

**Matthew Barber**  
Police & Crime Commissioner  
for Thames Valley



The Rt Hon Kit Malthouse MP  
Minister of State  
Home Office  
Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DF

21<sup>st</sup> December 2021

Dear Minister,

### **Initial Police Learning and Development Programme (IPLDP)**

The delivery of the Home Office funded uplift programme is one of our key priorities in Thames Valley to ensure the public see more visible policing and to enable the Force to drive down crime. I am also committed to longer term, locally funded recruitment to ensure that we have the capability to keep our communities safe.

As you will recall from our conversation earlier this month we have opened a final IPLDP intake to help us address the need to fulfil our recruitment target. Whilst the degree-entry routes undoubtedly have value in recognising the skills of our professional police workforce, the traditional entry not only increases diversity in the widest possible sense, but will also see officers reaching the frontline more quickly and therefore joining the fight against crime even sooner.

The Home Office are due to formally withdraw the IPLDP entry route early next summer. I would ask you to reconsider the complete removal of this option as a matter of urgency. I obviously welcome the significant increase in police officers being funded through the uplift programme and it is likewise welcomed by the Force and the public. The challenge of recruiting and training such significant numbers however, particularly given the impacts of the pandemic, cannot be underestimated.

I strongly believe that policing needs a diversity of entry routes to ensure that it is a profession open to all. I recognise the desire within the policing family to pursue the PCDA and DHEP entry route, in Thames Valley we have made great use of these opportunities since their introduction and will continue to do so. There are however genuine concerns that some good candidates for policing are put off by the academic elements of these options, and these longer, slower entry routes were never designed for the volume of officers currently going through training in Thames Valley and across the country.

I would urge you not to remove the option of IPLDP recruitment altogether, or at the very least to allow Forces such as Thames Valley to reach the end of the uplift recruitment before doing so. The Chief Constable and I are committed to recruiting more police officers and getting them onto our streets to cut crime, but we need your continued support through these regulations to give us the tools to succeed.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matthew Barber', written in a cursive style.

Matthew Barber  
Police & Crime Commissioner