



**POLICE & CRIME
COMMISSIONER**
for Leicester,
Leicestershire & Rutland

Your Communities - Your Commissioner

8th April 2025

Alex Davies-Jones

Minister for Victims (Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Ministry of Justice)

Email: alex.daviesjones.mp@parliament.uk

Dear Alex Davies-Jones,

I am writing to you in your capacity of Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Ministry of Justice with responsibility for Victims and Witnesses. As the Police and Crime Commissioner for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland, it is my responsibility to commission services for victims and witnesses of crime, and to ensure that these services are available to all across the policing area.

While we represent different parties and may have disagreements on how to achieve certain goals, we certainly share a common purpose. That is to deliver for Victims and Witnesses. Making victims feel safe to come forward with their experiences, be assured that they will see justice done to their perpetrators and ultimately help them cope and recover from their experiences. With that in mind I truly struggle to understand how the Government have seen it fit to reduce the Victim Core Grant funding by 4.2% for the 2025/2026 financial year.

I fear the Government has fallen into the bad habit of not looking beyond the figures in front of them. A 4.2% reduction in funding is so much more than a balancing of the books. It's potentially a victim of crime not being able to access the support they desperately need. It's a victim who will not be able to cope and recover from their trauma, leading to a life where their personal potential and their potential to contribute positively to society is lessened if not removed. It's a victim's family that will have to pick up the pieces, who may well need support themselves, but it will not be forthcoming.

Victims and Witnesses in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland deserve better. Between April 2024 and December 2024, over 11,500 non-domestic abuse or sexual violence victims have been supported by Victim First. Over 5,700 standard risk domestic abuse victims and over 700 serious sexual violence and adult rape victims have been supported. My Office work incredibly hard to commission and manage services for victims and witnesses that deliver the best service possible for the taxpayer's money. They have continued to do so even with shrinking budgets and higher calls for service. This can't continue, however. There has to be a breaking point where the funding provided from the Government is simply not sufficient to deliver the level of service required. I fear that we have already reached that point.



For example, there is a worrying trend in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland where we are seeing a rise in Stalking. Leicestershire Police and my Office have responded to the Stalking Super complaint, however we cannot put into place specific programmes to tackle the issue as there is no funding remaining from our current allocation. Unfortunately, the Government has not made new funding available to support the implementation of recommendations from the Super Complaint.

As well as the above, real term consequences have already been felt here in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland as a result of the 4.2% reduction in the Victim Core Grant. 10 services have had to be cut from our service offer. That means less support for rape victims, domestic abuse survivors and the removal of specialist pregnancy and maternity domestic abuse support. This surely can't be what the Government wants to happen across England and Wales?

Many victims of serious crime, including our child victims, are already stuck in the national Crown Court backlog of cases, sometimes waiting several years for their case to reach trial. To cut funding at a time when our victims are already disengaging because of these unacceptable delays and wait times, is disheartening. Locally, we need to encourage victims to have faith in their criminal justice agencies, to feel supported throughout their victim journey, even when the national delays are unacceptable; the one thing that matters is that we can adequately support them. We cannot do that if our funding continues to be cut and in Leicestershire, where we are already one of 18 forces who are disadvantaged by the draconian and unfair funding formula, which leaves us with less each year. To suffer yet another blow does not help us at all.

I urge you as Parliamentary Under Secretary of State to reconsider the reduction to the Victim Core Grant and instead make funding available for all PCC's in England and Wales to cover the shortfall. I'm sure you agree with me that we need to do all we can to deliver the best service possible for victims. A funding cut does not achieve this and can't be allowed to happen. I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you and your team to discuss this issue further. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Rupert Matthews
Police and Crime Commissioner for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland