



Devon & Cornwall
POLICE

Chief Constable Shaun Sawyer QPM

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📞 101 Non-urgent

📞 999 in an emergency

🌐 www.devon-cornwall.police.uk

✉️ 101@dc.police.uk

📘 [DevonAndCornwallPolice](https://www.facebook.com/DevonAndCornwallPolice)

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📺 [dc_police.999](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCdc_police.999)

📺 [DCPolice](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDCPolice)

PCC Alison Hernandez
The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for
Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly
Alderson Drive
Exeter
EX2 7RP

20 January 2022

CC/SG/SDB

BUDGET PROPOSAL 2022/2023

Introduction

I am writing to outline my operational budget requirement for the next four years having regard to the Police and Crime Plan. This follows the Government funding announcements in December 2021, which included details of the final year of funding for the police officer uplift.

This time last year you supported my proposals, which included additional investment in policing for the people and communities of Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. That support has given us additional resources to investigate crime, modernise police technology, and provide 40 extra neighbourhood beat managers. This gives us a strong base on which to deliver policing over the next three years.

This year the Government has announced an outline three year settlement, with detailed figures for 2022/2023 and strong indicative figures for the two years thereafter. A three year council tax referendum increase of £10 annually was also announced as part of the available funding. Government grant and precept increase combined will be needed to achieve next years' uplift target. Due to previous uplifts and the additional 216 officers funded through the council tax since 2017, this will give us our highest ever number of officers; and maintain that over at least the following two years. Whilst acknowledging that any increase in council tax is a difficult choice, I believe that a £10 increase per annum will give a budget that allows the force to sustain its strong position and build in officer numbers and capability over the next three years. This proposal is dependent on the maximum increase in council tax announced as part of the funding settlement.

This year Devon and Cornwall has met some significant policing challenges. The force has enforced public health related restrictions whilst also dealing with one of the largest number of summer visitors to Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly ever. The force also supported the country in hosting the G7 global summit whilst facilitating lawful demonstration, enabling people to go about their business despite the presence of a significant international event. Public confidence was at the heart of the operation and the force demonstrated world class policing skills on a global stage.

I am proud of our joint approach to Serious Violence Prevention and building the evidence base in advance of the enactment of the Serious Violence Duty with our partners. The operational response to combatting County Lines has seen significant success. It must though, be recognised that serious violence in the home and enduring concerns in respect of domestic violence is not a challenge which can be resolved within society overnight but can be addressed operationally. Whilst we live in a comparatively low crime area, violence is disproportionately represented as a segment of our total crime.

The response of the force operationally and the commitment of our partnership and communities has been tested several times. High profile homicide within communities, particularly relating to violence against women but also the awful events in Keyham have been met with professionalism and commitment. The strength of affected families and communities will last far longer than the operational response and the support you have provided through Victim Services, alongside local government partners, has been invaluable.

This in turn, has been set in the context of high-profile national incidents which have affected confidence in police legitimacy and trust. This budget approach builds on previous investments in leadership, training, standards and anti-corruption. It also enables the operational delivery of key strategies relating to safety on our streets, in homes and online, with a particular focus upon violence against women and girls, drug related violence, knife crime and hate crime.

Integrity is non-negotiable in this force and those who actively seek to harm the public, who they are sworn to serve and protect, will be rooted out of this organisation. It is notable that in several cases where an individual has failed to meet our standards, it is their colleagues who have reported their behaviour.

Police Officers

The comprehensive spending review puts increasing police officer numbers at its centre. The combination of an average council tax increase of £10 and the uplift grant will fund 188 further officers in 2022/2023. This is of course extremely welcome operationally. By the end of the year, police officer numbers will have increased by nearly 700 since 2017/2018 – nearly a third through precept funded growth outside of the uplift, and the remainder co funded by council tax and grant.

Meeting this target is achievable. Whilst recruiting next years' 188 will involve hard work, we have exceeded our uplift recruitment target each year to date despite the practical difficulties caused by the pandemic. As you are aware, we are notably successful at attracting high numbers of transferees. No doubt this is testament to our reputation as a

force and employer. The hugely successful mutual aid deployments during G7 seem to have left a lasting legacy with our policing partners.

Of course the new officers will not immediately impact performance – those who are not transferees will have significant training periods of both academic and practical training to complete. Nevertheless in 2022 we will increasingly see the effect of the previous recruitments as the new officers are posted to operational duties. As part of the context for the next three years, since uplift began in 2019/2020 we have created, amongst others, the following front line posts:

- A total of 67 extra neighbourhood beat managers: an increase of more than 50%
- 18 extra detectives working on neighbourhood crime
- Additional skilled teams in roads policing (19), specialist dog support, and drone search ability
- 74 additional local patrol officers

These officers are allocated relatively evenly throughout the force area.

Because of the delay in new officers becoming deployable, there are more than 100 posts still to be allocated in the current year which is in addition to the 188 extra officers next year. These officers will allow the force to further develop its operating model and deploy resources in line with its mission and your police and crime plan. It is key that as well as meeting operational demand, the deployment of officers ensures the public is safeguarded, connected and confident.

Visibility

As already mentioned, investments in recent years have enabled us to enhance our local policing and neighbourhood offer. Increasing police numbers last year and this year will be predominantly invested in local policing. Whilst visibility is highly important for public reassurance and confidence, we have also made essential investments in our detective capability, as one of the key indicators of confidence for victims and communities is to be assured that best endeavours have been undertaken to bring offenders to justice.

The force, in partnership with your office, has developed metrics for performance. These will be monitored as part of the force performance profile with oversight and scrutiny through the Police and Crime Plan mechanisms and accountability through existing governance structures.

The force is already, and will continue to, utilise academic best practice, as well as traditional policing skills, to enhance its visibility. It must be noted that visibility also relates to other agencies and investments by Bluelight partners and your investment in tri-service officers with Cornwall Council assists greatly, especially in rural communities. Alongside visibility we are also seeking to invest in accessibility through online services and the opening of some police stations for public access.

PCSO colleagues and other police staff colleagues, such as those in our control room, play an integral part in respect of visibility, accessibility and public confidence. They too will be tasked in respect of these metrics where relevant. Additionally, we believe there

are digital mechanisms through which we can innovate to improve accessibility and visibility online.

I must add one caveat. Visibility in our urban areas is greater than any other part of the force area and yet, we hear from those areas too that there is insufficient visibility. It is important that using these metrics, the force is able to provide accessible information to the public and partners. People tend to see visibility through their own community lens, but I must also see it through the force lens.

Not all police officers are in uniform and, as mentioned, many officers are engaged within CID, public protection, proactive operations and other essential frontline roles. Even were all the officers and PCSOs in the force to be on duty at the same time, there would be less than 1 officer per square mile. Nevertheless, we will focus on this area of policing, realising its importance to both the realities and perceptions of crime within communities.

Police Staff

Depending on their role, police staff work across a wide range of professional disciplines and not only support operational policing, enable it and deliver services to the public too. Your investment last year in staff support to the growing organisation will continue to bear fruit in the three years of this budget proposal.

One key area where staff make up the majority off the workforce is call handling. Most if not all forces are, like us, struggling with meeting demand, including at times 999 calls, within acceptable times. Once calls are answered, the force's response is good and deployments of officers to scenes are keeping apace. Nevertheless the delays in answering calls are no doubt effecting public confidence. To mitigate this issue, within the overall budget proposal are some staff and officer resources as far as the budget envelope allows. The investment is made following an independent assessment of the levels of investment required. A significant recruitment programme to achieve the levels of trained staff required will commence immediately and be supported by an additional investment of police officers into this area of work. There will be particular focus on 999 calls and an earlier triage point by people to ensure 101 calls are better prioritised. This is intended to increase the confidence of the public that policing will be able to respond when needed and support the 999 call monitoring the Home Office will be requiring in the near future.

The force has also successfully trialled vulnerability lawyers who obtain a wide range of orders to protect the public and prevent harm, including domestic violence and stalking protection orders amongst others. Their work in particular focusses on preventing violence against women and girls and my overall proposal allows for an expansion of that service. A lack of public confidence in the ability of the criminal justice service to protect in these scenarios is very clear.

The public need to be confident that we treat information about them properly and in accordance with the law. Increased demand has meant the force has struggled to meet public requests for details of data held about them by the force. Transparency is fundamental to public confidence and the budget proposal includes additional support to that function.

Overall Three Year Financial Plan

We know we will need to use a range of resources over the next three years to meet changing demand and requirements from the public and the police. I wanted to look beyond the headline increase of uplift officers but also look overall at the resources available to us over the next three years.

- I have already detailed the additional officers funded through precept and uplift grant to date, with around 300 still to be allocated. Work on the operating model will be enhanced next year and it will need to remain flexible to deal with our current unpredictable demands and challenges – including potential requirements from the Home Office Strategic Policing requirement. The Home Office has indicated that local forces, as part of the conditions of the uplift funding, will be expected to provide specialist resources for national tasking beyond normal mutual aid requirement.
- We have a strong team engaged in recruiting, training and providing support and wellness facilities to those officers. Because the increase in officers is combined with historically high turnover, over a third of my officers will have less than three years' service at the end of next year and the organisation needs to adjust for that. We will also be looking at supervision levels as part of the ongoing operating model work.
- You have already financially supported enabling services including finance, HR and professional standards. We will continue to develop these areas, knowing their indirect impact on public confidence if not delivered correctly.
- We have invested heavily in technology over the last few years, transforming the service and increasing our transparency to the public. We have personal issue body worn video, mobile data devices and, increasingly, laptops. We have fully embedded Microsoft 365 (as confirmed by Police Digital Service). This will give us ongoing and developing business systems; costs are significant but, as the pandemic showed, it is not possible to deliver a world class service without effective business communications.
- We will also be rolling out national ICT programmes, including the single online home which will allow everyone greater access to police services and local policing contact details.
- Next year will see the delivery of the new operational system Niche. This will open the door to significant improvements in core crime and intelligence recording processes. It will also give a step change in operational systems being available on mobile devices, increasing visibility of our front line officers.
- Existing investments in new information systems will form the bed rock of improved business processes. Fleet tracking system data for example will be made available to commanders, allowing better oversight of vehicle visibility and deployment.

- There is already much activity going on within our environmental and sustainability including the development of a regional environmental procurement strategy. Most importantly this will develop our commitment to the UN sustainability goals; it will also put us in good stead to meet future environmental reporting requirements.
- Roads policing remains a priority; additional officers have been allocated and I look forward to the reduction in harm that will be instigated by the Vision Zero programme you are leading to massively invigorate road safety partnership work across the force area.
- Robotic Process Automation is a step change in business process efficiency and a few forces have successfully trailed its implementation, saving money, improving data quality and releasing staff for other functions. We are about to embark on the same journey, and this will be an important driver of efficiency gains over the next three year.
- The budget proposal also includes additional contributions to south west regional functions – including the regional organised crime and forensic units. It is clear over the next few years operational activity will be increasingly co-ordinated across the area, working across five forces and the regional specialist organisations. An example is the operation Scorpion approach to drug dealing and anti-social drug activity being developed across the region.

I believe the proposed base budget puts us in a good position to meet the challenges of the next three years.

Budget Detail

I also want to take this opportunity to assure you on the robustness of the budget proposal I am making. As is usual, the preparation has been undertaken with full liaison between our respective 151 officers and with full regards to funding announcements.

My budget proposal for 2022/2023 is detailed in the Medium Term Financial Strategy document produced to accompany this letter. Key cost drivers (other than uplift) are as usual pay change costs including increments; the end of the pay cap on police and staff salaries have been reflected in the estimates. The national increase in employers' national insurance of 1.25% (£2.4m) has also been budgeted for.

The three year funding envelope announced in December provides for all the funding of the last year of uplift in the 2022/23 financial year. In reality, costs will be spent over a longer period. Our respective finance officers have worked together to ensure the budget is structured to reflect this without creating financial cliff edges. This protects us from significant cuts in service in future years. Details are included in the Medium Term Plan; the mechanism assumes some support from one off funding from the 2021/2022 financial year.

As well as increased pay costs, the budget includes some significant inflationary costs. Even when a reduction in fossil fuel usage as a result of changes in ways of working is taken into account, gas, electricity and fuel costs have increased by extraordinary

amounts. Increases in third party costs are also significant. Forensics supplier and custody healthcare provider contracts, which have been vulnerable to contract failures from difficulties in retaining staff, are currently being renewed. It is anticipated that costs will rise significantly to maintain these vital services.

Robustness also means having sustainable financial structures in place. The proposal includes additional revenue funding for ICT and related short-term assets, and for the cessation of capital grant.

Whilst certainty around funding has improved, other budget uncertainties do remain. The Home Office has been clear it will review the police funding formula within the life of this parliament which could lead to changes in the allocation between forces. No assumptions about the formula review have been included in my proposal; whilst a review of the funding formula could benefit Devon and Cornwall and we are both working to ensure that is the case, we know from the past that cannot be guaranteed.

Cost risks also remain – the most significant one being the pay award where a 1% additional award would cause a £4m unfunded cost in following years. We have made appropriate estimates for pay and undertaken scenario modelling on this key variable. Pay awards in excess of estimates may mean revisiting savings plans.

The uplift grant means that officer numbers have to be maintained during the three year settlement. This focusses any savings needed to meet shortfalls predominantly to police staff costs. In practice, this may mean putting police officers into roles currently filled by police staff.

My budget proposal makes sensible assumptions around future costs and financing, adjusts for the front loading of grant, makes full allowance for uplift numbers and adjusts for full year effect of previous years' investment and removes one off funding requirements for that year.

Conclusion

Your ambitious Police and Crime Plan, based upon local engagement and consultation, sets a challenge for the force and partners to deliver local needs and national requirements. It builds upon previous investments and delivery by the force on previous expectations. It would be wrong to suggest that I have always achieved that expectation and one of the key areas of demand seen here, as in other forces, is the accessibility of policing services and the effect within the criminal justice system. The latter is a focus nationally and within the Beating Crime Plan and the government is also focusing upon public contact arrangements nationally.

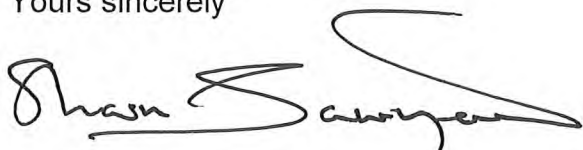
In spite of these challenges, our collective response during the pandemic, staycations, and international events, the force has remained one of the lowest crime areas in the United Kingdom. This is undoubtedly due to the sustained investment in the force and the approach of the force in working in partnership with partners and taking a long-term prevention approach.

This budget proposal will enable the force to build on a strong legacy with an additional focus on community problem solving, protecting the most vulnerable and proactively targeting people of violence in our communities and homes. This is intended to be the best of policing, building on our history of neighbourhood policing but also using proactive operations and technologies to make this area of the country the most challenging for criminals to operate in.

My budget proposal outlines a range of expenditure designed to meet the Police and Crime Plan's requirement in respect of tackling violence, drug misuse, anti-social behaviour and improve road safety. It also supports the force's mission to detect and prevent harm, protect the vulnerable and reduce crime.

As well as new expenditure, this letter outlines the investments already made and the strength that gives us over the next Medium-Term Plan. If you support us with the full £10 increase to meet the operational budget requirement in 2022/2023 and beyond, we will see a further increase in officer numbers of 188. The result will be that next year we will have the best ICT and equipment we have ever had, we will see police staff numbers back at pre austerity numbers, and we will see police officer numbers the highest they have ever been.

Yours sincerely

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

Shaun Sawyer QPM
Chief Constable