



Sue Mountstevens  
Police and Crime Commissioner for Avon and Somerset

Andy Marsh  
Chief Constable, Avon and Somerset Police

19 October 2017

Thank you for your letter of 13 September and the enclosed briefing document.

I would like to reassure you that the Government recognises it is crucial the police have the right resources, capabilities and powers to keep the public safe.

This is why we ensured that the 2015 Spending Review protected overall police spending in real terms. Since then, PCCs have received broadly flat cash direct resource funding. For Avon and Somerset this has meant an increase in direct resource funding of around £4.5m since 2015. I also note that the force held almost £40m in reserves in March 2016, which represents 14.6% of total resource funding.

Alongside this protection, we are increasing investment in upgrading capabilities, such as the £34m already provided for the armed policing uplift. This programme will see levels of armed officers increase by around a thousand by the end of 2018 with further investment planned through to 2021. Through the Police Transformation Fund, the Government has invested in other capabilities such as surveillance, cyber crime, roads policing, major investigations, and intelligence.

I do appreciate that demand on the police is changing and we are listening to messages coming from the police system about stretch and strain. I also recognise and am thankful for the dedication of hard-working police officers to the work that they do in what has been a very challenging year.

This is why I am leading a programme of engagement with PCCs and the police to better understand the changing nature on demand on police resources, the impact of that change and how that can be managed as efficiently as possible.

I am looking towards the 2018/19 police funding settlement, to ensure that any decisions continue to be based on evidence and not assertion.

I sincerely welcome your engagement with that process and I look forward to meeting with you to discuss your report very soon. I have asked that my office arrange this discussion at the earliest opportunity.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nick Hurd". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

**NICK HURD MP**