

Cllr David Stewart
Chairman, Police & Crime Panel
Members Services
Hampshire County Council
The Castle
Winchester
SO23 8UB

23 February 2018

Dear Cllr Stewart

I am writing further to the Police and Crime Panel meeting on 26 January 2018, and specifically in response to the recommendations made by the panel in relation to Item 8 Council Tax Precept 2018/19, Budget 2018/19 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2019/20 to 2021/22.

We note that the panel did not veto the increase in council tax precept put forward in the paper. The Commissioner will therefore increase the policing precept by £12 for a Band D property.

The Police and Crime Commissioner's basic Council Tax for the year beginning 1 April 2018 will be £177.46 per annum at Band D which will total £120,644,195.22 for financial year 2018/19 raised across all precepting authorities.

To address the recommendation:

'That the Panel do not support the recommendation, as outlined in the paper before us, and ask [that] our concerns and those of the public are taken into account, and that any increase in funding is put directly and only into retaining and enhancing [the services provided by] police officers and staff.'

Since the meeting further clarification has been sought from the panel regarding this first recommendation. The Chairman went on public record to make it clear that the panel did not intend the grant funding, for organisations that protect the victims and those vulnerable at risk of harm, be reduced.¹

¹ BBC Radio Solent, Monday 5 February 2018



Therefore, whilst the papers presented to the Panel identified a sum of £700,000 be added to revenue expenditure, this money will now be added to reserves; funding will then need to be drawn down from reserves as required in 2018/19 to fund these critical commissioned services.

This does however remain an unsustainable approach in the longer term, as commissioning is a core part of the Commissioner's activity to support the delivery of his Police and Crime plan and to support the PCC's role 'Beyond Policing', the funding for which must be put on a sustainable basis going forward as part of the core revenue budget. Any commissioning expenditure funded from the £700,000 this year will be subject to the normal decision making process.

A further £440,000 was also proposed to be added to the Commissioner's revenue budget, broken down into two separate sums of £280,000 and £160,000.

£280,000 has historically been drawn from reserves to support the year-on-year delivery of projects supporting the priorities set out in the Police and Crime Plan. The plan had been to formalise this position for 2018/19 to reflect the recurrent nature of this spend, and to also recognise that, with diminishing reserves, it is no longer sustainable to fund this amount annually from reserves into the medium term.

The £160,000 did represent new spend to support additional capacity within the OPCC to support the Commissioner in the delivery of his plan.

As a result of the Panel's recommendation, the entire £440,000 will now not be added to the revenue budget for 2018/19, but will be added to reserves.

The sums identified would have supported delivery of new mandatory requirements for all Police and Crime Commissioners as set down in legislation during 2017. The following will therefore be subject to further decisions as work progresses:

- Review of Fire Governance - Policing and Crime Act 2017
- Police Complaints Reform - Policing and Crime Act 2017
- Changes to Data Storage - General Data Protection Regulations 2018
- Data Protection Officer and Deputy - General Data Protection Regulations 2018

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All costs associated with the £440,000 will be reviewed to ensure the work of the Office both meets the statutory requirements as set down in legislation and remains as efficient as possible. It is hoped that the overall cost will remain, as in previous years, one of the lowest cost per capita for any Police and Crime Commissioner's office. Where necessary, decisions will be brought forward to release funding from reserves to fund required service delivery.

This year the report to the Panel sought to improve transparency of the whole budget for policing and beyond, including the money which is spent on preventing crime, the reduction of offending, and helping the most vulnerable in our communities. Whilst there have been questions over how the budget is sourced and allocated, there has also been strong support for the value in the work delivered in partnership with many organisations across all of our communities.

To address the recommendation:

'That the Police and Crime Commissioner clarifies to the public what funding he receives, and what this is spent on, including the mandatory functions of the Police and Crime Commissioner.'

The creation of the Police and Crime Commissioner's plan sought to address this (pages 23, 24) as part of the context of the whole plan. This visible identification of where public money is spent continues to be a priority and will inform key elements of the Commissioner's Communications Strategy for the year 2018/19. More specifically the Commissioner will provide information that will be sent out with Council Tax bills that identifies the funding received and how it is allocated across the police service. Further details will be provided through the Commissioner's website and details of this will also be provided through the leaflet. This has proved to be the most cost effective solution to provide information to all households in Hampshire, the Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton, something the Panel has encouraged the Commissioner to achieve on many occasions.

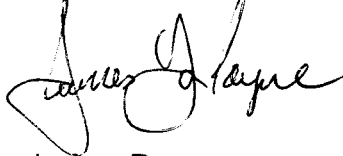
Further work will also be undertaken and a report created that sets out the mandatory functions of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the costs associated with the delivery of these functions.

The focus over the coming year will be to continue to improve the whole community's understanding of the wider role of the Commissioner, both in support of policing and beyond, and how the budget is allocated and invested.

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All of the above will be subject to the usual reporting and scrutiny at the quarterly panel meetings. Should the panel require further information or clarity regarding the response to the recommendations and the process in place to deliver the Plan priorities, opportunities exist through both the Plan Working Group and the Finance Working Group for more detailed discussion.

Yours sincerely,



James Payne
Chief Executive