



**POLICE & CRIME
COMMISSIONER
for Leicestershire**

Prevention | Partnership | Protection

7 November 2017

Since my election as Police and Crime Commissioner I have consistently called for a fairer funding deal for Leicestershire Police. I have repeatedly raised concerns about our settlement and the fact that it is insufficient. Demand is higher, crime is more complex, diverse and time-intensive than at any time in our recent history.

But we have many fewer officers and we are asking much more of them. We need officers to tackle issues such as cyber-crime and terrorism. The public rightly expect to see officers on the street. We need officers to respond and to investigate crimes and bring those responsible to justice. At the same time our population is increasing at a rapid rate. This looks like the start of a perfect storm.

Now, after a week in which the force was stretched to its limits with the busiest night ever and when senior police officers, supported by Police and Crime Commissioners, laid out the stark future if the funding position is not addressed, I write to seek your support.

The Chief Constable Simon Cole and I have repeatedly, and in many different ways, urged ministers to fund policing adequately. The government's promise that budgets would be "protected", however, has proved to be as untrue as the allocation to Leicestershire has proved to be unfair.

Let me be quite clear. A flat cash settlement means real term cuts. Since 2015 police force budgets across England and Wales have reduced progressively by £200m each year. Police Officer numbers are at their lowest point for 30 years with 20,000 officer posts lost since 2010. To make matters worse, police budgets have been cut by £2.3bn, or 25%, since 2010. Here in Leicestershire, your constituents have been the real losers. At least £38m has been removed from the grant. We have lost 547 police officers between 2009 and 2016; that is around 23%. We now have one police officer per 601 members of the public. In 2006 there was 1 police officer per 430 members of the public. This loss of resource cannot be sustained. Something will have to give and it may be public confidence that is lost. Without public confidence the police's duty to protect your constituents and uphold the law becomes even more difficult.

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We simply cannot afford to compromise our approach to issues such as counter-terrorism, work which has naturally intensified this year, child sexual exploitation and on-line criminality. Public safety is paramount.

I therefore ask that you, on behalf of your constituents, please support us in our call for a budget that will relieve some of the pressure on this hard-working and committed police force. A police force that seeks to protect us, that is there when we need it, and that is rapidly becoming the first and last port of call for those seeking assistance.

Lord Willy Bach
Police and Crime Commissioner