

I'm not fiddling expenses says police and crime commissioner

9:00am Monday 13th May 2013

By Tom Jennings

POLICE and Crime Commissioner Anthony Stansfeld last night denied using a “sham” office to fiddle his expenses.

It has emerged that just two months after taking up the role, Mr Stansfeld designated Hungerford Police Station, just four miles from his home in Kintbury, West Berkshire as his main office.

This has meant he could claim more than £1,000 for a number of journeys from West Berkshire to [Thames Valley Police](#)'s headquarters in Kidlington.

If Kidlington was designated as his main office he would not be able to claim mileage at 45p-a-mile for the 74-mile round trip from home.

Yesterday he said he needed to have the base at Hungerford to access the force's computer system and store secure documents and that it would be “very expensive” to set up a secure computer at his home.

But the TaxPayers' Alliance has accused him of creating a “pop-up office”.

Mr Stansfeld, who earns £85,000 a year for his role, also defended his decision to employ a part-time “chauffeur” and assistant, saying he carried out other duties such as minute-taking.

He said: “I am extremely good value for money. If I could hire myself I would charge a lot more.”

In the two months before he opened the office in Hungerford – on February 8 – he claimed £30.50 for 50 miles travelling. Over the following two months he claimed £1,064.15 for 2,339 miles – an increase of more than 3,300 per cent in costs.

Mr Stansfeld was quick to defend claims by the TaxPayers' Alliance: “It is not a sham office. It is not dodgy at all, it is totally above board.”

He added: “I certainly haven't fiddled the books.”

However, he said he'd changed his main base to Kidlington because the “trial period” at Hungerford had not worked.

Mr Stansfeld's expenses show he claimed for five trips to Kidlington in February and eight trips in March.

His support worker – dubbed a “chauffeur” by the TaxPayers' Alliance – almost earns £20,000 a year with three days of his working week assisting Mr Stansfeld.

He said: “I tried it and one week I drove about 600 miles and realised it was becoming impossible. Not only did it become dangerous, I wasted a huge amount of time where I could be working, reading up notes or on the telephone.”

Mr Stansfeld is being driven in an Audi A6, which he defended saying it was an ex-police car, had 111,000 miles on the clock and a value of about £5,000. He added: “I have saved £500,000 out of my own budget compared to the previous Police Authority.”

The 18 members of the Thames Valley Police Authority – disbanded upon Mr Stansfeld's election – claimed expenses of £254,000 in 2011/12. Mr Stansfeld's unelected deputy David Carroll, who earns £35,000 a year, has claimed no expenses.

Oxford East MP [Andrew Smith](#) said: “I think the commissioner is learning the hard way that he is, rightly, publicly accountable, and as such has to be doubly careful that his arrangements are above reproach.”

TaxPayers' Alliance chief executive Matthew Sinclair said the revelations, would “leave Thames Valley residents wondering if their PCC is more interested in palming off his travel bill to taxpayers than representing them”.

- [Expenses-PCC---December-2012.pdf](#)
- [Expenses-PCC---January-2013.pdf](#)
- [Expenses-PCC---February-2013---final.pdf](#)
- [Expenses-PCC---March-2013.pdf](#)

[Back](#)

© Copyright 2001-2013 Newsquest Media Group

The Oxford Times

<http://www.oxfordtimes.co.uk>



http://www.oxfordtimes.co.uk/trade_directory/