



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Nick Hurd MP
Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service
Direct Communications Unit
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

23rd October 2017

RE – Police funding and the precept cap

We are writing to you concerning police funding and the now untenable restrictions placed on local forces by the imposition of a 2% funding cap on the precept. Thank you for your kind offer to meet with Essex MP's regarding this matter.

In our minds, the current precept cap presents very real challenges for Essex;

- 1) Firstly, it means that operational and professional decisions regarding force funding requirements are restrained arbitrarily by Whitehall. This impedes the ability of front line police officials to make decisions considering the local context and furthermore makes it difficult for them to innovate effectively.
- 2) Secondly, for a county such as Essex with a very low precept, a 2% increase represents very little compared to other comparable forces and therefore we are unable to generate new funding for front line officers in line with other precept areas.

Put quite simply, there is a great appetite amongst Parliamentary colleagues, the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Chief Constable, the police force itself, councillors, and certainly the general public, to increase the precept to put more officers onto the front line. However, the funding cap prevents this.

During the General Election, most people we spoke to understood the need for spending restraints over the past 7 years, but feel that it is the natural position of the Conservatives to support strong law and order and that currently the gauge has moved too far away from this in regards to policing capacity. In Essex, we are confident that surplus buildings are being rightly decommissioned and that wasteful back office functions and management have been correctly trimmed back. Now is the right time to ensure front line policing is increased.



We do hope we can arrange a meeting as soon as possible to make further representations on this issue and navigate a way forward.

Yours sincerely,

John Baron MP
Basildon and Billericay

Alex Burghart MP
Brentwood and Ongar

Vicky Ford MP
Chelmsford

Giles Watling MP
Clacton

Will Quince MP
Colchester

Eleanor Laing MP
Epping Forest

Bernard Jenkin MP
Harwich and North Essex

John Whittingdale MP
Maldon

Mark Francois MP
Rayleigh and Wickford

Kemi Badenoch MP
Saffron Walden

Stephen Metcalfe MP
South Basildon and East Thurrock

David Amess MP
Southend West