

# Lincolnshire Police and Crime Panel chairman is standing down



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THE chairman of the Lincolnshire Police and Crime Panel will be standing down in June.

Councillor Ray Wootten's announcement came as he clarified his testimony this week to the House of Commons Home Office Select Committee on Leadership and Standards in the Police Service.

As reported, he appeared alongside Lincolnshire's Police and Crime Commissioner, Alan Hardwick, who told MPs he stands by his decision to suspend temporary Chief Constable Neil Rhodes.

He told that he maintains his interpretation of events was correct, but the judge who quashed the suspension in March took a different view. Mr Rhodes was suspended in February in a row over an employment dispute at another force.

Councillor Wootten said: "I believe that I inadvertently gave the incorrect impression that I was not allowed to hold an extraordinary meeting of the Police and Crime Panel.

"The correct position is I was given advice that it was not desirable to hold a meeting of the Police and Crime Panel to discuss the suspension of the acting chief constable, while various issues were still under investigation.

"It was important that we did not compromise those reviews. Following careful consideration, as chairman, I decided not to hold a meeting, which I still stand by.

"However, I did decide to hold a meeting on the 9th May to appoint the task and finish group which will start work once the Sir Peter Fahy report is completed.

"I have already apologised to the legal officer I referred to at the Select Committee and will be sending a correction to the Select Committee Chairman, Keith Vaz MP.

"I am very sorry that this misleading impression was given, my only explanation was I felt under excess pressure at the hearing and did not explain the situation clearly enough.

"I acted in good faith throughout. I gave evidence to the Select Committee in order to assist the matter. I held a meeting of the PCP on May 9 2013 for the purpose of arranging a task group so that we are able to respond to the wider issue of performance as efficiently as possible at the correct time.

"I will be standing down as chairman of the Police and Crime Panel at the annual general meeting in June."

Read more: <http://www.thisisgrimsby.co.uk/Lincolnshire-Police-Crime-Panel-chairman-standing/story-19005094-detail/story.html#ixzz2TpVEIFqP>

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