



Durham Police Authority

PRESS RELEASE

Thursday 11 December

Chief Constable Jon Stoddart and police authority chairman Peter Thompson have expressed their concern and displeasure with the leaflet from Liberal Democrat Carol Woods delivered to houses across Durham City.

The figures presented by Coun Woods are hopelessly inaccurate. Additionally the photograph next to the crest at police HQ used on the leaflet implies as if she has police support which she does not. There has been no discussion with Carol Woods prior to this circular being distributed and while we welcome her support for the police we do not consider this method to be helpful. The misrepresentation of the situation is likely to impact negatively upon the public's fear of crime and safety.

While officer numbers have fallen, we have maintained the number of front-line officers and have 272 officers per 100,000 of the population, one of the highest ratios in the country. This has been achieved by a proactive workforce modernisation programme

We know people in County Durham and Darlington feel safe because 90 per cent of them told us so in a recent survey.

We have tried to contact Carol Woods to discuss the circular however she is currently not available. In a spirit of partnership we will be inviting her to meet with us and discuss issues like this without trying to politicise the police force.

Ch Supt Watson, North Area Police Commander, also expressed his concern, "We have excellent working relationships with Durham City Council, Durham County Council and a wide range of other partners. We collectively recognise that the reduction of crime and disorder is all our responsibility and we consider we have achieved a great deal through our partnership approach. In regard to the specifics in the leaflet I was very concerned at the suggestion a resident had been 'burgled 62 times and that we took 3 days to respond" I have asked Mrs Woods' office for these details but they have not been made available to us so we can follow this through."

Notes to Editors

Durham Police Authority is an independent body responsible for ensuring Durham Constabulary delivers an efficient and effective police service. It is

made up of 17 local people who include 9 councillors, 8 members of the public who are the independent members.

The Authority ensures that the Constabulary is accountable to the people of County Durham and Darlington and ensures that citizens have a say in how they are policed.

The Authority is responsible, amongst other matters, for setting the budget for the Constabulary and, following consultation with local communities, mapping out the strategic direction of policing. This includes agreeing policing priorities and setting the Constabulary challenging targets to drive performance higher.

The Authority's vision

“To be the effective voice of our communities in securing delivery of the highest quality policing.”

Our mission

“Working in partnership to ensure fair, effective and visible policing”

The Authority aims to: -

- Exercise strong and effective leadership in partnership working
- Engage positively with our Citizens and Communities to build confidence in local policing.
- Promote equality, tolerance and respect for human rights.
- Scrutinise and challenge police performance & procedures to secure continuous improvement
- Ensure Effective use of resources

For further information or comment, please contact: Victoria Fielding, Policy and Communications Officer Durham Police Authority Tel. No: 0191 3835511

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