

**Paul McKeever, Chairman of the Police Federation of England and Wales says;**

“When the Prime Minister says his cuts to policing will result in freeing up police time and getting more officers on the street - he is wrong. He talks about getting officers out of the 'back-office' and back into our communities but he hasn't explained that these 'back-office' bound officers are already providing an invaluable service to the most vulnerable members of society. These 'back-office' functions include roles within; child protection units, domestic violence units and surveillance. So if these officers are put back in uniform and back on the beat ; who will fulfil these functions?

“I predicted riots and criminal behaviour would happen last year but the Government didn't listen. Now we know that we will lose over 16,000 officers over the next three years and I implore the Government to listen to us and the requests of the public; stop, rethink your proposed 20 percent cuts to policing.

“The police simply cannot provide the same level of service to the public if we lose 16,000 officers. The past week has demonstrated that violent behaviour can only be tackled by having more police officers on the streets. We can only protect the public if we have enough police officers to patrol our communities so it is vital that the Government reconsiders the proposed 20 percent cuts. Efficiency savings can be made and we could operate with the HMIC recommended 12 percent cuts but it won't be possible to protect the innocent members of society if the 20 percent cuts are imposed.

“The Government cannot underestimate the potential economic consequences of the riots in terms of loss of foreign investment and tourism to the UK. The Prime Minister and Home Secretary are giving the impression that it is imperative to the UK finances that policing is cut by 20 percent. However, the total savings to the Government amount to only around 0.5 percent of their total budget, whereas the potential loss to the UK through lack of confidence from abroad could run into many billions of pounds far outstripping any 'savings' from police cuts. The cost and devastation caused by the criminality and rioting last week could have a lasting impact on the economy if the Government doesn't reconsider proposals to cut the policing budget.

“Despite the refusal of Government to listen to the men and women who police the streets, we have seen unprecedented acts of bravery from officers throughout England and Wales. Over 200 officers have been hospitalised and injured as a result of the ferocious attacks by rioters but they remain more determined than ever to restore peace on our streets and protect innocent citizens. It is the support of our communities that keep officers going and we will do everything in our power to convince the Government of how detrimental the 20 percent cuts will be to the communities we serve. “