HUMBERSIDE POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

The Office of Jonathan Evison
Police and Crime Commissioner
The Lawns
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Cottingham
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Sent via email: PS.HomeSecretary@homeoffice.gov.uk

26th October 2026

Dear Home Secretary,

Section 55 Response to HMICFRS Report: Firearms Licensing

I am writing to provide my formal response to HMICFRS's thematic inspection, "Firearms licensing: An inspection of firearms licensing across police forces in England and Wales."

The report followed the inquests into the five deaths caused by Jake Davison in Plymouth in 2021. It concludes that the national firearms licensing system is not fit for purpose and makes 23 recommendations across legislation, national structures, medical safeguards, technology, governance, training and decision making.

I support clear national standards and reform. Public safety must remain the overriding priority, while lawful applicants and certificate holders should receive a professional and timely service.

Humberside Police was not directly inspected. However, the findings provide a clear benchmark against which to test local arrangements. I have asked the Chief Constable for continuing assurance that licensing decisions are lawful, evidence based, properly supervised and subject to effective quality assurance.

Strengthen accountability and transparent oversight
I will use regular one to one meetings with the Chief Constable to scrutinise progress, backlogs and performance. Firearms licensing is also a standing item at my bi-monthly Accountability Board and will remain so while improvement is required.

At our most recent board, the force gave me a detailed update. The Firearms Licensing Unit has ten posts and also reports through a quarterly Public Accountability Group. Between May and August 2026, expired certificate cases fell from 36 to 7 and the renewal backlog reduced from 1,502 to 1,168. These improvements are welcome, but sustained progress and effective risk management remain essential, and will be something I continue to monitor.

Maintain capacity
In our force, four Rural Task Force officers are training as Firearms Enquiry Officer and will be supporting relevant local checks where appropriate.

Prepare for national reform and maintain local confidence
We will monitor proposals for a national firearms licensing authority, new legislation and statutory rules, medical safeguards, digital verification and a national licensing system. A replacement firearms licensing portal is expected from May 2027.

Overall, I support decisive national reform, stronger governance and consistent standards.

Locally, I will continue to hold the Chief Constable to account through regular scrutiny and the Accountability Board, with particular focus on public safety, backlogs and service standards.

A copy of this response will be published on the Humberside OPCC website and shared with His Majesty's Inspectorate.

Yours Sincerely



Jonathan Evison
Police and Crime Commissioner for Humberside