



**HOUSE OF COMMONS**

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Sir Mark Rowley QPM  
Commissioner  
Metropolitan Police  
New Scotland Yard  
Victoria Embankment  
Westminster, London  
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JL29453  
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Dear Sir Mark,

I am writing to you today to once again to press you for a decision on the future of Hornchurch Police Station, further to your commitment to provide one 'by late summer'.

You will appreciate that we have corresponded on this issue for a long period of time now and, shortly before my maternity leave in the spring of 2023, you indicated that a decision may be anticipated that summer. Unfortunately, you advised that the work that would underpin the strategy had taken longer than anticipated. However, in April, you set out that you expected to publish the Estate Strategy this summer. In August, the External Relations Team informed me that this timeline still applied.

As we are now in October, I would be grateful for an urgent update on both the future of the Hornchurch Police Station specifically and a broader update on the progress on delivering the Met Estate Strategy. Delivering a strong neighbourhood policing model and ensuring that teams are 'in buildings and locations that are visible and accessible to the public' were key priorities within the New Met for London Plan (NMfLP) and retaining this vital asset, and home to the effective Havering Joint Taskforce, would go some way to achieving this aim.

While writing, I would like to thank for your letter, shared with London Partners on 2 October, providing an update on your progress to deliver on the NMfLP published in July 2023. I was very glad to see the progress that you have made in a range of areas, particularly the increase in the charge rate for rape offences and the targeting of violent offenders who pose the greatest risk to women and girls. I hope that the progress in this area will continue.

However, I must confess that I was disappointed that theft and robbery - two types of offending which we have seen a considerable increase in Havering and have caused significant anxiety to local residents and shopkeepers - received only a passing comment in such a detailed update. Within your foreword to the NMfLP you highlighted tackling community crime, including theft and anti-social behaviour, as one of your three key priorities and I am concerned that this no longer appears to be a priority area. This is especially alarming when, according to the Met's own Crime Dashboard, incidents of theft within Havering have seen a 14.6% increase in the year to August 2024 and incidents of robbery have increased by 37.4%, when compared to the 12 months leading to August 2023.

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I recently hosted a meeting attended by local traders, the Neighbourhood Inspector, local Councillors and our London Assembly Member, Keith Prince AM to discuss concerns from local shopkeepers about the increase in shoplifting and ASB they have encountered and the fear this has caused the community. Attendees expressed a clear view that they felt an insufficient focus was being given to dealing with these issues, which have caused financial hardship to independent retailers as well as legitimate fears for their safety. Their sense of frustration was palpable and understandable.

Keith and I shall be writing to you shortly to set our wider concerns on the resourcing of policing in Havering. In the meantime, I would be grateful for an urgent update on the future of Hornchurch Police Station and the Met Estate Strategy ahead of your meeting for London MPs.

With best wishes,

*Julia Lopez MP*

Member of Parliament for Hornchurch & Upminster