



Devon & Cornwall Police

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Dear Commissioner

BUDGET PROPOSAL 2021/22

INTRODUCTION

I am writing to outline my budget proposal for the next four years. This follows from the Government detailed funding announcements in November and December 2020.

My proposal seeks investment in supporting policing for the people and communities of Devon, Cornwall, the Isles of Scilly and our support to collaborative working with partners.

It does so also to address the many challenges set out nationally through the requirements of the Secretary of State, the National Strategic Assessment, Peninsula Strategic Assessment, a myriad of HMICFRS and other Public Service reports alongside many other operational and strategic reports amongst which are published by the APCC/NPCC and College of Policing.

These and our collaborative partnerships, for example your role as Chair of the Local Criminal Justice Board, inform and assist in the delivery of your Police and Crime Plan, along with the Force Mission.

I am conscious of the precept impact on local taxpayers, the need to evidence robust value for money and to recognise that the government is now investing in policing; it is also calling for local investment.

The outcome of previous force value for money scrutiny, modernisation, productivity and operational delivery of local precept investments is referenced in this letter. The investment by government will take several years to reach full benefit. It does not address the systemic issue of summer policing and the long stay residing population and leaves force funding well below national average.

I recognise that you, supported by members of the Police and Crime Panel, local government colleagues and MPs, led a cross party approach to address this systemic issue with government through the special grant process. Our collective ambitions for a more equitable funding settlement that recognises the impacts of tourism and rurality remain a focus but the timing of funding formula reform will be set by the government and is realistically several years away.

I briefly summarise two investments. The first is to build greater uniformed public facing and engaged preventative capability, supported by a focus on improving contact services to the public. I am proposing to recruit 40 officers in addition to the 141 funded through the government uplift and 22 police staff in our contact centres. These will support improved contact, visibility and accessibility in market towns, coastal and rural areas, as well as investment in key city areas.

The second is in crime investigation, prevention and victim services. Others include roads safety, a greater focus in our maritime roles, improved intelligence development and information quality, supporting police technology to improve operational intelligence and meeting our national IT requirements.

The proposal is a sustainable response to the challenge set through the Police and Crime Plan and builds on the investments and achievements of recent years. I reference the most recent HMICFRS PEEL inspection report in which the inspectorate graded the force as good across the three pillars of effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy.

The proposal is essential to maintain and grow an enduring legacy of low crime, strong community resilience and improving public confidence. That includes sustaining investment in violence prevention as we enter our second year of activity, limited by Covid-19, which is a transformational approach with local partners.

This is not achieved by accident or sustained by standing still; long-term stable financial management and investment through a precept increase is pivotal to improving public facing and victim services, preventative problem-solving policing and addressing peninsula, national and global challenges.

It is vital that we invest in partnerships locally, leading the challenge of confronting serious violence on the street, domestic abuse in the home and the exploitation of children on-line, alongside many other harms. Sustainable strategic and local problem-solving approaches with local government, health providers in the sphere of mental health, alcohol and drug referral centres as well as with schools and third sector diversion schemes are integral to our way of working.

These approaches are the building blocks of a preventative approach to crime and a civil society; they are the fundamentals for safety and reassurance for local people, communities and visitors. Some Police and Crime Panel and local government discussions have focussed on this element of policing and sought further investments in local high visibility presence and partnership approaches. This proposal is the professional operational response to many, though not all, of those discussions.

We know we are likely to have some extraordinary challenges next year in addition to addressing the continued pandemic.

There is no doubt that the future beyond 2021/22 will be financially difficult; the Chancellor could not have been clearer when he warned that 'the economic emergency has only just begun'. We know we need to ensure that the 2021/22 budget provides us with the best possible starting point to withstand that. The settlement provides an opportunity to both strengthen the organisation and ensure it delivers more for the people of Devon and Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

Due to the announcement of a single year Comprehensive Spending Review we have, once again, no details of future years' funding, other than the intention for uplift to continue into 2022/23. Again, I have used reasonable future funding assumptions to present a four-year balanced and sustainable budget.

My budget proposal contains no additional funding for COVID costs other than minor changes in income levels; I am assuming that PPE continues to be provided centrally and that overtime and other costs are funded by central government. I do include some travel and related savings as a result of changes in the way we work.

I include nothing for costs for the G7 event this year. Although funding arrangements with central government are not yet finalised, I am assuming all additional costs will be met by Government. This scale and importance of this event for our communities and the force cannot be underestimated. There are risks for us as part of a national and local team to manage and lead. As importantly, it is an opportunity for long term investment in communities and for the force to evidence its world class policing credentials, some of which are detailed within this proposal.

It is welcome news that funding has been made available to ensure a second year of uplift, though funding will be dependent on recruitment targets being met. Our Strategic Alliance support services achieved our first-year targets and I am confident we will achieve those targets next year. We exceeded the current year targets despite the pandemic, and hence my proposal of a precept supported investment in officer numbers is also achievable.

The force continues its relentless focus on productivity, business improvements and ensuring value for money. Like the NHS, what the public sees and feels is only part of a wider organisation requiring revenue and capital resources dedicated to public service and without which colleagues could not deliver visible policing or combat the growing challenges of crime in a digital age.

This proposal seeks the precept investments necessary to deliver not only what the public need but also what many want, to make them safer but also feel safer.

CURRENT POSITION

As outlined last year, Devon and Cornwall Police remain underfunded within policing as a whole. Disappointingly, we also know that we will not see the funding formula revised next year to take account of our disproportionate summer visitor numbers.

Our funding remains £40m below the average for forces. The force has made ongoing savings of £14m since your first budget in 2017/8 and there are further savings of £1.9m in the current year's budget proposal. This is set against a background of reduced Home Office grant. Core grant has fallen by £51m in real terms since 2010.

Nevertheless it is clear that the overall funding settlement provides a real opportunity to deliver improved services to the public in addition to the uplift, and I will outline how I intend to deliver that later in this letter.

Performance

Your public survey showed that 94% of respondents wanted investment in crime prevention, 88% in visible policing and 86% in community based crime prevention.

We will be investing in these areas as the uplift officers become fully operational and the operating model invests over 85 of them into local policing. Subject to precept increase, we will be investing even further with a further 40 additional officers into visible local policing.

I recognise and value the support of local taxpayers over the years and some, but far from all, of the return on that investment includes at the time of writing;

- The second lowest rate of crime for England and Wales¹
- The lowest rate of burglary offences nationally²
- The second lowest rate of victim based crime
- The third lowest rate of violence without injury
- The fifth lowest crime rate for violence against the person
- Thefts and Robbery falling faster than the national average³
- Total recorded crime decreasing at almost twice the national rate⁴

As the Peelian policing principles make clear, the measure of efficiency in policing is the absence of crime and disorder. Crime prevention is, your survey indicates, the priority for the community too. There is always more to be done, but the force's achievement this year should I hope be recognised as an indicator of future delivery.

LAST YEAR'S BUDGET PROPOSAL – Headline achievements and delivery

This time last year I outlined what the force would deliver with the budget proposal:

- *Ensure we recruited sufficient officers to meet the uplift plus a further 50.* We have succeeded, despite the pandemic, and have combined new recruits with experienced officers transferred from elsewhere. We have actively engaged with Police Now to target much needed detective resources and this has also had positive diversity outcomes.
- *Invest in a Serious Violence Prevention Programme.* The Programme is well underway with a Programme Director recruited. Investments have been made such as the Turning Corners programme in Devon and activity-based education in Cornwall.

¹ 54.0 crimes per 1000 resident population, compared to 84.7 across England and Wales

² 2.8 c/w 10.2 per 1,000 households

³ Down 23% and 13% respectively

⁴ 9.5% compared to a 4.9% decrease nationally

- *Achieve our planned savings.* Overall current budget monitoring shows expenditure extremely close to budget and under control. The cost challenge savings overachieved with £900k saved against a target of £600k. Planned savings in PCSO numbers through natural turnover did not occur and we worked with PCSOs, managers and Trades Unions to address this. We are expecting to be within 20 of the operating model by the end of the year.
- *Maximise opportunities to further invest in local policing.* I will be writing separately with details of the operating model and the allocation of uplift and other officer growth posts. This will demonstrate our commitment to local policing.
- *That we take opportunities to lead nationally in respect of our coastline/seas.* As you are aware the T/DCC Nye was appointed as the first NPCC Maritime lead. His leadership, diplomacy and operational acumen ensured Devon and Cornwall Police played a key part in preparations for EU Exit, ensuring our borders were protected and that arrangements were in place to protect our fishing industry. He is taking forward a significant national bid is being progressed to provide a full time marine capability and the finance required to staff a full time marine unit, including the necessary training and equipment.

Continued investments

Successful innovations from previous years remain in the budget. These include £400k of funding to meet the summer policing surge, the £1m Serious Violence Prevention Programme and funding to develop improved public contact through the police estate.

The pandemic has of course produced challenges for everyone. I am proud that Devon and Cornwall Police has not only continued to deliver services effectively, but has done so whilst balancing public safety and public cooperation. The investment that you have supported in technology – laptops, Microsoft 365, network capacity, body worn video – made that possible. Spending on technology can seem removed from front line policing but the pandemic has shown how vital it is to public service. My budget proposal contains continued investment in these areas.

Although there is no financial impact as such on next year's precept, because the investments have already been funded, the force is undertaking a significant review of its operating model and allocation of uplift and precept funded additional officers. This equates to the biggest cost we have, the workforce, being reviewed and realigned to improve effectiveness and efficiency as part of our business cycle, to deliver the Police and Crime Plan and responding to public and partnership feedback.

This work has not quite been finalised and there will be a further briefing to you in the coming weeks in respect of our draft new operating model. Local policing will receive over 85 of the uplift officers by the end of next year. In this paper it is assumed that the officer costs are met through this allocation; police staff and equipment costs are included in the budget proposal details below.

I am planning a significant increase from the uplift to support a step change in Roads Policing and Road Safety through enforcement, driver education and improved collision investigation. It is clear that road safety and enforcement featured highly within your public survey. This investment, in terms of technology, is a key element of our overall

approach to prevention of roads collision, the investigation of road collisions and is integral in bringing offenders to justice.

In short, the budget set last year has been delivered, exceeding its planned outcomes. It has been sustainable, and as a result the force have been able to achieve outstanding crime prevention outcomes; these need further investment.

BUDGET PROPOSAL

The 2021/22 budget settlement from the government again assumes an increase in council tax. You will be aware of the awaited announcement of national policing outcomes from government.

It refers specifically to an overall increase in funding for police of £703m, which assumes all PCCs increase their council tax by £15, through local determination. The Government and Home Office clearly not only wish but also anticipate the police to be financially supported and precept maximised where necessary and justified.

As the NPCC lead for Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking, Organised Immigration Crime and senior portfolio holder for NPCC Performance I am cognisant of the national and international threats to our force from Serious and Organised Crime and Terrorism. Some of this is seen and felt by local communities and businesses, such as so-called County Lines criminality, on-line grooming and fraud. Local funding as well as national funding, is key to preventing those crimes.

As in previous years our respective 151 officers have worked together developing the budget proposal. My Director of Finance confirms that in her opinion the budget as calculated is robust and sustainable. A full implementation of my proposal would mean on average 29p extra per Band D household per week.

1. Contact – Improved customer service in Contact centres	
Increase in contact officers by two teams, 20 staff and 2 supervisors	
Cost	£626,000
Annual council tax impact (Band D):	£1.02

Performance in the contact centre as calls for service volumes grow, continues to be a challenge. Two thirds of respondents in your survey wanted to see investment in this area and over a third of people contacting us were dissatisfied.

We have seen the first draft of the scrutiny commissioned into the contact centre. It is clear that there was no significant issue raised as to the quality of staff or the response the contact centre gives; it is the length of time taken to answer the call and how the public are updated that is impacting on public satisfaction.

Whilst we await full analysis of the recommendations of the deep dive, there is no doubt that more staff, at key times, will improve non-urgent call waiting times. I am not able to calculate in detail what impact that would have on answering times, not least as there are process and IT advances that we are also progressing, as well as encouraging the public to move on-line. Even if agreed, this proposal will see some delay whilst we recruit, vet and train staff for a highly demanding professional role.

My proposal is to increase the numbers of contact centre staff permanently by 22. These would consist of two teams that would be targeted on peak times (rather than undertaking fully rotating duties) in order to maximise their effectiveness. Technology allows an increase at this scale, but we are also exploring whether we can remotely locate contact centre staff across our geography.

Outcomes

Positive impact on waiting times at high volume call times.

Improved public service.

2. Police Technology – Drones and improved public safety	
Equipment costs to enable a new 6 officer team to significantly advance drone provision	
Cost (one off)	£300,000
Annual council tax impact (Band D):	£0.49

As has been demonstrated many times, drones have provided key front line services, from search to surveillance. They are an easily deployable, flexible resource and it is increasingly likely that police will soon be able to fly drones Beyond the Visible Line of Sight, a national discussion with the force at the heart of those discussions. At the same time that drones are in the ascendancy, the National Police Air Service (NPAS) is struggling to provide an affordable and sustainable effective helicopter service.

Like Body Worn Video, drone technology allows us to not only keep the public and frontline staff safe, but also show our successes to the public through the media. Your public consultation shows strong support (79%) for increased investment in police technology.

The proposal is for an initial allocation of 6 officers (funded through the uplift) as warranted powers are required in these front line emergency response and patrol roles. These will be four operational advanced drone pilots to develop Force-wide capability 7 days a week. The other 2 posts are drone trainers, which is the first step towards increasing the number of officers trained in drone use within BCUs.

The additional funding is however only required for the equipment to enable that team and the wider roll out over the next few years. There may be further capital investments sought in the future.

Outcomes

More responsive search facility, for missing people, property, and vehicles. Enhanced live time information gathering for public order events and better evidence gathering. This is a highly effective and visible use of new police technology and will immediately enhance policing in Devon and Cornwall and form a platform to build on if continued membership of NPAS becomes unaffordable. Data on the use of the drones will form part of the performance framework.

3. Crime Investigation – improved outcomes for victims, offenders brought to justice and timeliness	
Fund on an ongoing basis 29 police staff investigators temporarily funded this year in a structure piloted through the summer policing initiatives	
Increase in the communications investigation team of 3 to meet increase in volume	
Fund permanently a successful pilot of a 7 person suspect management team	
1 member of staff to deliver 3D mapping	
Cost	£1,152,000
Annual council tax impact (Band D):	£1.88

Policing has many purposes; one of the most fundamental is the prevention and detection of crime. The new national policing outcomes add further weight to your own police and crime plan, making clear that there must be an enduring focus on raising the standard of criminal investigations, support to victims, criminal justice outcomes and the overall prevention of crime. In this latter respect our intelligence systems identifying opportunities to interdict but also focus on repeat victims and repeat offenders.

You are aware that we have a skills shortage in PIP level 2 trained officers. We have been filling that gap with agency police staff for some time using one off funding and taken great steps to fill the gap in detectives by direct recruitment of detective transferees and through the use of Police Now; we will continue to require this additional support for the next two years as we fill the gap through police recruitment and training.

This year, with help from your summer policing fund, we also trialled an ‘Investigation Support Group’.

This proposal brings together both strands to create a full year ISG. The ISG is proactive in addressing PIP2 crime especially relating to violence, child protection and sexual offences, filling the gap between local and major investigation. The size of the unit can be entirely scalable. It will be reviewed annually and reduced as direct recruitment and training fill the PIP2 gap for Police Officers or Police Staff.

Communications Data Investigators provide 24/7 support for the force and out of office coverage for other forces in the Region. Their prime role is to liaise with mobile service providers and to gain access to investigative data. They are particularly focussed on work associated with serious and organised and high harm incidents. Demand has increased by 64% over the last four years, whilst staff numbers have remained static. The budget proposes an increase of five employees over three years. This will help ease delays in providing evidence to investigating officers and prioritising safeguarding and operational risks.

As Chair of the LCJB, you will be aware that a team of 7 staff was temporarily funded this year through carry forwards in order to deal with the issues caused by the Released Under Investigation (RUI) process. This process, introduced by the Home Office to reduce the use of police bail, ironically resulted in further delays, suspects subject to longer uncertainty and victims similarly impacted.

Since the team has been in place, the length of time that suspects are subject to RUI has reduced and criminal justice outcomes improved. File quality has improved, and custody records reduced by 25%. The proposal is to make the team permanent and rename it the 'Suspect Management Team'. The numbers in this team will be reviewed at this time next year. A national revision of RUI and Police Bail may be implemented, and we will better understand whether the new crime system 'Niche' will impact on requirements as any return to the use of bail may require a change.

Funding of £70k is proposed to fully integrate 3D mapping across the force. It would allow our officers, partners and the public to view 3D information from a computer, tablet, phone or smart watch. Our work has been praised by Criminal Justice partners as leading edge in the presentation of complex and sometimes harrowing information in the courts, with real benefit to victims and witnesses.

This bid is for devices and includes licence costs plus 1 grade 6 FTE. This will allow operational teams, such as major crime and sexual offence/domestic abuse investigation teams to be briefed using 3D crime scenes, improving the investigative process.

Witnesses and victims will also be able to use the 3D technology for walkthroughs and in interviews. Scene representations for court as well as the control room will be developed using 21st century technology, innovatively and compassionately.

Outcomes

The investment in investigation will resolve crimes more quickly. The ISG will impact positively on violent and sexual crime offenders and victims; violent crime is low in Devon and Cornwall but appears disproportionately in our reading of crime levels because of other low crime types which are larger elsewhere.

Investment in 3D technology will improve investigations and services to witnesses and criminal justice partners.

Improvements in communications investigation directly impacts on the proactive pursuit of serious and organised crime and safeguarding the vulnerable.

Your public survey showed high support for disrupting drug supply. An integral element of addressing County Lines and recovering missing vulnerable young people is telephony and communications investigation.

4. Public Confidence (Professional Standards)	
8 police staff to manage additional workloads as a result of legislative changes and underlying volume pressures. Customer service training for police officers	
Cost	£300,000
Annual council tax impact (Band D):	£0.52

Our professional standards are key to public confidence and the department overseeing enforcement of those standards needs investment. This proposal will see improved responsiveness to the public when there has been a service failure, lessening frustrations and speeding up investigations. The importance of integrity demands that we resource

this department to ensure that those few officers and staff who undermine public confidence through wilful or deliberately negligent actions are accountable.

In part, this proposal is as a result of the Conduct and Complaint Regulations 2020 which have led to significant increases in work to enhance public confidence and legal oversight of police complaints arrangements. Discussions with the Independent Office of Police Complaints indicate that the composition of the Strategic Alliance team is bordering on being unable to maximise its preventative role and disseminate organisational learning from incidents.

I am planning to increase establishment of PSD by a Chief Inspector, a DS, three Investigating Officers and an analyst. The officer posts will be included in the Operating Model; the police staff posts are included in the cost above. Customer service training for officers will also be developed.

Four police staff are required to create a Complaints Handling Team, following a recent pilot and business review. This is supported by BCU commanders whose teams would otherwise have to deal with the additional work and will now have increase front line productivity. Current resourcing levels are having underlying difficulties in meeting the volume of demand in the professional standards department.

Outcomes

Improved timeliness for the public. Improved quality and speed of investigations benefitting the public and staff, including reducing times of restrictions of duty or expeditious progress to a hearing.

There will be an increase in prevention, early intervention, individual learning and organisational learning. The result will be improved public confidence and welfare.

5. Police Technology – improved criminal justice outcomes and information integrity through intelligence investment	
Mitigation of significant risk by enhancing data reliability, accuracy and security. Twenty staff to undertake the work, 5 project team members and associated technical and consultancy costs	
Cost	£850,000
Annual council tax impact (Band D):	£1.39

All 21st century organisations, in the digital age, must embrace the challenges and opportunities of automation and robotics; not investing in the future in this way is not legally or reputationally an option nor does it serve the public.

For policing, the integrity and accessibility of its operational information is pivotal to keeping the public and the most vulnerable safe. Information quality and its dissemination, with and from partners, is critical. When this fails it can do so with tragic consequences often detailed through independent reviews and high-profile cases nationally and locally. This issue has been highlighted, tracked and managed within the Corporate Risk Register; this investment is a key mitigation to the potential adverse impact on victims and bringing offenders to justice and fulfilling our lead role in the wider Criminal Justice sector.

Your survey shows that 94% of the public support crime prevention and 79% support investment in police technology to support that. We have also seen this week public concern at high profile information issues for policing, and newspaper reports of 'creaking' police databases and the serious risk it poses.

Crime and crime incident databases are an integral element of the force intelligence and information architecture. Force tasking and policing operations are based on information that needs to be accurate, secure, timely and accessible to force analysts, our statutory partners and frontline staff in order to keep communities safe.

The force still holds information on core operational systems over several decades, input by many hundreds of individuals. Our current system alone contains over 25,000,000 records and ensuring the quality of that is a key risk for the force. Because we are transferring to a new system, we have now the opportunity to invest for the future and ensure this vital information is fit for purpose. We must address this now as we migrate to new systems; preparing for the advantages automation will bring with better information/intelligence accuracy and information compliance.

A full business case has been supported through PRISM balancing risk management and affordability to progress the minimum viable option. The funding is currently anticipated to be for two years.

The project will also identify those individuals and teams where training and awareness and working with department heads will do the most to improve the quality of information and reduce duplication. The project is also delivering a communications campaign (#Get it Right) to raise awareness of good information. This is especially important at a time where we are uplifting our workforce and coupled with the normal turnover of officers will mean we have so many new operational staff. It is possible that there will be some ongoing requirement for further information quality control beyond; this will be assessed through the project.

Outcomes

The need for good policing information to drive crime prevention and public safety is clear. As the Policing Minister said in the written statement accompanying the police settlement, "Policing needs to ensure that high quality data is collected and utilised effectively to support local delivery, identify efficiencies and support the drive to deliver the best possible policing outcomes for the public." Good information is fundamental to improving proactive and reactive policing, including prevention, and thereby delivers greater safety.

This essential investment enables the force to maximise opportunities to bring offenders to justice, prevent crime and safeguard victims, many of whom are the most vulnerable in society.

In a 21st century digital age information and intelligence will be more readily accessible and accurate and thereby drive policing interventions, maximise opportunities to keep our communities safe and enable us to share timely and accurate information with policing and statutory partners.

6. Co funded community officers – Prevention, crime reduction and public confidence	
Increase non police uniformed visibility, through continued exploration for co funded community officers with a particular focus on marine and coastal	
Cost	£150,000
Annual council tax impact (Band D):	£0.24

Previous collaborations have focused on traditional ‘Blue Light partners’ (Fire & Rescue and Ambulance). The 2019/20 Blue Light allocation of £300,000 is fully committed and final proposals, overseen by the Blue Light Collaboration Board, will fully allocate this year’s funding. This proposal is for further investment in this area.

The force perceives that existing blue light collaborations are more likely to be sustained rather than grown. However, other exciting innovations are being scoped and may be achievable such as maritime collaborations with Harbour Masters and some maritime and coastal agencies. Investment is proposed to expand operational and visible coastal/maritime collaborations. The proposal also includes a small amount of funding to support the national maritime bid referred to earlier, and for some coastal community awareness initiatives, an area where many coastal and seafaring communities feel the force does not invest in them.

I propose an investment, smaller than previous year’s Bluelight allocations, to provide flexibility to progress joint initiatives as they are developed.

Outcome

Increase uniformed presence and crime reduction in coastal and maritime settings through innovation.

7. Special constabulary – Prevention, crime reduction and public confidence	
Increase non police uniformed visibility through the new ability to remunerate specials	
Cost	£80,000
Annual council tax impact (Band D):	£0.13

The force has explored with your support and for the first time in policing, the payment of Special Constables (SC) for agreeing a set number of hours of high visibility patrols as part of our Covid 19 response. Those officers/volunteers do so of their own volition.

If proven and scalable, subject to legislative change, the potential for this initiative should not be underestimated. Whilst a paid auxiliary is not unusual in other parts of public service it’s potential for this force, particularly in regard to summer policing and surge capacity during civil emergency, could truly benefit our communities.

The pilot is not without controversy and there is no pre-determined outcome from the pilot which will be assessed in the coming weeks. Even should the pilot prove to be beneficial there will need to be further discussion with local SC colleagues, NPCC, local Trades Unions, Staff Associations and the Home Office as to the concept.

Outcomes

Increase uniformed capability at core times of public need, providing reassurance for the public and resilience alongside other frontline colleagues.

Enhanced enforcement and prevention capability within high harm communities.

Potential to improve upon our summer policing offer to our communities and visitors in a manner not previously envisaged.

8. 40 Additional officers – crime fighting, prevention, visibility and public contact	
Additional 40 recruits/transferees in addition to the uplift, for allocation to local and neighbourhood policing	
Cost	£551,000
Annual council tax impact (Band D):	£0.90

The government's 2021/22 investment enabling an uplift of 141 officers, is welcome. I understand why the government scaled back the overall in year national target to 6,000 given the challenges in achieving the planned total of 8,000, although we have no concerns that we could have met our full total locally.

I continue to respect and learn from our history; I must also look forwards and plan for the coming decades.

Some of the government funded uplift has and will be allocated to policing roles that are not necessarily visible to the public or geographically dedicated. Some will be tasked combatting the unprecedented offending occurring on-line and investigating Serious and Organised Crime. Cyber crime and cyber enabled crime, even with our best endeavours, is likely to grow steadily; areas such as Specialist Operations and Counter Terrorism, must be enhanced. I referred earlier to growth in Roads Policing, but we must also increase our uniformed patrol and response functions.

The force has a true heritage in respect of neighbourhood policing and prevention which has of course been impacted by austerity and the need to respond to new crime types and demand. In your tenure, the precept increase has enabled us to restore some dedicated Neighbourhood Beat Managers and Neighbourhood Team Leaders.

Whilst some of the national uplift will also be allocated to dedicated Neighbourhood Policing, the public and members of the Police and Crime Panel wish us to do more; notably it is the strongest response within your public survey. My own leaders and staff see the value of such investment.

I propose that an additional minimum of 40 officers are recruited in 2021/22.

Those 40 officers, supported by the uplift and other precept growth, will provide enhanced capability for dedicated Neighbourhood Policing. They will focus on prevention, problem solving, enhancing visibility and improving public confidence.

In addition, they will support a programme to open some police stations to the public on notified days and locally published times for neighbourhood and local policing 'surgeries'. This is of course dependent the buildings being fit for purpose within the OPCC Estates Strategy.

It is important that we take account off the needs of diverse communities and the views of partners. The current lockdown restrictions mean we have time to develop the proposals, ensuring they meet local needs, while we undertake recruitment.

I stress that these 'surgeries' are not Police Front Desks nor implemented to fulfil that purpose. Those will be maintained across the existing estate for the foreseeable future and remain staffed by police staff colleagues.

My intention is for the 40 officers to be additional to the uplift numbers. It is possible that the rules or funding for uplift change next year; in which case we could revisit whether they were sustainable, however in such a worse case, we would still have increased visibility by bringing forward recruitment.

Outcomes

Improved confidence in local policing with enhanced warranted officer numbers geographically based within rural, coastal and market town communities and in higher violence communities.

Improved early interventions, diversion, problem solving and community contact. The potential to support improving demand management in our call centres through local 'surgeries' accessible to the public.

Delivering on your public survey, which highlighted the overwhelming support for visible policing and community based crime prevention.

CONCLUSION

The funding settlement announced in December 2020 provides an opportunity for PCCs and the public to invest in policing in their communities. To look to the future but also to restore some of what was lost in austerity.

Your survey received strong and positive public feedback as to areas for investment, alongside the draft report following scrutiny of the force contact centres. This budget proposal aligns overwhelmingly with those responses and insight.

The force has a strong track record on delivering in its strategic and operational intent, even in the current pandemic. We are seeing the allocation of uplift and precept funded officers and further uplift growth next year.

This budget proposal addresses key public and force priorities:

Investigating crime. A range of investments in the Investigative Support Group, the Communications Data Investigators and the Suspect Management Team. These will resolve crimes more quickly, maintain support to the pursuit and investigation of serious and violent crime and to the disruption of drug supplies. More offenders will be brought to justice, crimes resolved more speedily, and victims better supported.

Police technology such as drones and 3D mapping will enhance safeguarding, improve investigation and facilitate the prosecution of crime. Underpinning the investigation of crime and many of the other investments, information quality is integral to 'deliver the best possible policing outcomes for the public'.

Improving Public/Customer and Victim Services. The proposal includes a significant investment in contact centre staff in order to impact positively on call waiting times in line with the recommendations from the PCC's 101 Scrutiny Review from December 2020. The 40 additional officer recruitment will specifically enable development of local place-based contact between the public and police.

Neighbourhood policing and prevention. The budget proposal would lead to an increase in 40 dedicated Neighbourhood Beat Managers. The budget proposal also seeks investment in local policing, maritime and coastal policing and collaborations to enhance operational resilience, visibility and public reassurance.

This budget proposal is a net investment in policing our communities and our visitors, providing greater safety and security in what many suggest may be a volatile few year to come. It builds on a legacy of crime reduction, innovation and intelligence led problem solving policing. It is an investment in Neighbourhood Policing, Prevention and Partnerships which is not only our precious ancestry but also our future; even in a digital age.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shaun Sawyer', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Shaun Sawyer QPM
Chief Constable

Appendix

Table A – People Numbers

2020/21 (FTE)		2021/22 (FTE)	2022/23 (FTE)	2023/24 (FTE)	2024/25 (FTE)
<u>Police Officers</u>					
3,097	Opening Balance at 1st April	3,241	3,422	3,610	3,610
50	Precept funded change	40	0	0	0
94	Uplift numbers	141*	188	0	0
3,241	Closing Balance at 31st March	3,422	3,610	3,610	3,610
* Includes 6 FTE allocated to ROCU.					
<u>Police Staff (Force)</u>					
2,100	Opening Balance at 1st April	2,127			
27	Investment/Uplift	90			
2,127	Closing Balance at 31st March	2,217	2,208	2,178	2,178
<u>Police Community Support</u>					
169	PCSO	150*	150	150	150
37	Blue Light	** 43	43	43	43
206	Total	193	193	193	193

* estimated year end numbers

** Bluelight posts are posts provided in partnership with other blue light organisations. FTE number currently estimated, actuals to be finalised.