

Statement from Acting Chief Constable Ivan Balhatchet.

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"Late on Friday, the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Stephen Mold announced he would not be standing for office following media revelations about misogynistic comments made at a meeting earlier this month.

"You will have seen the apology the Commissioner made in relation to these comments, which were unacceptable.

"Once again, the Force has been unnecessarily subject to adverse publicity and criticism from which we will need time to rebuild the trust and confidence of the public.

"Yesterday, as everyone across Northamptonshire Police continued to reflect on the news, I met with a wide range of senior leaders, Police Federation representatives and staff networks to listen to their thoughts. Their feedback was unanimous: This was a disgraceful episode which has let down our officers and staff, particularly our female workforce, and deeply offended the wider public.

"What is particularly disappointing is the Force has taken huge steps in the past couple of years to address the issue of misogyny. Only today I have been proud to open and attend a two-day workshop, *Challenging Misogyny*, with colleagues from across the police and fire service. Some of the learning that comes out of this will build upon the extensive internal messaging already produced on this subject.

"I am determined to instil a culture in this Force where everyone – everyone – views misogyny as grossly offensive and unacceptable and create a workplace in which it is simply not tolerated and where people feel empowered to report those who cross the line.

"It is one year this Thursday since the publication of the Baroness Casey Review commissioned in light of the murder of Sarah Everard. Through the excellent work of our Op Admiral team, we strive to ensure we have the correct processes in place to deal effectively with all adverse behaviours that damage our workforce and undermine public trust and confidence in the police service.

"Similarly, the publication of the Angiolini Inquiry last month has led to the creation of a Board whose job will be to track this Force's progress against the recommendations, starting with an entire review of all 79 indecent exposure cases reported to the Force in the past 12 months. In the coming months we will also see a significant increase in officers attached to our Professional Standards Department (PSD), a sure sign that we are determined to take the most robust approach possible to root out behaviours which are not befitting of someone working in the police service.

"In the meantime, as your Acting Chief Constable, I remain absolutely determined to lead a Force which, as evidenced by the improvements cited in last month's inspection report by HMICFRS, is showing significant progress in performance. I remain resolutely focused on this and am grateful for all the great work that our officers and staff do every single day. Now is not the time to be distracted by the fallouts raised by such negative headlines, now is the time to ensure we are doing everything we can to change our workplace culture for the better."