



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

December 2018

Dear Constituent,

I have recently received a lot of correspondence from constituents regarding the future of police services in and around Daventry. I understand that villages such as Brixworth have been hit with a spate of crime, notably burglaries. This is of great concern to me as much as it is to you, as I live just down the road from Brixworth in Pitsford which feels the effects of rural crime too. I have written an open letter to constituents to help reassure them about police funding for 2019 and 2020.

The first role of Government is to protect the public. Government will always ensure that police have the powers and resources to keep citizens and communities safe. That is why, it will increase funding available to Police & Crime Commissioners by up to £813m, if PCCs use their precept flexibility fully. This is the biggest annual increase since 2010. Combined with increases in CT police funding and investments in serious and organised crime this means an increase in total police funding in 2019/20 by c. £970m, again if PCCs use their precept flexibility fully.

The threat from crime is changing. It is positive that more vulnerable victims of previously hidden crimes such as child sexual exploitation and modern slavery are confident enough to report, and we need to support the police to investigate these serious crimes. The Government will tackle increases in serious violence, challenge serious and organised crime networks, and counter the terrorist threat.

Today's provisional funding settlement for 2019/20 for the police in England and Wales builds on this year's total increase in police funding of £460m (including Council Tax). It is made possible by our balanced approach to public finances – keeping debt falling so we can spend more on vital services like the police, not debt interest. It includes:

- An increase in funding from central Government. This will increase the Government grant to PCCs by £161m, protecting the Government grants for every Police and Crime Commissioner in real terms. This is the first real term increase in the Government grant funding since 2010. On top of this the Government will provide £153m of specific funding to the policing system to assist with increased pensions costs.
- More money to spend locally. The council tax referendum threshold will be £24 for a Band D property (up from £12 in 2017-18). If PCCs ask households to contribute an extra £2 a month, this would generate around £510 million in additional funding for better policing. Overall, including precept flexibility, PCCs would see an increase of up to £813m in funding.



- An enhanced response to serious and organised crime. The Home Office will invest £90m in the Serious and Organised Crime Strategy to enhance the capability to tackle the criminal networks driving economic crime, child sexual exploitation and cyber-crime.
- Additional investment in the vital work of our counter-terrorism officers. As the Chancellor announced at the Budget, funding for counter-terrorism policing will increase by £160m compared to the original Spending Review plan. Counter terrorism police will receive a £59m (8%) increase in like-for-like funding when compared to 2018/19.

The police face significant financial pressures next year. This substantial increase in funding for the police system will enable forces to continue recruiting, fill crucial capability gaps, meet genuine pressures, drive through efficiency programmes, and improve their effectiveness by preventing crime and delivering better outcomes for victims of crime.

To ensure this investment is well spent, the Government will work with the police on four key areas next year that drive efficiency and effectiveness: delivering on the police's ambition to procure efficiently and share back office services; working more productively, including through digital mobile working; filling the major capability gaps the independent inspectorate has identified in detectives and investigations; and supporting coordinated work to tackle serious and organised crime.

In the forthcoming Spending Review, the Government will be prepared to invest appropriately in police capacity, capability and support for a professional workforce – but this must come with greater local accountability and a continued, concerted focus on reform. These strategic reforms should be driven by directly-elected PCCs, who are visible and accountable to the public for the delivery of police and crime plans.

And additional resource from central Government must be conditional on greater progress on collaboration – sharing procurement, common standards for technology and clear skills pathways, so that the very brightest and best talent in an engaged and diverse police service are able to develop their skills and experience in the right way.

The Government will always be on the side of the police, and the wider criminal justice system. But our support and investment needs to be followed by a coherent long-term plan at the Spending Review for how we will improve outcomes for the public and make our communities safer.

Yours faithfully,

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY