



**Police & Crime Commissioner for Cleveland**  
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Rt Hon Amber Rudd MP  
Home Secretary  
Home Office  
2 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DF  
[privateoffice.external@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:privateoffice.external@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk)

Dear Home Secretary,

I write in response to the Government statement which appears to indicate that there will be no additional funding for the one-off 'bonus' for police officers or for police staff and PCSOs whose award is currently being negotiated.

As a matter of principle I support fair pay for both our police officers, staff and PCSOs all of whom contribute to keeping members of the public safe in what can only be described as a challenging environment, particularly with the rise in terror attacks but also the changing nature of crime and the pressures this places on limited resources.

No-one should be in any doubt that with more resources we could do more to protect the vulnerable. Cuts to funding and unfunded increased costs will lead to reduced officer and staff numbers therefore impacting upon our ability to do this.

In line with the public sector pay cap my Long Term Financial Plan has assumed a 1% pay award across the board. In the past fortnight central Government has effectively removed £500,000 from our budget in Cleveland in order to fund a bonus to officers. To fund this we will have to take money allocated elsewhere. This money should have come from Government and should have been in the form of a consolidated pay rise, rather than a one-off bonus.

The suggestion that reserves can fund ongoing revenue expenditure is neither appropriate nor a sustainable funding strategy, it is also vital to recognise that an approach that doesn't provide additional Government funding, to pay for these additional



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pay awards, has a disproportion effect on those who haven't, and couldn't, bolster their reserves because:

- Of the demands that they face,
- That they believe it is the right course of action to spend the public's money on public services, instead of putting it into reserves, and;
- That the current policy to cut Government Grants by the same amount across each Policing Area impact on areas, such as Cleveland, who are heavily reliant on Government Funding more than other areas in the Country.

It is clear that the Government view Reserves as collectively too high across policing, however perhaps reserves are higher than they would otherwise be because of the lack of clarity that exists around future government grant settlements, funding formula review and now pay settlements.

In an environment when there is no clarity to enable clear financial planning accountants will generally err on the side of caution, to be able to project the financial stability and sustainability of an organisation. Moving away from the previously articulated position of a 1% pay cap is counterproductive, if it is not funded, as what is now likely to happen is that Chief Finance Officers will revisit their financial planning assumptions, increase their assumptions about future pay awards therefore increasing their budget gaps and therefore working on areas for further cuts/savings.

They may also take the view, in the absence of any clarity, that the risks of future pay awards being even higher might mean they need more in reserves than they were planning to have, because previously they thought there was a 1% pay cap in place that effectively capped the increases on 70-80% of their expenditure.

I hope you will reflect on these comments and reappraise the situation as now exists.

Yours sincerely



Barry Coppinger  
Police & Crime Commissioner for Cleveland