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Rt Hon Amber Rudd
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Date: 20 June 2017

Dear Home Secretary,

Funding for North West Police Forces

In our roles as the Mayor of Greater Manchester and Police and Crime Commissioners, we represent communities and police forces across the North West of England.

We are writing to urge you to ensure that increased resourcing of the police is a key priority for the Government in this week's Queen's Speech, particularly in the light of the changing times we are living in, and the increased terrorist threat.

The resources available to our police forces has been an issue of serious concern for residents over recent months and throughout the General Election campaign. This has been reinforced by recent events in Manchester, London and across the country and has been flagged by several Chief Constables from our region. In addition, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary has highlighted the erosion of the Neighbourhood Policing Model as a result of the challenge of austerity and increasing demands, resulting in a weakening of a key element of the frontline.

Our forces are committed to neighbourhood policing, which allows for proactive policing and results in good quality community intelligence for a variety of investigations, including counter-terrorism. Since 2010, however, officer numbers have fallen drastically. Further funding reductions would threaten to make our current delivery models financially unviable and we would welcome a firm commitment to further resources.

Resources are currently being spread too thinly which is putting additional strain on frontline services. Whether due to complex investigations into the terrorist attack in Manchester, gun crime in Merseyside or policing daily fracking protests in Lancashire, forces across the region are stretched to the limits.

We have heard the re-assurance you have offered that mutual aid exists and that forces have the capacity to respond to major incidents. However, by continually eating into police resources this resilience is being eroded and this concern has been reinforced by senior officers.

These are practical and operational concerns that need to be a priority for the Government with a Queen's Speech addressing resources for policing, effective neighbourhood policing and community safety. We are especially concerned that if the Government does not illustrate a firm



commitment now, it will be lost among the additional Brexit related legislation which has resulted in next year's Speech being cancelled.

As Police Commissioners we cannot continue to endure year-on-year reductions in Government funding for policing in our areas given the demands being faced. While a flat-cash promise has been made nationally this relies on local council tax precepts being increased annually and doesn't factor in the top-slicing that takes place for national projects.

While we are aware that the police funding formula is currently under review and may need to be updated we must highlight the risks of robbing Peter to pay Paul. If the Government's assessment is that some forces are currently under-resourced for the service they need to provide, then this must be addressed. However, if this comes at the expense of already overstretched neighbouring forces then the whole service will suffer.

As the recent terrorist incidents in Manchester and London have highlighted, nationally we require a wholesale review of the funding for policing services. We are committed to working with the Government on this. We would welcome early dialogue on your proposals and would urge you to ensure that any consultation allows time for the level of discussion required.

As Home Secretary you have the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that police forces across the country are properly resourced so they can keep people safe and tackle crime. We are asking that you ensure that this is a priority for the Government by making a clear commitment to reverse austerity in policing in this year's Queen's Speech. We will be sharing this request with our communities and other elected representatives.

We look forward to working with you on this agenda.

Yours sincerely,

Andy Burnham
Mayor of Greater

Jane Kennedy
Merseyside PCC

Clive Grunshaw
Lancashire PCC

David Keane
Cheshire PCC