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The Rt. Hon. Amber Rudd, MP
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30 October 2017

Dear Amber,

Metropolitan Police Funding – Londoners' safety being put at risk

We write further to our letter of 24 February 2017, addressed to yourself, and the response we received from Brandon Lewis, the then Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service, dated 25 April 2017.

In our letter we raised serious concerns about police funding and the impact this was having on police numbers, crime rates and the safety of our residents and businesses. Since 2010, Hackney has had one-in-four of its police officers cut, about 200 in total. Now, crime is increasing in the borough, particularly regards violence and robbery.

Hackney has suffered one of the most severe cuts to officer numbers in London - from 770 in October 2010 to 584 this month. However, such cuts and the associated increase in crime is an issue across the Capital, and the country as a whole as starkly evidenced by the latest crime statistics published this month. This reduction in officers is because of the Government's short-sighted real terms cuts to the Metropolitan Police's budget – which have required the Met to make savings of £600m since 2010/11 with a further £400m expected by 2020/21. This £1bn cut to London's police force is a false economy, where the impact of crime ends up costing us all.

Our local police officers do a fantastic job, but an increasing population and significant cuts to budgets mean that they have fewer resources to meet growing demands. They simply do not have the resources they need, and Government platitudes about being more efficient do nothing to address the reality on the ground or the rapidly growing concerns among our residents and businesses.

Brandon Lewis dismissed our warnings back in April, stating that "forces have the resources they need to cut crime and keep our communities safe". As evidence to the contrary continues to mount, that position seems increasingly removed from the facts.



We urge you again to take action to avoid more people becoming victims of crime. Listen to our calls, and those of people across London, and Foot the Bill:

- Commit now to no further cuts to the Metropolitan Police;
- Increase the Government's Police Grant so that our streets can be kept safe;
- Increase the funding that the Met receives for policing a capital city, so that London gets a fair deal.

We would also like to take this opportunity to address specifically some of the assertions made by the then Minister of State for Policing in his response of 25 April.

“The Government is maintaining stable funding for police forces.”

As you are aware, what is referred to here as “stable funding” is in fact a real terms cut. The central Government Police Grant has remained frozen since 2015/16 – failing to take into account increasing demand and inflation.

This comes on the back of a 25% real terms reduction to the central Government Police Grant between 2010/11 and 2015/16.

In London this has led to the Metropolitan Police having to make £600m of savings since 2010/11. It is now faced with having to find a further £400m of savings by 2020/21.

“The NICC was not fully funded in 2016/17 and 2017/18 in order to ensure that stable funding could be provided for all police forces.”

As this statement acknowledges, there is currently a shortfall in the amount of National International Capital City grant that is paid to London - money that London needs to cover the cost of the additional duties of the Met arising from its role as a capital city, ranging from protecting diplomats to policing national demonstrations.

Increased funding of other underfunded police forces should not be achieved by the further underfunding the Metropolitan Police. Shifting money between forces while the overall budget, which you yourself have acknowledged has been “pulled very tightly”, continues to be restricted benefits no one.

“We expect all forces (and indeed all public services) to become more efficient and manage a number of financial pressures each year, and the Metropolitan Police Service should not be exempt from this approach.”

In attempting to absorb these cuts, we note that the Met has:

- Reduced PCSO and police staff numbers by 2,800
- Has outsourced most of its back-office functions
- Released over £1billion by rationalising its buildings and selling properties such as Scotland Yard and is proposing further sell offs and police station closures
- Is pursuing pilots in relation to Basic Command Unit models

While these measures may have helped manage cuts, they have come at a cost.

In Hackney, we will continue to do everything we can locally to work in partnership with the police to keep Hackney safe – for example we have:

- Increased front-line uniformed Council enforcement officers from 15 to 24
- Continued to invest in our CCTV network, providing a 24 hour monitoring suite, run by accredited officers, which provides an invaluable resource to the police in responding to and prosecuting crime
- Passed the Late Night Levy to help raise additional funds to contribute to the costs of policing the Night Time Economy
- Actively supported partnership working at both an operational and strategic level.

However, none of the above is a substitute for having the officers Hackney needs to keep its residents safe. Rhetoric about smarter working and changing times is no substitute for the fact that London's police simply don't have the resources they need to do their jobs properly.

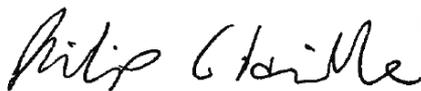
"I note your concerns about police officer levels in Hackney, however it would not be appropriate for me to comment further on this as decisions regarding the allocation of funding and deployment of officers in London are a matter for the Commissioner and the Mayor of London."

Police officer numbers in Hackney are a consequence of overall reductions in funding.

The Mayor of London has committed to a strategic target of 32,000 officers across London (and has increased the Council Tax precept by the maximum amount possible in an attempt to contribute towards this) but has also been clear that unless Government takes action to resolve the current police funding crisis, numbers risk falling below 30,000 for the first time since 2003.

We urge you, for the sake of our hard-working police officers and increasingly concerned residents and businesses, to Foot the Bill and properly fund our police service.

Yours sincerely,



Philip Glanville
Mayor of Hackney



Cllr Caroline Selman
**Cabinet Member for Community Safety
and Enforcement**

cc: Philip Hammond MP, Chancellor of the Exchequer
Nick Hurd MP, Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service
Diane Abbott MP, Shadow Home Secretary
Meg Hillier MP, Chair of the Public Accounts Committee
Sadiq Khan, Mayor of London
Sophie Linden, Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime, London
Jennette Arnold OBE AM, London Assembly Member for North East London