



## **Frack Free Lancashire**

PRESS RELEASE 20 NOVEMBER 2017

### **NETPOL REPORT RAISES SERIOUS CONCERNS AROUND THE POLICING OF ANTI-FRACKING PROTESTS**

A report published today by Netpol, a collective of activists, campaigners, lawyers and researchers, working together to challenge disproportionate policing of protests and of communities, has raised serious concerns about the policing of anti-fracking protests nationwide, but particularly in Lancashire.

Citing concerns about collusion between fracking companies, the government and the police; disproportionate and inconsistent policing and the police's public relations strategy which appears to be designed to divide communities, Netpol has called for an urgent review by the National Police Chief's Council on the guidelines for the policing of fracking protests.

As Green MEP Keith Taylor explains:

"If local residents are beginning to question whether officers are working to protect them or just the interests of the oil and gas industry, the notion of consent has broken down – and trust must be repaired"

A spokesperson for Frack Free Lancashire commented

"Since Cuadrilla started work we have continually expressed concern about the way in which Lancashire Police have facilitated their work, but have not given equal weight to the right to protest of those opposed to the fracking operations.

"We are fighting a David versus Goliath battle against an invasive industry and yet the current policing model has created a skewed narrative that it is protesters versus the police. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, we need the police to protect our hard-won civil right to protest, but this is simply not happening.

"Instead we face inconsistent and oppressive policing, from forces from all around the country, which use legislation intended for industrial disputes to criminalise citizens



who have explored all other legitimate means of protest and have seen fracking imposed upon them in spite of a democratic decision to forbid it.

“We once again call upon our MP, Mark Menzies, to recognise the importance of this issue for all of the community that he represents and to ask some serious questions in parliament.”

ENDS

**REFERENCES:**

For immediate release on behalf of Frack Free Lancashire.