



Mr Adam Holloway MP
House of Commons
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P Harman Esq
General Secretary
Police Federation Office
Police Headquarters
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3rd September 2010

Dear Mr Holloway

We write to you in order to express our very real concern regarding the future policing capabilities of this county. It is now public knowledge that Kent Police is facing financial cuts in the region of a £53 million over the next four years. The Chief Constable has understandably sought to reassure officers, staff and the public that he will maintain policing services. However we as the Police Federation and UNISON representatives do not share his optimism.

In reality, the loss of £53 million will inevitably lead to staff reductions. Current predictions by the Chief Constable are that 1000 police staff and 500 police officers will disappear from policing in this county over the next four years. There is absolutely no doubt that cuts of this magnitude will have a direct impact on policing capabilities and our service delivery. The much touted line "we will be maintaining front-line services" is completely unsustainable.

What is the frontline? In policing terms it is far greater than the visible uniformed officers and PCSOs. There are officers who, because of their role do not wear uniform, but are very much a part of the front line in our fight against serious crime and terrorism. Undercover officers, officers dealing with sex offenders, domestic violence, fraud, money laundering and murders are all frontline. The police staff in our control room, in forensic teams, coroner's officers and statement takers are all frontline. The commanders of major events and critical incidents, the senior managers responsible for command resilience and future planning are all frontline.

To potentially reduce Kent Police by 1500 officers and staff will have a dramatic impact on policing. To purport that £53 million can be saved through "efficiency savings" and "reducing bureaucracy", whilst maintaining the "frontline" is frankly nothing short of political gimcrackery. There are very few so called back office functions. Kent Police is a lean organisation. We are constantly trying to do more with less.

As a public service with responsibility for safety, the maintenance of law and order and a vast myriad of additional responsibilities, policing is a multi-faceted operation that requires some experts and specialist support. Take that support away and the organisation starts to fail.

We are all aware of the precarious state of the economy and that policing is not immune from any cuts. However in our professional opinion, the predicted deficit will mean Kent Police will not be able to maintain the service it currently does. We will have to stop doing something. Police officers and staff want to make a difference. They want to provide a quality service across the many disciplines and areas we work in. We genuinely fear that we will not be able to do so in the near future if the cuts are as severe as they are predicted to be.

Any assistance you could give in mitigating the scale of cuts would be appreciated. Not just by the officers and staff of Kent Police but by your constituents who expect and deserve a police service that is far more than the so called "visible frontline". We would welcome your observations on the issues raised and would be more than happy to meet to discuss further if you think it would be useful.

Yours sincerely



Peter Härman
Secretary
Kent Police Federation



Peter Saville
Secretary
Kent Police UNISON