
Chair of the UK Statistics Authority, Sir David Norgrove

Louise Haigh MP
Shadow Minister for Policing and Crime
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

20 March 2018

Dear Ms Haigh,

Thank you for your letter of 23 February in which you raised concerns about statements on police funding made by the Prime Minister, the Home Office and the Leader of the House Commons.¹

We have commented in the past about statements on police funding and emphasised the need for greater precision in the way numbers are used.²

The arrangements for police funding are complicated, and the lack of a regular Home Office publication bringing together all the relevant data, has added to the difficulty of understanding by all involved. The Home Office factsheets³ are a helpful step, but misunderstanding continues. I would urge again that Home Office statisticians should produce a regular analysis of police funding in line with the principles set out in the Code of Practice.

In terms of the particular points you make, the Prime Minister's statement and the Home Office's tweet could have led the public to conclude incorrectly that central government is providing an additional £450 million for police spending in 2018/19. The Home Office tweet also implied that the £450 million sum is guaranteed. As the Minister for Policing's statement outlined,⁴ up to £270 million of the funding settlement will come from local council tax, if Police and Crime Commissioners and Mayors choose to raise these sums. In addition, the Leader of the House of Commons stated that the £270 million that can be raised locally was on top of the overall settlement of up to £450 million.

Complex funding arrangements are difficult to explain particularly in the time-compressed context of Prime Minister's Questions. Written communications, including tweets, do not face this constraint. We recommend that the Home Office's Head of Profession for Statistics speak to communications colleagues about the importance of clear public statements about police funding and ensure they understand the structure of police funding.

I am copying this letter to David Blunt, Home Office Head of Profession for Statistics and the Rt Hon Andrea Leadsom MP, Leader of the House of Commons.

Yours sincerely



Sir David Norgrove

¹ [Letter](#) from Louise Haigh MP to Sir David Norgrove (February 2018),

² [Letter](#) from Sir David Norgrove to Dame Vera Baird (September 2017).

³ [Home Office December 2017 police funding factsheet](#) and [February 2018 update](#).

⁴ [Written statement](#) by Nick Hurd MP, Minister of State for Policing, 31 January 2018.