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## FIRM GUARANTEE THAT FUNDING FOR POLICE AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS PROTECTED UNTIL 2016 (17 JAN 2014)

A firm guarantee that funding for Police and Community Support Officers (PCSOs) will remain protected until 2016 has been made by West Yorkshire's Police and Crime Commissioner.

Mark Burns-Williamson reassured partners at events across the county this week that he is committed to protecting neighbourhood policing and has ring-fenced £17.8m a year of police funding to continue to pay for PCSOs across the county.

The reassurance was given amid fears that neighbourhood policing teams (NPTs) will be seriously affected by the severe cuts being imposed by government on the police budget and to local authorities.

Committed to protecting frontline policing Mark Burns-Williamson said:

"I have reassured partners this week that I will be maintaining the level of funding for PCSOs for three years across West Yorkshire.

"PCSOs working as part of our neighbourhood policing teams with police constables provide an invaluable service in our communities and I have pledged to protect neighbourhood policing which is a key priority in my Police and Crime Plan.

"I understand the pressures that councils and partners are under with severe government cuts to all our budgets and I am working closely with council leaders to secure their level of funding.

"But it is not just about protecting the numbers of frontline officers and staff but about making sure our NPTs are more visible, responsive, and working in a more joined up way with partner agencies to deliver a better service in our communities.

"This is important work to make sure our communities are safer and feel safer."

As part of more integrated working, by April, NPTs will become part of a wider delivery group in our communities with officials from local authorities, the third sector, volunteers, other emergency services and businesses.

This will not affect the numbers of frontline officers or PCSOs but will mean police staff and officers joining up with their counterparts to share premises, information, intelligence and provide improved services for people and for our communities.

This model has already been developed in Wakefield and comes to Bradford, Leeds, Calderdale and Kirklees in the near future following a series of consultation and engagement events.

The new way of working will increase the reach of all organisations working to ensure the wellbeing of our communities and ensure the joined up thinking and approach to tackle problems at a local level.

Chief Constable Mark Gilmore said: "I am pleased that this funding has been guaranteed for the next two years. PCSOs do a great job as part of our Neighbourhood Policing Teams.

"We are committed to providing a world class policing service and PCSOs play a key role in this by engaging with and reassuring our communities."



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