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

##

 **5 October 2017**

**Media Release: PCC’s Response to HMICFRS Inspection: Abuse of Authority**

Cumbria’s Police and Crime Commissioner Peter McCall said: “I welcome the findings of the latest HMICFRS assessment of how Cumbria Constabulary has addressed the areas highlighted in their police legitimacy inspection in 2016.

“Overall, the Force has responded really well to the national recommendations, and provided HMICFRS with comprehensive plans as requested, albeit with some work still to be done.

“In addition to that, I know the Force has done a lot of work internally to reiterate that Cumbria Constabulary expects the highest standards of conduct from all police officers at all times, and will not tolerate officers or staff using their position of authority for sexual purpose.

“They have also worked with external partners who deal with victims and witnesses to make sure they are clear about what they should do if they are made aware of any inappropriate behaviour.

“In summary, I am reassured with the progress that the Force has made in this area, and will continue to hold the Chief Constable to account in all areas of their performance.”

Superintendent Sarah Jackson said: “Cumbria Constabulary expects the highest standards of conduct from all police officers at all times, and we will not tolerate our officers or staff using their position of authority for sexual purpose.

“We have a strong and detailed plan in place to act on the national recommendations, and have been actively highlighting the issue both internally within our force and externally with partners.

“Internally, we have created marketing campaigns and organised events to raise awareness of the strict boundaries when it comes to dealing with members of the public. We will continue to remind our officers and staff that abusing their position in any form is not acceptable, and have introduced a confidential reporting line for our employees to use if they have concerns.

“We have also recently hosted an external event, attended by more than 50 representatives from partner agencies. These agencies are those that come into contact with victims and witnesses, and we sought to ensure they knew how to act if they suspected an officer was abusing his or her authority for sexual purpose.

“I can reassure communities that we investigate any reports thoroughly and would encourage anyone with any concerns to contact Cumbria Police on 101 and ask to speak to the Professional Standards Department, or email PSD-ACUIntel@cumbria.police.uk. All reports will be treated with the strictest confidence.”

Ends