

26 January 2026

Dear All

FROM LOCAL TO NATIONAL: A NEW MODEL FOR POLICING

Since becoming Home Secretary, I have seen policing at its finest. I will never forget the extraordinary bravery of the officers responding to the terrorist attack at Heaton Park Synagogue. In running towards danger, their actions reaffirmed what I already knew to be true: that police officers and staff are some of our most dedicated public servants who work tirelessly every day to keep us safe.

As a Government, we must set you up to succeed which is why we have today published a White Paper that sets out a new model for policing in this country. The reforms we are proposing are wide-ranging but at their heart is you. You deliver results for the public every day, but the system you operate within has remained largely unchanged since the 1960s. It is no longer designed to meet the scale, pace, and complexity of today's challenges.

To effectively tackle crime and revitalise neighbourhood policing, we need the right policing in the right place. At the moment, that's not the case. We have national responsibilities held by some forces whilst other local forces do not have sufficient resource to conduct sophisticated investigations and large operations.

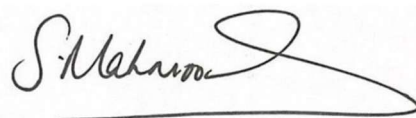
The reformed system will be more effectively geared to deliver better policing services for local people and better support to those officers and staff closest to communities. We will deliver this through:

- Local police areas focused on the everyday crimes that blight our communities, which will ultimately renew relationships with the public and restore confidence;
- Fewer regional police forces that can deliver consistent specialist functions like armed policing and complex investigations; and
- A National Police Service focused on nationwide and cross-border crime.

However, we also want to go further with a range of measures aimed at improving the job, in particular:

- **We will remove the barriers that prevent you from focusing on what matters to the public.** We will clear away bureaucratic barriers, such as those linked to crime and incident recording standards. We will modernise legislation, such as the Public Order Act 1986, to ensure that officers are clearer about where the line stands between freedom of speech and criminality. We will support the responsible adoption of AI powered tools and software where they can automate manual processes to save you valuable time.
- Policing exposes officers and staff to high pressure and often traumatic situations, and we recognise the impact this has on mental health. To **strengthen wellbeing support**, we will work with the National Police Wellbeing Service and the Chief Medical Officer for Policing to introduce mandatory national standards, including enhanced trauma support and strengthened occupational health. We will expand roll out the Mental Health Crisis Line and put on a sustainable footing. We will increase psychological risk assessments from 75,000 to 140,000 each year and ensure every force uses a trauma tracking system to monitor exposure and intervene early.
- We want to support policing with a **stronger culture of continuous professional development** with clear, consistent pathways for everyone, addressing current variations in national frameworks and performance standards. To support this, we will introduce a Licence to Practise to reflect the trust placed in the office of constable and ensure officers receive the training and support they need.
- We will take **focused action to improve the culture of policing**, reforming vetting and misconduct systems and tackling unethical and discriminatory behaviour to improve the public experience of policing and to enable a healthy working environment within it.

We won't create a new model of policing overnight, but our future success will depend on delivering these reforms with you, the workforce. The Policing Minister will continue regular, constructive engagement with staff associations and trade unions as these reforms are developed and implemented over the course of this Parliament. I know we share the same aim: to deliver a stronger and more effective police service for the public we all serve.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'S. Mahmood', with a long, sweeping horizontal line underneath.

Rt Hon Shabana Mahmood MP
Home Secretary