



# HERTFORDSHIRE Police and Crime Panel



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Please ask for Gavin Miles  
My reference: 2/8/2/PCP  
6 August 2013

David Lloyd  
Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire  
Leahoe House  
HERTFORD  
SG13 8DE

Dear David

## **MEETING OF THE PANEL ON 27 JULY 2013 AT STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT OF THE PANEL ON YOUR ANNUAL REPORT 2012/13**

As you are already aware, the Panel requested that the report on your annual report be in the form of the notes made of contributions made at the meeting as recorded in the minutes. So that there is a free standing document recording the report I set out the comments below:

Mr Munday asked what the most positive aspect of the report is. The Commissioner commented that crime is down 15% compared to the year before, although there were still 53,000 crimes in Hertfordshire, but this is down from circa 100,000 approximately seven years ago. It is important that public awareness is increased of how safe the county is.

Ms Cash acknowledged that the figures show a fall in incidents of domestic violence but asked what arrangements are in place to ensure the drop is for the right reasons. The Commissioner advised it is a certainty that not all incidents of domestic violence are reported and it typically takes over 30 incidents of abuse before a person reports the problem to the police. Cllr Bedford noted up to 40% of reports of domestic violence are by males.

Mr Munday asked how the Commissioner will ensure information is shared between partners. The Commissioner confirmed he is not alone in the pursuit of crime reduction

and partnership working is vital. For example, it was a joint initiative between the Commissioner, Hertfordshire County Council and Stevenage Borough Council to fund the women's centre in Stevenage.

Mr Munday queried what systems are in place to give credibility to the accuracy of the figures in the report. The Commissioner advised that the figures are published nationally and are audited by Her Majesty's Inspectorate, which provides validity and a useful comparison with other police forces in the country.

Mr Munday requested that the information is published in a more understandable form for the public. The Commissioner will reflect on this request.

### **Comments from the Panel**

Ms Francis welcomed the Commissioner's commitment to reduce domestic violence and asked whether he would support the Twitter campaign to encourage the abolition of 'page three' models. The Commissioner acknowledged the merits of the campaign but has chosen to not support any campaigns on Twitter, as once one campaign is actively supported by the Commissioner there is a precedent set that must be followed for all campaigns.

Ms Francis noted since the street lights have been switched off some members of the public do not feel safe going outside late at night. The Commissioner advised the lights are only switched off between midnight and 6am and that since the lights have been switched off crime has gone down. Certain locations, such as transport nodes, do not have the lights switched off.

Clr Brewster observed that a senior police officer and senior probation officer were unaware of the Living Room charity. The Commissioner recognised that this was unfortunate but, broadly speaking, both the police and probation are aware of the work this charity does.

Clr Bedford welcomed the volunteers that have kept Abbots Langley police station open for longer hours and suggested the scheme could be adopted elsewhere. The Commissioner stated that this is not a panacea for everything and what works in Abbots Langley is not necessarily transferable elsewhere in Hertfordshire. Police station enquiry desks have declined in use by the public. It is better for the police to be on the frontline speaking to people, such as via police surgeries, having a presence at supermarkets or other places the public may gather.

Mr Laidlaw-Dickson raised the issue of collaboration with other police forces and noted Bedfordshire have taken the decision to reduce neighbourhood policing. The Commissioner reaffirmed the focus of his office was on crime reduction in Hertfordshire and possible collaboration with other policing areas had to be right for Hertfordshire.

Yours sincerely

*Gavin Miles*

**Gavin Miles**  
**Head of Legal Services**