



## LEICESTERSHIRE POLICE AUTHORITY

# PRESS INFORMATION

### Leicestershire Police Authority Chair Calls for Reality Check

Barrie Roper, Chair of Leicestershire Police Authority, has reacted strongly to the Home Secretary Theresa May's speech earlier today (16-08-11), suggesting that it is time to get in touch with reality.

Mrs May, a keen supporter of directly elected Police and Crime Commissioners, said: "...the Mayor [Boris Johnson] was on the streets of his city, working with the Acting Commissioner and representing Londoners to central government. The contrast with unaccountable, unelected and invisible police authority chairmen in other parts of the country could not have been clearer."

Pointing out that every Police Authority Chairman he has spoken to was actively involved in the work to contain the disturbances, Mr Roper said: "It is very disappointing that the mindless violence witnessed last week is now a pawn in the game for political gain."

"I do not believe that people want to see in excess of £100m spent on a system that will see 41 more directly elected commissioners across the country when that money could be invested in police officers, trained to protect communities from the thuggery and stupidity seen over the last few days."

"It is time that these politicians got in touch with reality. The mood, as they say, has changed since they first came up with the expensive idea of replacing police authorities with elected individuals – and it was never really supported then apart from within the Government and a couple of think tanks. Now, however, I cannot see how support can be sustained for an untried, costly scheme when we need every penny we can get to keep people and property safe."

"It's quite clear to me that if we need to cut costs, then of course we will. But something will have to give. Policing will need to be redefined. Forces will have to stop doing something in order to meet the cuts. Simply saying frontline services won't be affected will not make it so without risk and pain. What do people want us to take out of the equation? Child Protection? Anti-terrorism?"

Fraud investigation? Cyber-crime? I think the public want, and deserve, more police on the streets, not less.

“The London Mayor certainly got it right when he said now is not the time to cut police funding, but I notice that wasn’t highlighted in the Home Secretary’s speech.

“Finally, if I have been ‘invisible’ then I have invisibly been out on the streets, I have attended numerous briefings with the Chief Constable, I have personally overseen how the resources have been used and I have been to meet local officers, including the Divisional Commander, to personally thank them for their work.”

Ends

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