



Devon & Cornwall Police

Building safer communities together

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

Shaun Sawyer
Chief Constable
Police Headquarters Middlemoor
Exeter EX2 7HQ

Telephone: 01392 452011

Our ref: CC/SG/EST/146/01/2018/njq

25 January 2018

Dear Alison

1. INTRODUCTION

I am writing to formally present my budget proposal for 2017/8 to inform your submission to the Police and Crime Panel in early February. The government has listened to those who, like us, petitioned for additional council tax flexibilities. The proposal I put forwards in this letter will allow us to further invest in the transformational one team approach, address the milestones required by government, and avoid some of the deeper cuts we have been planning for. We can use this opportunity to invest, change and work with our Alliance partner to create not just a bigger force, but one that defines the next generation of policing nationally.

2. LAST YEAR'S BUDGET PROPOSAL

I wanted to begin by looking back at what was achieved in 2017/8. I wrote to you this time last year outlining how we would be using the resources you have made available to support policing in a changing and challenging environment. I said that I would:

- Start to transform the way the police operate, through the transformational change programme (PRISM).
 - Integrated Service Delivery has been developed and parts have been piloted. Making it live is a key priority within the next financial year. I believe it will transform the way that policing is delivered across Devon & Cornwall and Dorset; and will provide a benchmark for other police forces.
 - We have developed a funded investment plan for the technology to support PRISM. My budget proposal includes spending significant sums



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over the next four years in this area and I seek your support through reserves and borrowing to make that investment.

- We have piloted telephone statement taking, saving officers time and improving the service to the public. The outcomes of the trial will be announced in 2018. My budget proposal includes a continuation of the service until the trial reports.

- Employ additional Police Staff Investigators.
 - We have appointed 30 during the year, focussing on safeguarding victims and public protection. My budget proposal includes a further 20 to be appointed from early 2019; we will learn from the appointments already made and the workforce planning to inform that recruitment. These additional staff will be used to counter emerging crime types such as cybercrime and the reporting rise in modern slavery.

- Supporting Crime recording.
 - We have been funding 44 police staff to support crime recording, pending technological improvements. The risk of discontinuing this support is considerable and the 2018/9 budget proposal includes a tapering from current levels to 17 over 12 months. The HMIC inspection before Christmas has indicated a highly positive transformation in recording standards.

- Neighbourhood Policing.
 - Working together we have done much in the year to understand the totality of local policing availability, and we have completed the local policing problem solving pilot. As a result 10 local problem solvers (PCMOs) are included in my main budget proposal and will be an ongoing part of the workforce.
 - PCSO numbers have reduced in line with natural turnover. As intended, a number have transferred into other roles within the workforce. Project Genesis has been developed in consultation with staff and is informing that process. We will continue to transform Neighbourhood Policing in line with both changing demand and our drive towards greater connectivity.

- Citizens in policing
 - Citizens in Policing seeks to build on the success that volunteers have already achieved through Specials, Cadets and our Police Volunteer Programme. It aims to increase volunteering capacity, capability and contribution resulting in stronger more resilient communities who are



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better connected to the Police Service to address the issues that matter most to them in the community. This element requires greater attention than I had first anticipated and is subject to active discussion within the connectivity framework.

- Increasing our armed response capability.
 - 2017 has highlighted the need for all Forces to maintain their operational capability. The step change in the terrorist threat has led us to review our armed response capability and we are now uplifting in numbers in order that we can provide an effective response to the threats we face. National data indicates significant challenges in recruiting and retaining firearms officers due to the high standards required for accreditation and ongoing licences to practice. We have been highly effective in external recruitment and along with internal selection this may require further funding in 2018.
- The roll out additional Taser, to provide additional protection to officers, staff and the public, has commenced.
- Develop our strategic alliance with Dorset.
 - All four corporation soles have worked together during 2017/8 to develop our strategic alliance and take us to the point where a business case for merger is the next step. We are of course the only PCCs and Chief Constables actively proposing collaboration at this level. If we proceed to merger we will be the fifth biggest Police Force in the country by officer numbers, and have the largest geographic area of any Force.

Your 2017 budget was instrumental in enabling our early transformation but has also coincided with a significant national and local increase in crime. Whilst improved crime recording has played some part, crime levels have genuinely risen and we are continuing to deal with that within allocated resources.

3. EXPECTATIONS OF THE BUDGET

The minister has made it clear that he is expecting productivity, efficiency, and transparency from policing - we of course share those aspirations - and that the funding given will allow the necessary investments to achieve that. HMICFRS are clear that they expect us to understand demand and the skills we need from the workforce, and to ensure that we reinvest efficiencies into our operational priorities. I will go on to outline the investments in my budget proposal that build further on this. But I want to assure you that I remain committed to the wellness of my staff through a developed programme and the additional resources put in place over the last two years.



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The budget also continues a total investment in citizens in policing of £1.1m to continue to develop the policing family.

I believe it will be important to continue to review our service provision. As well as the re-design work through ISD, I will be developing a small in house review team to undertake targeted efficiency reviews to identify savings that can be directed into other priorities. This will include reviews of police staff areas, especially those effected by significant changes in volume, technology or processes.

We have identified significant efficiencies through the Alliance in the last year, including significant savings in police officer time.

In combination with the budget changes outlined in the next section, the actions taken in the 2017/8 year, and the ongoing commitment to our people, processes and service offering, will provide the evidence that we are productive, efficient and transparent.

4. BUDGET PROPOSAL 2018/9

You will recall police chiefs engaged with government throughout 2017/8 on the funding crisis within policing. Whilst national events, such as high profile terrorist attacks brought focus, my concern, and one I know you share, is that it is local policing which best safeguards and delivers confident and sustainable communities. You were able to facilitate a meeting with the policing minister where, together, we set out our funding concerns whilst continuing to address the specific challenges of our peninsular force; not least the summer policing challenges.

At this stage we do not have the final settlement figures but I have assumed grant as announced in the provisional settlement and current best estimates of council tax base and collection fund levels. I can meet the proposals in this letter and the requirements of your Police and Crime Plan if you are able to support us with

- The £1 per month maximum council tax increased as outlined by the minister
- Significant use of reserves, as detailed in the Treasurer's draft report to the Police and Crime Panel
- Borrowing as outlined in the Treasurer's draft report

'This budget proposal does not include any significant additional investment in road safety. I am aware that this is an area that you have made a particular priority and that we are working together to actively explore how we can deliver a step change in this area. We are likely to be considering options for significant change and investment in roads policing and safety in next year's budget'.





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My budget proposal includes:

Investments in technology to drive efficiencies and productivity

Over the next four years we plan to invest £35m in ICT infrastructure, convergence and PRISM investments. This includes a replacement records management system, improved automatic number plate recognition, digital storage, and improved control room technology. In 2018/9 it also includes £2.4m for the first stage roll out of body worn video. I am committed to the implementation of this technology which will protect my officers and victims, and give full transparency to the public. It will also provide the basis for further development of digitalisation, paving the way for video evidence and statement taking.

Investment of £11m in the new digital radio service (ESN) over four is also included. ESN offers real opportunities for efficiencies in officer time, although costs and timescales remain uncertain.

Investments in the Estates

The budget proposal assumes a range of schemes including Liskeard, Wadebridge and in evidential property storage. It also includes two significant projects, being the Southside and Northside developments at Middlemoor and the development of a local custody Headquarters site in Bodmin. I have discussed with you the many elements of connectivity at the heart of your Police and Crime Plan. One element is sense of place and alignment to both geography and community. There is a strong sense of identity within our two counties and the Isles of Scilly. It is my view, and that of many of my colleagues, that whilst we are a 'force' which does not recognise geographic boundaries in order that we can provide resilience across all communities, there is still a requirement for communities and our staff to have a geographic focal point. I believe it is our shared view that the operational headquarters at Bodmin should be recognised and developed as a Cornwall County Headquarters and in discussion with local partners, a further development of what that means beyond purely the operational. The Southside development at Middlemoor and the transfer of Heavitree would also provide a similar approach and potential to be the Devon Headquarters.

Investments in Collaboration

As I mentioned above, our merger plans with Dorset are unique within policing at the current time. My budget proposal includes funding for the current merger exploration team, and also an estimate for potential harmonisation costs in 2020/21. I am of course fully committed to the merger and, in addition to the funding, I am fully committed to exploring this opportunity and my team and I will support the creation of the business case and, subsequently, the delivery of any merged force. I will remain open to further regional co working and the budget proposal includes full funding of all the existing





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regional collaborations. I will continue to supply staff resource to develop collaboration with Fire and other blue light partners.

Pay awards

The budget proposal assumes an annual increase in base pay for both officers and police staff of 2% from 1 September 2018.

Investments in People

Until December the police service was planning for a 1.99% increase in council tax and facing the real possibility of yet further reductions in officers and police staff. The new settlement means those additional cuts are not required. If we continue with the savings already built into the budget, the improved settlement even offers us some growth opportunities.

The budget assumes further police staff reductions through Strategic Alliance savings of 13 in 2018/9 and a further 76 in the following three years. The processes are in place and plans are advanced; and we have a good history of reduction through design. Nevertheless the timing of these savings are increasingly uncertain, they have become progressively more difficult to realise, and they remain high risk.

The plan, already built into the budget that PCSO numbers will fall through natural turnover to a level of 150 by 2021 remains valid. Project Genesis has indicated that the PCSOs' key neighbourhood functions can be delivered within that number, plans are well in hand to ensure that people are in the correct place, and staff are engaged in the process. In response to concerns raised by local councillors, the budget proposal includes a cash sum that will allow part funding of 20 joint funded blue light officers. Proactive discussions with Fire and other partners have indicated a real appetite for a new way of delivering neighbourhood functions, and I would like to develop and expand the existing and successful collaborative PCSO posts. I am eager to start talking with fire, ambulance and parishes and other partner organisations to take this exciting innovation forwards.

Last year, my team told me their priority was to try to prevent further drops in police officer numbers. You supported a budget that allowed officer numbers to increase to 3000 by the end of 2021. This year's budget proposal allows us to both accelerate those numbers and add to them. The budget proposes 3,015 police officers by the end of 2019/20; an increase of 71 on the numbers anticipated at the end of the current year. We have historically high levels of turnover and are anticipating recruiting 575 officers into the organisation over the next four years. We will be looking to recruit specialist experienced transferees in addition to our very high level of new recruits. I will be using the workforce planning team to drive a recruitment strategy to ensure that local policing



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sees the benefit of additional officers, but that other specialist operational functions have the right skills in place.

5. CONCLUSION

Over the last two years you have given us the maximum financial available under government rules, whilst ensuring my full accountability for the use of those public monies. I believe that I have used that funding to invest in innovation and new approaches to policing. We are going through a period of fundamental change in public expectation and in demand; but we have opportunities through technological change, new people and ways of working, and real collaboration to transform policing in Devon and Cornwall. I know that it is difficult to increase the council tax burden on the people of Devon and Cornwall and I am reticent to ask you to do so. But I know that so many members of our communities have raised concerns about the levels of policing. If once again you support the maximum increase in council tax, and give access to reserves and borrowing, not only can we begin to assuage their concerns but we can deliver the next generation of policing.

Yours sincerely

Shaun Sawyer
Chief Constable