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Dr Carolyn Wilkins
Oldham Council
Level 3, Civic Centre
West Street, Oldham
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Reference: T16412/14

Dear Dr Wilkins,

Thank you for your letter of 24 October to the Home Secretary about cuts to police funding in Manchester. I am replying as an official responsible for police funding.

I note your concerns about cuts to police funding in Manchester and how you feel this is affecting neighbourhood policing. However, the Government has no choice but to deal with the deficit. The funding settlement for the police is a challenging one, but as the latest report from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) 'Policing in Austerity: Meeting the Challenge' has found, forces are balancing their books whilst delivering reductions in crime and high levels of public satisfaction. Like all parts of the public sector, the police must play their part in helping to tackle the deficit. But there is no question that the police will still have the resources to do their important work.

The police can and are making savings without affecting the level of service to the public, for example:

- through greater collaboration across operational and support services;
- through improved procurement of goods and services (including uniforms and equipment); and,
- by improving productivity, including taking a more collaborative, streamlined approach to working with other criminal justice agencies, reduced bureaucracy and improved digital working.

Ultimately, decisions on the size and composition of a police force's workforce are for individual Chief Officers and Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs). Also, it is important to note that what matters is how officers are deployed, not how many of them there are. All forces need to look at the way frontline services are delivered to ensure that the quality of service provided is maintained or improved. As HMIC has made clear, there

is no simple link between officer numbers and crime levels, between numbers and the visibility of police in the community or between numbers and the quality of service provided. I note from your letter that you have written to both the Greater Manchester Police and Crime Commissioner and to the Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police, therefore they will be able to respond to your concerns about neighbourhood policing.

According to the most recent HMIC report, 'Responding to Austerity' (July 2014), recorded crime has fallen by 19 percent in Manchester between 2010/11 and 2013/14. It also states that over the spending review period, the force has reduced crime at a higher rate than the figure for England and Wales. Additionally the force received an overall rating of 'Good' from HMIC. Therefore, Greater Manchester Police are managing to deliver reductions in crime whilst responding to their financial challenge.

I hope you find this response helpful.

Yours sincerely,



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