**CUMBRIA OFFICE OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER**

##

 **20 September 2017**

**Under embargo to Thursday 21 September 00:01**

**Media Release: Response to HMICFRS National Child Protection Inspections Report**

In July 2016, Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspected Cumbria Constabulary on their child protection work as part of an inspection programme for every police force in England and Wales.

Their report concluded that Cumbria Constabulary had demonstrated a strong commitment to improving services for children in need of protection. That said, they also identified areas for improvement.

In March 2017 the Constabulary produced and implemented an action plan to address the recommendations in the original report. Subsequently in June 2017 HMICFRS carried out a post-inspection review to assess progress. Overall, Inspectors considered that Cumbria Constabulary continues to demonstrate a strong commitment to improving services for the protection of vulnerable people. HMICFRS are encouraged by the progress made, and felt reassured of the continuing commitment by the Constabulary to making further improvements.

Cumbria’s Police and Crime Commissioner, Peter McCall said: “I welcome this report from the post-inspection review made by HMICFRS in June 2017, and I am able to report to the public that the Constabulary has responded incredibly well to the previous recommendations.

“In particular I would note that HMICFRS highlighted that Cumbria Constabulary continues to demonstrate a strong commitment to improving services for the protection of vulnerable people. They also acknowledged that the Constabulary has made significant improvements to how it recognises and responds to child sexual exploitation, which is an area that I have been very keen to raise awareness of.

“Our police force is incredibly busy and I would like to extend my thanks on behalf of all Cumbrians to the chief officer team who impressed the Inspectors with their total commitment to deliver the improvements, and to all officers and staff who have worked so hard to achieve this outcome. I know that they will continue to address any outstanding issues; meanwhile I will continue to monitor progress on this closely, as you would expect.

 “Child safety is a complex area involving many other agencies and it is essential that procedures meet the highest standards and I expect the force to continue to develop and improve in this respect. As Police and Crime Commissioner my aim shared by the Chief Constable is that all children in Cumbria should grow up in a safe environment, cared for and protected from harm. Safeguarding is everybody’s responsibility and it is essential that the police, partners and the public get it right first time.”

Chief Constable Jerry Graham said: “The July 2016 report recognised Cumbria Constabulary’s strong commitment to improving services for children in need of protection and the force-wide focus on safeguarding children. However, it also made a number of recommendations for how the force could improve in the future.

“Inspectors have returned to check on our progress and I am pleased that today’s review report reflects the great strides that we have made over the past year and the commitment and desire my Officers have to protect people.

“The report reflects the decisive actions we put in place in response to the recommendations of inspectors and the significant progress made over the past year.

“Whilst the findings are very positive, we will not be complacent. We will continue to prioritise the safe-guarding of vulnerable children and will work to identify further areas where we can improve so we can build on the progress made.”

MEDIA OPPRTUNITY

**Police and Crime Commissioner**, Peter McCall will be available for interview under embargo on Wednesday 20 September 13:30 at Booths Supermarket Keswick car park.

Please call Gill Shearer on 01768 217734 to arrange an interview.

**Assistant Chief Constable** Mark Webster will be available for interview under embargo on Wednesday 20 September at Police HQ, Penrith from 13:00.

Please call the Constabulary Press Office on 0330 124 0900