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Our reference: WMPCC 2024-01137

Sent by email to:
NHPGuaranteeOfficerBaseline@homeoffice.gov.uk

Dear Damon

Thank you for your letter dated 6 November, "Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee", addressed to me and the Chief Constable. West Midlands Police has provided separately the information requested.

The increase in resources promised by the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee should prioritise those areas that are still smaller than they were in 2010.

The government's commitment to strengthening local policing is welcome. It is widely acknowledged that disparities in funding and the allocation of resources between police forces leads to increased inequalities and adverse outcomes.

I draw your attention to the following:

- Shares of police funding are furthest below shares of estimated needs for areas in the West Midlands (-19%) and Greater Manchester (-8%), while rural areas with older populations tended to receive higher shares of funding than they were estimated to need: **IFS Report: R269: August 2023.**
- It has been acknowledged that the current funding formula and system for police funding does not properly reflect need. The government has committed to developing a new funding formula (no timescale set), but investment on this basis over the last 3 years through uplift has further amplified inequality: **NPCC Report: Strategic Assessment of Workforce: August 2023.**
- The HO Formula for distributing funds has long been acknowledged as unfit for purpose as the Committee reported in 2015, but has still not been updated. The Police Funding Formula must be reviewed urgently and replaced as soon as possible: **Public Accounts Committee 7 November 2018.**
- WMPs funding has been affected disproportionately compared to some other forces and has little opportunity to obtain additional funds from increasing precept. WMP needs to have enough resources to prevent crime and protect the public effectively: **HMIC PEEL Inspection Report December 2023.**
- The system of police funding is outdated and unfair. Funding should be distributed so it goes to where it is needed most. But currently that is not the case. More deprived, higher population densities with higher crime rates are disadvantaged and underfunded compared to their needs: **HMIC Chief Inspector: State of Policing: July 2024.**
- The way that the Police Uplift Programme funding was distributed means that new officers have not been appointed where they are needed most. In the absence of increasing overall spend on the police, it will require taking money from some to give it to others. That might be politically

unpopular, but it is the right thing to do to make poorer communities safer: **HMIC Chief Inspector: State of Policing: July 2024.**

The current police funding formula is universally acknowledged to be outdated and has never been implemented. **This means West Midlands Police receives £40m a year less than the formula says it should.** West Midlands Police is further from receiving the funding it needs to prevent and tackle crime, keep people safe and secure and deliver access to justice than any other police force.

The position is truly stark. West Midlands Police has 800 fewer police officers than in 2010. 400 fewer PCSOs.

The Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee is an opportunity to level up and right this wrong. Many forces, generally in rural, lower crime areas, with older populations, are larger than they have ever been. Some, particularly those policing higher crime urban areas, are smaller than they were in 2010, even though their populations have risen.

The increase in resources promised by the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee should prioritise those areas that are still smaller than they were in 2010.

I look forward to hearing from you as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

Simon Foster



Police and Crime Commissioner