

# News story: Government publishes police reserves to increase transparency

This will provide a central and transparent database, where members of the public can go to see how their local Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) is managing their funding.

In March 2017, the police collectively held over £1.6 billion in usable resource reserves, which compares to £1.4 billion in 2011. There are wide variations between areas, from Gwent holding 42% of their annual funding in reserves to Northumbria holding under 7%.

The Minister for Policing and the Fire Service Nick Hurd is also writing to PCCs, setting out new guidance which asks them to publish reserves strategies on their websites.

Reserves strategies should make clear how much of the funding held falls into the following 3 categories:

- funding earmarked for planned expenditure during the current medium-term financial plan
- funding earmarked for specific projects beyond the current planning period
- funding held as a general contingency or resource to meet other expenditure needs (for example, insurance)

PCCs should set out, in a way that is clear and accessible to members of the public, how the level of general contingency reserve has been set and the detail of activities or items to be funded from each earmarked reserve.

Minister for Policing and the Fire Service Nick Hurd said:

Police reserves are an important tool for police leaders to fund projects and manage financial risk, but we also need to ensure there is real transparency about how they, as taxpayers' money, are being used to improve the service delivered to the public.

I've asked PCCs to set out their reasons for holding funds in reserve, so that the public can have a clearer picture of how their money is being spent on policing.

The measures follow a period of engagement in 2017, in which the minister spoke to every force in the country about the demands they face, and how these can best be managed, including making best use of financial reserves.

The publication of reserves comes as the government confirms its plans to

increase police funding by up to £450 million in 2018/19. The minister has been clear that police need to improve productivity and efficiency and make effective use of financial reserves to tackle the changing nature of crime.

You can read [details of reserves held by each PCC since 2011](#).