

ANDY BURNHAM

**MAYOR OF
GREATER
MANCHESTER**

Rt Hon Amber Rudd MP,
Home Secretary
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

12th September 2017

Dear Home Secretary

SUBJECT: HMCPSI/HMIC Report 'Making It Fair: A Joint Inspection of the Disclosure of Unused Material in Volume Crown Court Cases

I write in response to the above report that was published in July.

The appropriate handling and disclosure of unused material in the investigative and prosecution processes is fundamental in ensuring the integrity and efficiency of Criminal Justice proceedings. For justice to be served correctly and for victims of crime and the wider public to maintain confidence in the justice processes, agencies must work together effectively to ensure adequate procedures and lines of communication are in place. To this end, I was interested to read the findings of the report and support the principles of the recommendations highlighted. After discussing these findings with Greater Manchester Police (GMP) I can provide the following update in response to the recommendations specifically relating to the police service.

The report found that processes for the initial file submission and disclosure needed to improve, as per the obligations under the Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act (CIPA). Whilst there has been a considerable reduction in the number of disclosure failures in the last two years within GMP, I recognise the importance of these obligations and the need to improve further. As part of this work arrangements have already been made to deliver training as appropriate throughout the force. Together with the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) GMP has developed a training package covering the CIPA disclosure obligations for officers, including the areas highlighted for attention in this inspection. Further training is currently in development for front-line officers, student officers and promoted sergeants, together with advanced disclosure training for detectives and specialist investigators dealing with serious and complex cases.

To accompany the enhanced training, additional quality assurance checks will be made on files by a supervisory officer, before endorsing them ahead of submission. This process will be monitored internally with Borough Commanders and I will receive regular updates regarding this.

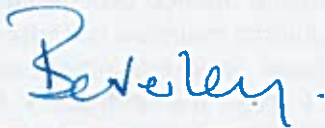
The report also makes a recommendation for forces to establish the role of a dedicated disclosure champion. Although GMP does not have a single disclosure champion, it is felt that structures and processes are already in place at present which meet the intention of the recommendation and provide the required functions and liaison with the CPS. In particular there is a dedicated lead for

Serious and Complex cases and a joint disclosure forum with the CPS. Additionally, I believe that disclosure standards should be driven locally and am supporting GMP in the identification of Disclosure Leads within each Borough and Branch to help drive performance and further reinforce disclosure standards. Overall force performance will be monitored by the Assistant Chief Constable lead for disclosure.

In relation to the inspection's findings on the provision of a central location to store all unused digital material, GMP and the CPS have already commenced a piece of work to review the digital management and transmission of case files and this specific recommendation will be addressed within this. Additionally, the force and CPS have been working closely to ensure the effective and timely communication on matters of unused material disclosure. As such, GMP has recently provided a dedicated escalation policy to the CPS in the event that appropriate officer cannot be contacted. I am satisfied that this arrangement is proving to be successful to date and will expect these communication processes to be monitored and reviewed to ensure they remain effective.

I hope this provides reassurance that work is well underway to respond to the findings and recommendations highlighted within this inspection. In addition, I will also review any opportunities for additional oversight of these processes through the Local Criminal Justice Board moving forward.

Yours sincerely,



**Rt Hon Baroness Beverley Hughes
Deputy Mayor of Greater Manchester
Police, Crime and Criminal Justice**