

KEITH TAYLOR MEP
MEP for South East England



PCC Katy Bourne
Office of the Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner
Sackville House
Brooks Close
Lewes
East Sussex
BN7 2FZ

1 June 2017

Dear Police & Crime Commissioner Katy Bourne,

Re: Broadford Bridge drill site at Billingshurst

I am writing to you regarding the policing of ongoing protests against oil drilling at Adversane Lane, Broadford Bridge.

In your letter to me in December 2016 you told me that the overarching aim of policing operations concerning oil and gas exploration in Sussex and Surrey is to, "facilitate the right of people to peacefully protest against oil and gas exploration, whilst enabling local communities and businesses the freedom to use their land and possessions." You told me that you would continue to scrutinise the effectiveness of Sussex Police in meeting this aim.

It has been brought to my attention by both local campaigners on the ground and Netpol that there is an urgent need in Adversane Lane to balance the rights of car users and UKOG's business at the drill site with the duty to protect the rights of freedom of assembly owed to protesters. The compromise would seem to be putting a traffic management plan in place that slows speeds and tolerates some slow walking (with clear guidance to all officers attending the site about what this means in practice).

During protests at the Horse Hill oil well near Gatwick, police tolerated some slow walking in front of lorries to slow down deliveries to the site. It would be reasonable for the police at Broadford Bridge to do the same whilst also learning from the mistakes that were made at Horse Hill. Some slow walking should be allowed with a clear indication to protesters exactly how far is considered reasonable and a traffic management plan should be put in place to slow traffic. It seems to me that this would balance the right of people to peacefully protest with the right of people and businesses to use their land and possessions.

As the Police and Crime Commissioner you have an important role to play in ensuring the legitimate rights of people to oppose oil drilling are not undermined or disrupted.

I look forward to receiving your urgent response.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Keith Taylor". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style with a long horizontal stroke underneath.

KEITH TAYLOR
Green MEP for South East England

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