



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Sir Mark Rowley QPM
Commissioner
Metropolitan Police
New Scotland Yard
Victoria Embankment
Westminster
London
SW1A 2JL

JL21360
1 March 2023

Dear Sir Mark,

I am writing to you further to my letters dated 5 December 2022 and 11 January 2023 regarding the future of Hornchurch Police Station. Regrettably, I have not received a formal response to either of these letters despite following-up with the Metropolitan Police's External Relations Team.

In the meantime, in the first three months of this year, a number of violent offences have been committed in my constituency and in the wider borough of Havering which have caused significant concern within the community:

13 January: CAD 4545/13Jan

Two males were seen fighting with machetes on the A127 carriageway near Gallows Corner, Romford.

18 February: CAD 617/18Feb

A 19 year old was rushed to hospital with a stab wound after emergency services were called to Hornchurch High Street in the early hours of the morning.

21 February: CAD2318/21Feb

The Ardleigh Green Campus of New City College, just over the boundary of my constituency, was put into lockdown after a student was stabbed at nearby shops.

27 February: CAD 5355/27Feb

In nearby Romford, three teenagers were taken to hospital with knife injuries after police were called to attend reports of a stabbing in the town centre.

A recent look at the Met Police Crime Data Dashboard indicated that, across London, there had been a 12.9% increase in knife crime offences in the last 12 months (ending January 2023) when compared to the previous 12 months (ending January 2022). For Havering, the same figure was 37.6%. This raises questions about whether Havering is receiving an appropriate level of police resourcing to tackle this violent offending.

Telephone: 020 7219 2631
Email: julia.lopez.mp@parliament.uk
Web: www.julialopez.co.uk Twitter: @julialopezmp



In my first letter to you, dated 5 December 2022, I highlighted recent media reporting that Havering had seen the highest growth in knife crime of all London Boroughs. While Havering has traditionally been and remains a low-crime area, recent experience and data suggests that the rate and nature of crime in Havering is changing faster than in other parts of London. This underlines an issue I have raised with your predecessor and the Mayor previously - that the Met's approach to policing in outer London is not keeping pace with the changes in crime profile we are seeing.

As noted in my earlier letter, in addition to the immediate harms caused to the victims, these types of offences have a profound impact upon the community. I have been contacted by constituents who have expressed their concern for loved ones going about their daily business.

In light of the above, I would welcome the urgent opportunity to speak with you directly to discuss recent incidents and the overall police resourcing in Havering. We have excellent and committed officers within the East BCU, ably led by Chief Superintendent Stuart Bell. Given that the Home Office reports that the Met Police will benefit from 4,557 additional officers via the Government's Police Officer Uplift, I want to ensure that the BCU receives an appropriate complement of officers so that they can have a bigger presence in the community.

As officer allocations grow, I also believe that it is essential that those officers are based close to the communities they serve and the retention of the Hornchurch Police Station under Met ownership is an important component to this. This will allow officers operating in Hornchurch and to the south of the borough to be closer to their allocated wards, allowing them to spend more time on the beat. At the time of writing, over 800 local residents have signed a petition to confirm that they agree that the station should remain under the Met's ownership. I look forward to an opportunity to discuss this, and other measures to further bolster policing in Havering, with you directly.

With best wishes,

Member of Parliament for Hornchurch & Upminster

CC:

Sadiq Khan – Mayor of London

Chief Superintendent Stuart Bell – East Area BCU Commander