MOPAC | MAYOR OF LONDON
OFFICE FOR POLICING AND CRIME

**Thomas Turrell AM**
C/o AssemblyChair@london.gov.uk

**Our ref:** MOPAC170326-M5624

**16 June 2026**

Dear Thomas,

Thank you for presenting your petition at the London Assembly Plenary meeting on 5 February 2026 on the Metropolitan Police's proposals for the future of Bexleyheath Police Station's front counters. I am replying on behalf of the Mayor and in my capacity as the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime for London. I apologise for the delay in responding to you.

Restoring visible neighbourhood policing remains at the heart of the Mayor's agenda to build a safer London for all. The Mayor has invested more in the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) than any previous Mayor by a huge margin – bringing City Hall's investment from 19 per cent of the MPS's total budget in the last year of the previous Mayor to 25% now.

However, the MPS is still in a difficult financial situation due to the legacy of the previous government's disastrous austerity policies, which saw funding cuts to policing to the equivalent of a £1.1bn reduction in real terms.

In this context of finite resources, the Commissioner and the Mayor are prioritising the things that matter most to Londoners: putting more officers into communities to tackle neighbourhood crime, reviewing our focus on driving down violence, ensuring the most vulnerable people are protected, and continuing to deliver improvements to the MPS's response times.

Given the financial pressures, there are no easy options, and the Commissioner has rightly looked across the MPS for savings. This situation means making tough choices, which the Commissioner and the Mayor have been open about for some time.

Regarding the front counter decision, as we have discussed on several occasions with the London Assembly, the decision to close front counters is an operational one for the Commissioner to take based on resources, funding, and public demand for services. We know that London's use of front counters is declining year on year, while we are seeing an increase in different ways to report crimes, including online reporting. According to the MPS's data:

- Only five per cent of crime was reported at a front counter in 2024.
- Only one per cent of crime reported at front counters was made during the night, and weekdays are busier than weekends.
- Some stations record on average just two or three crime reports a day (these include Twickenham, Sutton, and **Bexleyheath**).
- Over 90 per cent of crime is now reported over the phone, online, or in person with a police officer.

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The MPS brought forward its initial proposal and carried out an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) over the summer to ensure the decision was responsive to the needs of London's diverse communities and the MPS's staff. The Mayor has been clear that the EIA should explore the impact across all protected characteristics and that the draft proposals needed more detail on the specific barriers faced by vulnerable groups, such as language, access, technology use, and transport.

The Mayor's feedback, and that of other community groups, was taken on board by the MPS, which came back with a revised proposal in the autumn to improve the spread of access to front counters across London. That proposal meant fewer front counters were closed, while more counters moved to a reduced-hours model. The MPS retained 27 front counters, with two (Charing Cross and Lewisham) remaining open 24/7. This resulted in the closure of ten front counters (five 24/7 and five reduced-hours counters) across five Basic Command Units. These closures were implemented by the MPS alongside the additional mitigation option of introducing digital touchscreens outside front counters identified for closure and those moving to reduced hours. The revised proposal is expected to save the MPS up to £7m every year. It is also worth reiterating that this decision will not affect the police stations themselves, which will still be operational in their communities.

The challenging funding situation is not one any Commissioner or Mayor wants to find themselves in, but we are seeing positive results from the prioritisation we have taken: homicides were at their lowest level in over 20 years last summer, with knife crime, robbery, burglary, and theft all falling last year. Safer Neighbourhood teams now have an additional 500 officers and staff ranging from Superintendent to PCSOs, who are working closer than ever with London's local communities, with the Commissioner aiming to get more officers working in neighbourhoods.

Thank you again for presenting your petition. I hope my response assures you that the Commissioner and the Mayor are focusing on the public's policing and community safety priorities with the resources at our disposal.

We will continue to work closely with the Government and the Commissioner, with ongoing constructive talks with ministers about the funding the MPS needs in future years to ensure we can continue building a safer London for everyone.

Yours sincerely,



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**Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime**

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