



**METROPOLITAN
POLICE**

30th March 2023

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Thank you for your letters of 5th December, 11th January and 1st March, and your kind wishes on my appointment as Commissioner. I am sorry for the delay in responding. It is a privilege to lead the Metropolitan Police and I look forward to working alongside you - as a Minister of State and a London-based MP. Should you wish to visit the Met in either your Ministerial or MP capacity, you will of course be very welcome. In addition, I would like to invite you and fellow Conservative London MPs to meet with me over the next month to discuss policing issues that matter to you.

I am glad to hear you are in contact with Chief Superintendent Stuart Bell, including on how best to prevent a return to the levels of serious violence and knife crime in the borough before the pandemic. Strong working relations between police and local partners are vital in delivering our commitment to London's strongest ever neighbourhood policing. To complement engagement at BCU Commander level, we will be posting a Superintendent into each of London's 32 boroughs to lead local policing as part of our overhaul of the current neighbourhood policing structure. We will also of course be reflecting further on all the findings in Baroness Casey's Review, including those that relate to neighbourhood policing.

With regard to our Estate Strategy, I am clear that while the estate is big and complicated, we need to be closer to our communities. Strengthening neighbourhood policing is partly about the number of people, but it is also about recognising that local policing teams want to be able to walk to their patch and at the moment many cannot do that. We have to sort that out within our current estate plan, which is why I asked for our new developing Estate Strategy to put some new criteria in.

I am grateful to you for outlining your concerns about the impact of the previously planned disposal of Hornchurch Police Station on neighbourhood policing operations. While the MOPAC/MPS Estate Strategy had identified that Hornchurch Police Station would be subject to disposal, as you note the London Borough of Havering has made clear its plans to purchase the site and lease back a smaller footprint from which the local ward teams could operate.

The review of the Estate Strategy that I have asked for will consider carefully how well the list of properties earmarked for disposal aligns with my strategy and priorities for the Met. You rightly highlighted the impact of the uplift in officers, and the review needs to balance those considerations, as well as operational policing requirements in East London. The review will take a number of months and we are aiming to publish this summer.

Thank you again for raising your concerns and I hope that we can meet soon to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely,

**Sir Mark Rowley QPM
Commissioner**