Thank you for your letter of 10 January 2019 asking for details on what action is currently being taken in relation to the capabilities required in policing to manage the market effectively.

The review identified the need to establish a specialist team in policing which could coordinate engagement between the market and police forces, ensuring clear communication between budget holders, contract managers and providers. As a result, we have worked with the Transforming Forensics Programme and policing colleagues to help set up the Forensic Capability Network (FCN) Commercial team, which was established in Dorset Police in December 2018. Their immediate focus has been stabilising the market, but this will broaden to procurement strategy in due course. The team is now liaising closely with the commercial providers and police stakeholders.

It is also important that commercial providers are operating on a level playing field with police in-house services. This is why we have been clear that the police need to take immediate steps to reach accredited standards set by the forensic science regulator. We have also been working closely with policing colleagues to set-up the FCN Quality team which has already made progress in appointing a quality lead and delivering products to assist forces with the scientific knowledge and validation requirements to achieve accreditation.

As mentioned previously the findings of the review are currently under consideration and stakeholders are being consulted on the next steps and will be published in due course.

Susan

Baroness Williams of Trafford