agency lead for each call made to emergency services;
- The introduction of pathways to access voluntary sector, primary care and secondary care support services to give people the help they need at that time, thereby improving patient outcomes and safeguarding across Greater Manchester;
- The provision of a multi-agency collaborative service offer;
- To build on the foundations of the current Mental Health Tactical Advice Service, providing real time professional advice to police officers on scene;
- Digital solution enhancements to improve sharing of information and partnership safeguarding in real time.

The M-HUT pilot will test the intended processes and avenues to address mental health demand in a partnership context. The pilot scheme is expected to continue into mid-2023 to allow for the impact of the scheme to be fully understood across partnership organisations.

The partnership response to mental health is a key strategic aim of GMP and is being led and driven under the GMP Prevention Branch. Bettering outcomes for communities across Greater Manchester and improving effective partnership working is a clear focus for GMP.

Extract from Regulation 28, point 2b):

“When the review has taken place to consider the implementation of a training programme for all police officers and civilian staff involved in the operating procedures referred to in the Greater Manchester Police Incident Response Policy”

All FCC officers and staff received training on the IRP and THRIVE during the initial implementation. The training was delivered in a classroom environment by subject matter experts. To supplement the training GMP has designed a number of audits that are used to test the quality of IRP management and THRIVE content. In addition, the FCC Service Development Unit holds frequent briefings designed to continually test and upskill FCC officers and staff. The training is included in all new joiner programmes.

I hope that this response is helpful in addressing the issues that you have raised, and in demonstrating our total commitment to learning lessons from tragic events such as those which led to the death of Ms Phillips, so that we can do our utmost to prevent such incidents from occurring in future.

Yours sincerely /



Chief Constable