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Harriet Wistrich  
Birnberg Peirce and Partners  
14 Inverness Street  
London  
NW1 7HJ

12 August 2013

Dear Ms Wistrich

I am in receipt of your letter to Keith Vaz MP dated July 2013. There is no precise date on your correspondence. Mr Vaz has sent me your three page letter and I enclose his brief note to me asking me to respond to you. His correspondence was dated 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2013. My apologies for not replying sooner, however I was on leave until Monday, 5<sup>th</sup> August and I am now dealing with some of my outstanding correspondence.

I am aware that officers from Operation Herne have been in contact with you in the past and that I have recently written to you. I am not sure if you wish me to reply in detail to the points made in your letter to Mr Vaz, however as he has corresponded to me I thought it absolutely appropriate that I reply as requested.

Without going through your correspondence line by line, I thought it important to make a couple of brief points.

The revelations in the Guardian and the Dispatches documentary of June 24<sup>th</sup> are now subject to an investigation within Operation Herne. These allegations are, of course, extremely concerning and these matters have been aired very publicly. Currently the Home Secretary has expressed her confidence in the work that I am leading, coupled with the scrutiny being led by Mark Ellison QC as being the suitable method of investigation. If we are unable to properly investigate the allegations made she has made it clear that she will consider the option of a further more public type of investigation. Both myself and Mark Ellison have committed that we will seek to report on this by the end of the year.

Within your letter you deal with the issue of undercover officers who enter into sexual relationships and I note that you have quoted a part of the interim report from the Home Affairs Select Committee dated 1<sup>st</sup> March 2013. Can I say that the position we have taken within the Association of Chief Police Officers and as the senior representatives of the Service



Mick Creedon, QPM, BA(Hons), MA  
Constabulary Headquarters, Butterley Hall, Ripley, Derbyshire DE5 3RS

is that we agree with your comments and we agree with the position that such intimate sexual relationships should not be committed in any circumstances. The current policy lead for undercover policing is Commander Richard Martin in the Metropolitan Police Service and he has recently spoken on Radio 4 and expressed this position. I have the portfolio lead for Serious and Organised Crime which includes his working group and I have been very clear that I accord with his views that this type of behaviour should never be authorised. This stance has also been reiterated by Chief Constable Jon Murphy who is the Head of our Crime Business Area. Myself, Mr Murphy and Mr Martin are in effect the policing leads for setting the policy and direction of undercover policing and I have no hesitation in saying that we agree with the points you make at the start of your letter that this type of intimate sexual relationship whilst undercover should never be authorised. If such a relationship were to take place then, of course, the activity would be subject to proper and thorough investigation to understand what had happened, what the implications are and what action should be taken.

In the second paragraph of your correspondence to Mr Vaz you refer to my comments about 'this practice being abhorrent', and the fact that I have refused to apologise for this. I think you are perhaps confusing the commentary I made around the use of the identities of deceased children to provide cover identities for undercover officers. When I presented my report to the Metropolitan Police Commissioner and to a subsequent press conference, I made the point that some people may well see the use of this tactic (in relation to dead babies identities) as abhorrent. I was later questioned on this by the Home Affairs Select Committee. Please be clear that I was referring to the use of the identities of deceased children and not to the aspect of sexual relations with undercover officers. This is a totally separate aspect of Operation Herne and as yet there has been no reporting on this given the fact that there are ongoing investigations and of course a number of civil claims.

You make a lot of comment about the 'neither confirm nor deny policy' and I totally understand your concerns. Nevertheless there are very sound operational reasons why this policy is maintained, not only by the Police Service but by other agencies that use intrusive undercover tactics. I would happily discuss this matter with you and try and explain why we take this approach but I do understand the distress and confusion this can cause and particularly in the case of women that you represent who believe that they have had relationships with undercover officers.

I doubt there is a huge amount that I can say more in this correspondence and I have not been given the attachments that you sent to Mr Vaz. As the independent lead for Operation Herne I would be delighted to meet with you to discuss the work we are doing and the importance we attach to the evidence and testimony that can be provided by the women that you represent. Hopefully if we are able to meet I can impress upon you the serious nature of my investigation and how I can hopefully build some confidence with the women who, I understand, are badly damaged by their experiences. I have read the testimony that was given at the HASC and this was very compelling.

I have copied this correspondence in to Mr Vaz given the fact that he sent this to me and asked me to reply. I appreciate that you are not looking for any specific information from myself, however I reiterate that I would be keen to come and see you and equally keen to see

if there is a means by which I could meet with the women you represent to impress upon them the importance I attach to the work that I am doing and to the allegations that they have made.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mick Creedon". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Mick Creedon  
Chief Constable

Copied to: Keith Vaz  
Craig Mackey