



Chief Coroner

RESPONSE TO A REPORT TO PREVENT FUTURE DEATHS

REGULATION 29 OF THE CORONERS (INVESTIGATIONS) REGULATIONS 2013

When a coroner sends a prevention of future deaths (PFD) report to a person or organisation, they must respond within 56 days. Recipients of a PFD report can apply to the coroner for an extension. A response to a PFD report must detail the action taken or to be taken, whether in response to the report or otherwise, or it must explain why no action is proposed.

The purpose of the response template below is to promote clarity, ensure that responses address the coroner's concerns directly and transparently, and support consistency and good practice across organisations and sectors.

It does not restrict how a person or organisation formulates their response; recipients remain responsible for determining what action is appropriate and for ensuring that their response accurately reflects the steps taken or planned.

In accordance with the Chief Coroner's PFD Publication Policy (2026), any representations regarding publication of a response should be sent to the coroner. These representations should be made at the same time as the response is provided. The coroner will pass any representations received to the Chief Coroner for a decision.

RESPONSE TO A REPORT TO PREVENT FUTURE DEATHS

REGULATION 29 OF THE CORONERS (INVESTIGATIONS) REGULATIONS 2013

Please do not include any living persons' names in this document, in accordance with the Chief Coroner's PFD Publication Policy (2026).

THIS RESPONSE IS BEING SENT TO:

Mr. Ian Potter, Area Coroner for Kent and Medway in response to a '**REPORT TO PREVENT FUTURE DEATH REGULATION 28**' following an inquest into the death of [PM], that concluded on 13 May 2026.

1. RESPONDENT

In line with our duty under Regulation 29 of the Coroners (Investigations) Regulations 2013, The **Chief Constable of Kent Police** provides this response within 56 days (plus any extension granted) of the date of the Report to Prevent Future Deaths.

2. DATE OF RESPONSE

02 July 2026

3. CONFIRMATION OF CORONER'S MATTERS OF CONCERN

Part of the evidence in this inquest was that Kent Police does not have its own policy or standard operating procedure regarding the risk assessing and safety-netting of those arrested for this type of offence. I was directed to Operational Advice from the College of Policing (June 2019) entitled "Managing the risk of suicide for persons under investigation for online child sexual abuse and exploitation" ('the Advice'). It was confirmed that the Advice is available to officers on the Kent Police intranet. However, the nature of the Advice is such that some of its content is not suitable for individual officers to make case-by-case assessments and decisions without there being an organisational level policy or procedure in place. While it is accepted, in the particular circumstances of this case, that parts of the Advice (e.g. paragraph 3.9) would not have altered the outcome, the concern remains regarding future risks to others.

I heard evidence that, following initial basic training, officers at Kent Police are not required to undertake any face-to-face update or refresher training regarding welfare checks that they undertake regularly in the community. For the avoidance of doubt, I found that relevant officer undertaking the welfare check on the evening of 18 June 2025 was 'kind and compassionate' and did 'her best to conduct the welfare check'; however, it is not difficult to see that a lack of ongoing training raises risk in the future.

3. DETAILS OF ACTION TAKEN, how has the concern been addressed.

[If no action is proposed please explain why here].

Please note that any links to webpages included in the response will not be checked for sensitive information prior to publication, as the information is already online.

Kent Police does have a Suspect Welfare and Suicide Strategy standard operating procedure (SOP N11e) in place. However, we have identified that staff awareness and familiarity with the guidance is not as strong as it should be. In response, we have reviewed and updated the policy to make it more comprehensive and to incorporate relevant elements of the Authorised Professional Practice (APP) that were not previously included.

As part of the initial intelligence work a suicide risk assessment is completed prior to allocation to the Officer in the case (OIC) and immediately when a suspect is identified. This is included on the Intel package and is passed to the OIC - Before the suspect is aware of the investigation. Whilst this is standard practice, this is not explicitly covered in our policy N11e - the policy will be updated accordingly to ensure a more cohesive bond to APP exists in the new wording.

Research has been undertaken with other police forces to understand their approaches to providing mobile phones to POLIT (police on line investigation Team) suspects where a need has been identified. Having considered the various practices and the current financial pressures facing the force, Kent Police will not be adopting this approach.

Instead, the policy will be amended to require QIC's to consider providing suspects with key contact numbers to support their welfare and enable them to maintain contact with their support network. This information can be incorporated into the notes section of the Suspect Information Pack. In addition, officers should consider offering suspects the opportunity to use a telephone at the police station prior to departure to contact family members, friends, or other appropriate support services where necessary.

This approach seeks to balance welfare considerations with the efficient use of force resources, while ensuring that suspects are provided with reasonable opportunities to access support following their release from police custody.

To improve awareness, the revised policy will be circulated to staff and promoted through a Spotlight communication. In addition, it will be incorporated into continuing professional development (CPD) activity, including a Public Protection CPD event scheduled for September/October, which will be open to the wider force. The policy will also be specifically covered within CPD for POLIT officers. These actions will be completed within the next fortnight.

We also utilise a comprehensive Suspect Information Pack, which is currently being refreshed. In support of the above measures, the Detective Chief Inspector in (POLIT) has met with the Chief Inspector, who leads the Medway district where [PM] died. The Chief Inspector will oversee the delivery of refresher training on welfare checks, aligned with the force-wide Right Care, Right Person (RCRP) refresher programme.

This training will highlight the increased risk of suicide among suspects under investigation for child sexual abuse offences and reinforce the importance of considering support from mental health services and other relevant agencies where there are concerns regarding an individual's welfare.

Due to the scale of delivery and the number of officers requiring refresher training, implementation will take longer than the other actions outlined above. The anticipated timeframe for completion is approximately six months.

4. DETAILS OF FURTHER ACTION PROPOSED

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SIGNATURE

