

DEVON AND CORNWALL POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

Subject: Review and Recommendations in respect of the Police and Crime Commissioner's Budget and Proposed Level of Precept 2015/16.

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Executive Summary:

The Police and Crime Panel (PCP) is responsible for scrutinising and supporting the actions and decisions of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and also has a role in supporting the PCC in the effective exercise of his function, acting as a critical friend.

The Police and Crime Panels (Precept and Chief Constable Appointments) Regulations 2012¹ came into force on 22nd November 2012 and made provision for the scrutiny, by Police and Crime Panels (PCP), of proposals from Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC) as to the issuing of a precept.

At the PCP meeting of 6 February 2015 representatives of the PCC presented the budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2015/16–2018/19 along with the PCC's proposal for the level of precept for 2015/16 of 1.99%. The PCP considered this in line with the PCC's plans for the draft refresh of the Police and Crime Plan. After consideration of the evidence and the reasoning behind that proposal, the PCP agreed unanimously (15 members present out of 20) to support an increase of the precept by 1.99% with the following recommendations:

- When providing details of proposed significant future savings, to include what each saving represents in percentage terms of the overall budget line.
- Provide the Panel with a report which details options for giving primacy to non-staff savings as opposed to resorting to staff reductions.
- Undertake a review of procurement options to maximise on efficiencies and report back to the Panel upon completion.
- With the Chief Constable, provide a report to the panel on the viability of introducing initiatives and options for the scrapping of untaxed/abandoned vehicles and the potential for income generation.
- Provide a report to the Panel detailing options for maximising capital receipts, commercialisation and leasing options, joint initiatives with partners, as methods of income generation and maximising return on estates in revenue terms that will minimise reliance on the use of reserves and increase in police precept in the future.
- Provide the Panel with a detailed report clarifying where staff reductions will be made as a matter of priority.
- Lobby the Home Office against making cuts to the grant provided to Devon and Cornwall Police of £1.2M for tackling terrorism and allied matters in the South West.

¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/2271/made>

- Provide the Panel with a report of initial details and proposals for income generation in the Autumn 2015.
- Report to the Panel a detailed longer-term strategy of how the policing landscape will look in four years' time and how savings will be realised.
- Provide the Panel with a more detailed report to enable them to scrutinise 'earmarked' reserves. This detail should be routinely provided as part of budget/precept-setting reports.

Immediately following the PCP meeting, the Host Authority drafted, in liaison with the Chair of the PCP, a report and recommendations on behalf of the PCP (**Appendix 1**) incorporating the above comments and recommendations of the PCP meeting. This was emailed to the PCC and OPCC on 6 February 2015 in order that the PCP complied with its statutory requirement to review and make a report to the PCC on the proposed level of Precept by not later than this date.

The PCC has responded in writing to the PCP's report and his response, dated 17 February 2015, is attached (**Appendix 2**).

To assist the PCP, the Host Authority has provided an update (**Appendix 3**) on the PCC's progress in addressing the PCP's comments and, informed by the PCC's written response.

The PCP is asked to formally review and agree its report to the PCC and consider the PCC's response. The PCC will be given an opportunity to verbally comment on, and respond to, the report at this meeting.

Recommendations & Reasons for recommended action:

It is recommended that the PCP:

- Reviews and agrees the draft report to the PCC as a final version in respect of its comments and recommendations to the PCC (**Appendix 1**),
- Reviews the PCC's response to, the draft final report (**Appendix 2**) and progress made in addressing the recommendations (**Appendix 3**),
- Agrees to the suggestions for items for inclusion in the PCP work programme.

The above reflects the PCP role to effectively and robustly scrutinise the PCC's budget and precept in an open and transparent manner and ensure that issues of mutual concern or interest can be shared in a way that is both constructive and supportive.

Alternative options considered, and reasons for recommended action:

The alternative option would be for the PCP not to review, make a report and any recommendations regarding the PCC's budget and proposed level of precept, and therefore the PCP will not have complied with its statutory functions as stated in the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.

Background Papers: None.
