

Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM

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The Queen's Walk
London SE1 2AA
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Dame Cressida Dick DBE QPM
Metropolitan Police Commissioner
[By Email]

4th May 2020

Dear Cressida,

Re: Significant Reduction in Dedicated Financial Crime Officers in the Met

I am writing regarding the significant reduction in dedicated financial crime officers in the Met in recent years. I read with great concern the recent article in *The Times*, which reported that dedicated financial crime officers in the Met had fallen by almost two-thirds since 2007/08.¹

I understand that the Met has had a series of other key priorities in recent years, particularly tackling knife crime, the scourge of county lines gangs and terrorism in our city. However, fraud is now the most commonly reported crime and is constantly evolving and changing, particularly when we look at online fraud. Despite understanding the difficulties of having to prioritise resources I do find it deeply worrying that the Met now has only 30 dedicated officers tackling financial crimes, including many types of fraud, when just over 10 years ago there were over 90.

With the Met continuing to recruit new officers and beginning what is a very much needed upward curve in terms of officer numbers, can you provide assurances that some of these new officers will be trained and deployed to assist the thousands of Londoners whose lives are impacted by financial crimes and fraud every year? Furthermore, without the knowledge and expertise of dedicated officers the Met risks missing valuable learning opportunities to further understand the complex and changing nature of financial crimes and fraud.

I would be grateful if you could provide answers to the key questions below:

- What plans do you have to increase the number of officers dedicated to financial crimes over the next five years?
- How are you ensuring that the Met keeps up-to-date on the latest developments in financial and online fraud to support policing in this area?
- What plans are there to recruit more specialist police staff with technical and IT skills to help with online fraud work?
- Despite having important priorities, how will you be ensuring that financial crime and fraud, which now accounts for roughly one in every three crimes, is tackled as quickly and efficiently as possible within the Met?

¹ https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/met-police-lose-two-thirds-of-finance-officers-as-fraud-soars-6crrgfwpw?mc_cid=adf139bd17&mc_eid=a9bb826205

I look forward to hearing back from you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Caroline Pidgeon', with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

Caroline Pidgeon AM
Liberal Democrat Assembly Member