MIKE READER MP
Northampton South

Danielle Stone
Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
Darby House, Darby Close, Park Farm Industrial Estate
Wellingborough, NN8 6GS

Sent Via Email

24 September 2026

Dear Danielle,

Policing of antisocial behaviour and low-level crime in Northampton South

Thank you for your follow up letter of 21 August regarding the quarterly MP briefing, and for the time your office gave us.

At my surgeries, week after week, people raise the same things with me. E-scooters ridden dangerously and illegally, including the wrong way down one-way streets and along pavements. E-bikes and motorbikes ridden in groups around residential estates. Cars racing at night. Street drinking and drug use in public places. Vandalism, and the sort of persistent antisocial behaviour that changes how people use and view their own neighbourhood.

None of these constituents expect every incident to end in an arrest. That is not what they are asking for. What they say is that they do not see the police in the places where these things keep happening, and that they have stopped believing anything comes of reporting it. That second point is the one that worries me most. Once people stop reporting, we lose sight of the problem entirely, and the trust is very hard to win back.

Your letter points me to Operation Tides and to a statement from West Northamptonshire Council about Voi's commitments. I do not doubt either is being done in good faith, but neither answers the question I asked. Tides ran in Corby in June and launched in Kettering in August. That tells me nothing about Northampton. The Voi statement sets out what a contractor has promised, not what the police are doing. And while I understand the logic of asking residents to report problems through the operator's app, I cannot take that back to people who already feel the police do not treat this as their business.

I recognise the prevention work you have funded, including the ASB Early Intervention Team and the Targeted Intervention Officers now embedded in neighbourhood policing teams, and I welcomed the force's decision to publish an ASB Action Plan in April. But the force's own Action Plan recorded antisocial behaviour rising by 19.4 per cent in the year to September 2025, an increase of nearly 2,500 incidents, at a time when recorded ASB nationally was broadly flat.

I would therefore be grateful if you could give me the current twelve-month figures for Northampton and for West Northamptonshire and tell me whether the force reads any increase as more incidents happening or more incidents being reported. I ask because what I hear at surgeries is the opposite of growing confidence to report. If both things are true at once, the real picture is worse than the numbers show.

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I would also be grateful if you would give me a written response on the following:

1. What have you required of the Chief Constable on antisocial behaviour and low-level crime in Northampton South, and how do you hold him to it? I am interested in the mechanism, not the intention. i.e What is measured, how often, and what happens when it is not delivered?

2. What happens after operations end? I would like to see what incident levels did in the weeks and months following Operation Tides in Corby and Kettering, and Operation Renew in Rushden, rather than during them. If enforcement spikes and then falls away, residents are right to be sceptical.

3. What powers are being used, and how often? Specifically, how many community protection notices, dispersal directions, section 59 warnings and vehicle seizures relating to antisocial vehicle use have there been in Northampton over the last twelve months? Section 8 of the Crime and Policing Act 2026 came into force on 29 June and removed the need to give a warning before seizing a vehicle. I would like to know how often that has been used here, and how ready the force is for Respect Orders, which the Home Office has said will be available from 26 October.

4. On e-scooters, please distinguish between the licensed Voi trial and privately owned machines, which remain illegal on public roads and pavements. What is being done to seize private machines ridden unlawfully? And since West Northamptonshire Council has said the trial's continuation beyond 2027 depends on demonstrable improvement, what will you and the Chief Constable be measuring that against?

5. What happens when a resident reports one of these incidents, and what do you intend to do about the number of people who have concluded there is no point?

I am raising this constructively. If the honest answer is that the force does not have the officers or the powers to do what residents expect, tell me plainly and I will take it up with ministers. That is a conversation I am happy to have on your behalf. What I cannot do is go back to my constituents with a reassurance that these things matter to us all.

Yours sincerely,

Mike Reader MP
Member of Parliament for Northampton South
cc: Chief Constable Ivan Balhatchet, Northamptonshire Police, and Parish Council Clerks

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