

MOTION ON NOTICE

POLICE FUNDING

City Council: 23 November 2015



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Policing is in crisis. Police & Crime Commissioners and the shadow policing minister are challenging the government on its' plans for police funding. Faced with possible legal action, the Government has had to pause on latest proposals to revamp the formula.

However, this pause merely represents some short term crumbs of comfort – it is quite clear that this Government is intent on cutting police forces beyond the bone.

Like communities up and down the country, Plymouth's residents are fearful of the consequences. The Police and Crime Commissioner and Chief Constable for Devon & Cornwall have made it clear that cuts will have a devastating effect on the numbers of police officers and PCSOs in our neighbourhoods. These people play a vital role in dealing with and preventing crime, and reassuring people.

The Police and Crime Commissioner and Chief Constable have stated that the Government's intended cuts for our Force equate to c£54m a year for four years and would mean:-

- A cut of 1,300 officers and staff by 2020;
- Scrapping all PCSOs;
- A significant reduction in visible policing;
- Less work with councils;
- Doubts over whether all burglaries could be attended and investigated; and
- Other unspecified cuts.

As the largest urban area in the Force, Plymouth faces the most crime, and the impact of cuts is bound to be particularly hard felt here.

Although the Government's pause has reduced the immediate cut by £15m a year, the majority of the policing cuts predicted will still be necessary to meet the estimated £39m a year remaining cut. In any case, the Government is bound to be back for more. Devon & Cornwall Police and Crime Commissioner has confirmed that he still expects hundreds of police officers, PCSOs and staff jobs to be lost and that many further police stations will be closed. This comes on top of previous cuts including 1,000 police personnel in our Force over the last four years.

Whilst the Police and Crime Commissioner should continue to look at every opportunity to reduce backroom budgets, it is unrealistic for him to patch up a remaining cut of this magnitude. Responsibility for the situation and the consequences which will arise from it, lies firmly with the Government.

Criminals will be rubbing their hands in glee and it is quite clear that if the public had known about the Government's plans to deliver such savage cuts on our police force, they wouldn't have voted the way they did.

Council resolves to:-

Ask the Leader to write to the Home Secretary highlighting our deep concerns about policing cuts, asking her to reconsider; and to urge our MPs to back this.

Support Devon & Cornwall Police and Crime Commissioner in attempts to secure a fair funding formula for our police force as part of a campaign to restore Plymouth's "missing missions".

Proposed by Councillor Philippa Davey

Seconded by Councillor Tudor Evans