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Barry Coppinger  
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Andy Preston  
Mayor of Middlesbrough  
Via email only to: [Andy.Preston@middlesbrough.gov.uk](mailto:Andy.Preston@middlesbrough.gov.uk)

18 September 2019

Dear Andy,

Further to our recent conversations, I am writing to give you and council colleagues a wider picture of my work.

I've always sought a constructive dialogue and working relationship with local leaders, councillors, and communities, as I've always thought that is what the public expect of us. In addition to that, I'm proud of standing up for this area, and campaigning against governments of whatever colour, whose actions were undermining or otherwise damaging it.

I served for 28 years as a Middlesbrough councillor, the last 10 as Executive member for Community Safety, working successfully with Independent Mayor Ray Mallon. This included us introducing a 78-strong street warden service; an ASB team; Active Intelligence Mapping and area-based multi-agency problem solving groups. I chaired an award-winning community safety partnership, and the Cleveland Joint Emergency Planning Committee; introduced local innovations like the Best Bar None award; 'Talking CCTV', which received world-wide attention; and also through the Police authority, introducing and developing Neighbourhood Policing, and sustaining record numbers of Police officers (1727) and PCSOs (183).

Whilst retaining compassion and support for people homeless or destitute, we were also successful in targeting aggressive beggars - and making Middlesbrough town centre a beggar free area. You will appreciate what a significant achievement this was, and it was only achieved through a partnership approach engaging police, council, justice and other agencies.



*The Police & Crime Commissioner for Cleveland is an accredited Living Wage Employer with the Living Wage Foundation.*

I have maintained that partnership approach as PCC, working together is essential for the unique and challenging area that we serve.

The public know Government austerity has taken 500 Police officers & 50 PCSOs off our streets; put our NHS on the critical list; our Fire service under greater pressure than ever; James Cook hospital and some mental health services in special measures; never mind the pressures on our councils - including your own recent announcement to cut children's services by £2.7m.

After you appointed Cllr Antony High into a drugs role, I met him and outlined work currently on-going to reduce drugs related deaths and crime in the area. I was surprised when Cllr High put out a media statement blaming previous Mayors Dave Budd and Ray Mallon, the town's MP's Andy McDonald and Simon Clarke, and myself, for the drugs problems in the town, claiming we've taken no interest, or even discussed them.

This seemed to show no overall understanding of past and recent work on public health. In my case, when Executive member I was a key partner and investor in Middlesbrough's Drugs Action Team; I've previously worked with and promoted Dr Ian Guy's ground-breaking Fulcrum medical practice, including to Ministers; have supported a range of community drugs projects, through my council and now PCC roles; have supported Cleveland Police's Dealer a Day campaigns over many years; the on-going work of Cleveland's Community Drugs Enforcement team; I've committed 'Proceeds of Crime' income to tackling organised criminals; have regularly called for a Royal Commission on Drugs; and last October at the Recovering Together conference here, I announced plans for a ground-breaking multi-faceted Heroin Assisted Treatment project, which I am part funding and co-ordinating, in conjunction with key health and criminal justice partners.

The Heroin Assisted Treatment project is here and ready to commence. It is a pilot scheme and we are in close and continuing dialogue with the Home Office and Public Health England. There is considerable interest in the pilot to see if the approach to tackling drugs, evidenced in other countries, will yield the same results in Middlesbrough. I have always recognised and acknowledged the support of partners in being able to test innovative schemes such as HAT, including the criminal justice agencies, public health teams and service providers however large or small in trying to make a difference. I will continue to do so.

The key element is HAT is a treatment AND recovery programme and we are the only area in the country currently implementing this scheme which has been licensed by the Home Office. The pilot cohort comprises the most entrenched users for whom all other existing treatment has failed, those who are the greatest drain on public sector resources, including the council, and those responsible for the most crime.

Political attacks and calls for my resignation won't ever divert me from making progress and working with partners as passionate as I am about this area – as PCC I have a

mandate drawn from an electorate of over 560,000 people and I'm realistic enough to recognise I can't please all of them all of the time.

The biggest encouragement for me is the progress made over recent years as PCC, making a real difference to communities, including:

- Setting up from scratch in 2012 a dedicated and highly-regarded Office, costing 26% less than the Police Authority it replaced, or 0.6% of today's total budget, working across a wider range of responsibilities including: Casework for the public; Police Complaints triage; Developing Victim services; Scrutiny & Holding to Account; Community & partner engagement; Commissioning of services and grants; Contract management;
- Sharing my senior leadership team across both Cleveland, and with North Yorkshire's PCC, under a unique collaboration deal.
- Bringing in over £1.5m in grants & managing programmes, around a Regional Domestic Abuse strategy, and a successful Serious Violence youth fund bid.
- Bringing partner agencies together, to develop common approaches and good practice, including introducing an IT-based live-time, real-time, information sharing system, used in successfully tackling ASB and in other areas. Also, to share and promote good practice across Cleveland in supporting asylum seeker & refugee communities;
- Setting up and chairing a Tees Rural Crime forum, which works with residents and rural interests, and plans regular operations.
- I also set up and chair a multi-agency Strategic Hate Crime group, which analyses, investigates and prosecutes hate criminals.
- In terms of policing, promoting diversity & equality through an award-winning Everyone Matters programme, that will continue under my control
- Driving police standards up through a Transforming Professional Standards programme – progress was previously made, but much more to do.
- Setting up a joint external Audit committee and an Independent Ethics committee, to examine and provide independent assurance on those key areas of activity, including organisational governance and independent assessment of ethical issues and decisions made by the police.
- Through good financial management, I've invested extra resources in specialist areas in local policing including: crime prevention; successfully investigating hate crime; schools liaison officers; early intervention co-ordinators; asylum & refugee community support workers; community cohesion workers.
- Developed a comprehensive Victim Care & Advice service, which has helped thousands of residents and increased the volume of people who take up support when becoming a victim of crime.
- I support and provide funding for various specialist services to tackle Sexual and Domestic Abuse; Honour-based violence; and also have introduced a Cleveland anti-slavery network, to support those trafficked and enslaved.
- Introduced a Cleveland multi-agency Restorative Justice programme, and an award-winning Cleveland Divert scheme, to get first-time offenders back on track.

Developed support services to reduce female offending and increase interventions for domestic abuse perpetrators.

- Support collaboration with neighbouring Forces and PCCs across the region, to tackle serious and organised crime, and deliver specialist services.
- Continue to engage with communities – over 670 meetings attended across Cleveland, and I've supported around 150 local safety projects, working with residents and community groups. Also working to tackle extremism and terrorism - and racism within schools at earliest opportunities - and intervention and prevention work in at-risk communities.
- Investing in youth diversion work across all 4 boroughs.
- Built the award winning Community Safety Hub at no cost to the tax payer, providing improvements in technology and working practices to Cleveland Police and partners, including its use as an Emergency Co-ordination Centre for over 100 agencies, if and when required

A key role of the Police and Crime Commissioner is to consult locally and draw up a policing plan which gives strategic direction to the Chief Constable.

The deployment of police officers and best use of resources available to deliver this plan is solely the domain of the Chief Constable, though I hold him to account on behalf of the public.

Locally, I have led the call for the savage Government cuts to Cleveland Police, cuts which have seen 500 officers and 50 PCSOs taken from the streets, to be reversed. These cuts have had a severe impact on the amount of support we can provide to neighbourhood policing which is rightly regarded so highly in local communities for its impact in re-assuring local residents, preventing and detecting crime.

I have always been clear, the Chief Constable must make the best use of any resources available, but there can be absolutely no doubt that cuts to police forces have impacted on the number of officers that can be deployed on the beat. It appears the Government is finally taking note. I shall continue to hold them to account in delivering those promised extra officers to local communities.

I'm pleased external inspection of my office continues to be positive. We have again received the Transparency Quality Mark from CoPaCC - an independent organisation established shortly after the first Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) elections to monitor policing governance in England and Wales.

You will be aware there is a separate inspection watchdog for police forces – Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Services.

In 2017 the force was rated as "Good", however more recently, it has become clear from my own scrutiny process, from feedback from the HMICFRS, and from early observations

from the recently appointed Chief Constable, that the force is not performing as it should be.

The HMICFRS report will be published later this month. I fully support the Chief Constable in organising a meeting for stakeholders, including yourself, to attend at which he will be able to outline steps he will be taking to address any shortcomings, and to move the force forward over the coming years, and answer any questions. I will of course continue to ask him on behalf of the public to evidence that any improvements demonstrate the very best in policing service.

I hope this gives yourself and council colleagues a better understanding of the range of work I am progressing. I am by no means complacent and I feel the requirement to work together is needed now more than ever. I am happy to discuss further anything detailed in this letter and once again provide the offer to explore areas of mutual benefit for the communities we serve.

Yours sincerely



Barry Coppinger  
Police & Crime Commissioner for Cleveland

C.c. to: All Middlesbrough Councillors  
Tony Parkinson, Chief Executive