



Councillor Lee Carter
Leader, Telford & Wrekin Borough Council
Email: lee.carter@telford.gov.uk

Tuesday 14th July 2026

Dear Councillor Carter,

RE: CSE Annual Report

I write in response to your letter of 9th July 2026.

Unfortunately, as is often the case with your behaviour, I am forced to spend time refuting unfounded, politically motivated assertions, that are unnecessary distractions from focusing on delivering improvements for the public.

You are not the governance of West Mercia Police. You have no knowledge of individual police investigations, nor any other context behind the statistics you quote. I am not aware of you having any expertise in this area at all. The assertions you confidently make in your letter are not credible.

I note that your “serious concerns” were not raised at recent partnership meetings (neither of which you attended), nor were they raised by the Council’s representative at last week’s Police and Crime Panel.

The Police and Crime Panel is the statutory and regular opportunity for Telford and Wrekin Borough Council representatives to raise these issues. Attendance at the Police and Crime Panel by your Council’s representatives over the past three years I would suggest has been perfunctory at best, at only 41%. On seven occasions the council has not been represented at all. I would suggest to you this is a real missed opportunity for the Council to constructively engage with myself as PCC, and more importantly how we tackle the issues causing harm in our community.

Instead of constructive engagement, you raise these matters ahead of a Telford and Wrekin full council meeting. A setting where you have a track record of performative outrage without affording me any right of reply.

Considering all of these points together, I am afraid I can only conclude that once again, your letter is primarily motivated by political grandstanding on an issue which is far too important. Attempting to politically weaponise a subject as serious as the sexual exploitation of children is beneath the behaviour expected of the office that you hold.

If you were serious about working together on this subject your letter would ask questions around any missing context to form a richer understanding, or how we might work together to address any concerns. Disappointingly, your letter contains none of that. I understand the Chief Constable will write separately to clarify the points you have raised.

It is unfortunate, and probably a sad indictment of your own political vulnerability, that you instead prefer to point fingers from a position of ignorance.

I would also respectfully remind you of the code of conduct that applies to you as a Councillor in the ways that you engage with both myself and members of West Mercia Police.

For the reasons set out, I find your approach to this and other matters of shared interest unconstructive. I enjoyed a successful and respectful relationship with your predecessor. The services and communities we were responsible for benefitted from that relationship. I would strongly urge you to reflect on what variables have changed that have led to the degradation in relationship between the Council and myself in the last two years.

The recent partnership meeting on CSE set out an aspiration that partners are able to speak with "one voice" on this issue. I share that aspiration. There is a real risk that your political agenda undermines our ability to achieve that principle. Please do not jeopardise the progress made in the Borough for vulnerable people, for cheap political nonsense.

I remain committed to effective partnership collaboration in the best interests of the public. I do not expect us to agree on every point, but the features of challenge should be constructive and informed.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'John Campion', with a stylized, flowing script.

John Campion
Police and Crime Commissioner
West Mercia