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## Durham Police Dispute Darren Grimes' Claim Over Cancelling Constituency Meetings

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**DURHAM** – Reform UK's Deputy Leader on Durham County Council, Darren Grimes, has come under scrutiny after police contradicted his claim that security concerns prevented him from holding public meetings with residents. The controversy raises broader questions about transparency and accountability within local government representation.

Grimes, 31, who was elected in May and formerly presented on GB News, had told a constituent that Durham Police had advised him against holding face-to-face surgeries due to unspecified safety risks. The claim was made in response to a resident who had contacted him for help addressing persistent parking issues within the local ward.

However, Durham Constabulary has refuted the assertion. In a statement to *Byline Times*, the police force stated, “We have not advised Mr Grimes against holding constituency surgeries or public meetings.” The police further clarified that no threat assessments or warnings had been issued relating to his duties as a local councillor.

The revelation has prompted calls for Grimes to explain the apparent misrepresentation. Constituency surgeries, informal public meetings where elected officials assist residents with local matters, are considered a core function of a councillor’s role. Failure to hold them without legitimate cause could be viewed as neglecting the responsibilities associated with public office.

Although Grimes has not yet publicly responded to the police statement, pressure is mounting for a formal clarification. Residents have voiced frustration, with some expressing concern over what they see as a lack of accessibility from their elected representative.

This incident also casts a spotlight on the wider conduct of Reform UK representatives, as the party continues to position itself as an alternative to established political institutions. Critics argue that public accountability must be upheld, particularly when party officials campaign on platforms of integrity and openness.

Grimes was elected as part of a wider push by Reform UK into local government during the 2024 elections, marking a significant expansion of the party’s influence in the North East. His position as Deputy Leader of the council has granted him a high profile in local politics.

The situation remains fluid, with residents and opposition councillors expected to seek further answers during the next full council meeting. Meanwhile, Durham Police have reiterated their willingness to assist elected officials with safety planning should any future concerns arise.

No disciplinary action has been taken, and as of now, Mr Grimes remains in his post.