

## Police and Crime Panel

1<sup>st</sup> February 2024

Precept 2024/5

## Report of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

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### Purpose

1. To update the Panel on the process for setting the Policing precept for 2024/25 and to seek the Panel's support for an increase of £13 per household per year for properties in Band D, and commensurate increases for other properties.

### Background

2. In December each year, the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) is informed by the Home Secretary of the provisional amount of Government grant that will be provided for policing during the following financial year. That enables the PCC to formulate plans for the level of precept that she will need to ask Council Taxpayers to contribute, in order to deliver policing in County Durham and Darlington in line with the Police and Crime Plan.
3. The Government normally puts a cap on the level of precept increase. The Government announced the provisional funding settlement for 2024/25 on the 14<sup>th</sup> of December 2023. From this, the Force and PCC Office has been making the calculations in relation to the effect of the settlement on the overall budget, along with the priorities for its use.
4. In addition to local taxation and central government grant the Durham Office of the PCC generates and manages additional funding streams. These include from the Ministry of Justice and also grants dependent on bids submitted by the PCC. In the last 12 months this has resulted in total additional funding to the value of £ 5,140,616 to benefit communities of County Durham and Darlington.

### Funding in 2024/25

5. Government funding for policing in Durham and Darlington in 2024/25 includes the following:
  - The Police Grant will increase by 6.19% to £118.4m. This comprises:
    - An addition £1.6m, which was already included in the 2021 Comprehensive Spending Review announcement. It is designed to cover all spending pressures across pay, officer incremental pay growth and non-pay.
    - An additional £5.2m toward the cost of the 2023 pay award.
    - A reduction of £2.5m due to an increase in employers' police officer pension contributions.

- Capital funding will remain at nil.
- The PCC is enabled to increase funding from the precept for the council taxpayer by 5.1% or £13 for a Band D property as a maximum.
- The total potential revenue funding, assuming maximum precept, increases from £157.4m to an estimated £167.0m, an increase of £9.6m or 6.1%. This compares to the average increase of 6% across all forces, although after excluding the Metropolitan Police Service increase of 3.5% (which is low due to their underachievement of their Officer Uplift Programme), the average national increase is 6.7%. Therefore Durham receives less increase than the average, as has been the case since 2010 and is due to it having a low taxbase.

6. To achieve the £167m, it will be necessary to increase precept by the maximum permitted, i.e., £13 per household per year, for properties in Council Tax Band D. If this happens, the implications for each Council Tax Band would be as follows:

<b>Council Tax Band</b>	<b>Police Precept 2023/24</b>	<b>Proposed Annual increase for 2024/25</b>	<b>Proposed Police Precept for 2024/25</b>
	£	£	£
<b>Band A</b>	<b>170.16</b>	<b>8.67</b>	<b>178.83</b>
<b>Band B</b>	<b>198.52</b>	<b>10.11</b>	<b>208.63</b>
<b>Band C</b>	<b>226.88</b>	<b>11.56</b>	<b>238.44</b>
<b>Band D</b>	<b>255.24</b>	<b>13.00</b>	<b>268.24</b>
<b>Band E</b>	<b>311.96</b>	<b>15.89</b>	<b>327.85</b>
<b>Band F</b>	<b>368.68</b>	<b>18.78</b>	<b>387.46</b>
<b>Band G</b>	<b>425.40</b>	<b>21.67</b>	<b>447.07</b>
<b>Band H</b>	<b>511.48</b>	<b>26.00</b>	<b>537.48</b>

## Consultation

7. The PCC launched an on-line survey on the 24th November 2023 and closed at 5pm on Monday 8th January 2024. It was publicised using social media, releases to local media outlets, at engagements with the public and the PCC website, along with some meetings with MP's and AAP/ councillors. The AAP meetings were supportive of the £13 increase.
8. The PCC and her office had already received views from the public during the summer engagement events/fetes etc on the level of precept the public were willing to pay.
9. The survey asks respondents about how much they would accept to pay extra for the provision of its policing service. The survey and the results are provided in the presentation. In addition to questions relating to precept tax levels, the survey also asks respondents for their views on priorities within the Police and Crime Plan.

## Summary

10. Given the overall support for an increase, and the clear need to support Policing beyond the constraints of Uplift funding, the Panel is recommended to support an increase in precept of £13 per household per year for Band D properties.
11. As agreed with the Force this will enable in particular:
  - Officer numbers to be maintained at 1,368 until at least April 2025.
  - PCSO numbers maintained at 146.
  - Additional control room staff.
  - Continued IT technology improvements eg in the control room to improve public contact.
12. Under Schedule 5 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, the Police and Crime Panel is required to review the proposed precept, and to make a report on it (the Panel are to determine the manner of this report). The report can include recommendations on the level of the precept. The panel has the power to veto the proposed precept, which requires a two-thirds majority in favour of a veto. However, the Panel are requested to not that if not agreed, this will in effect mean real-time cuts to policing across County Durham and Darlington.

## **Recommendation**

13. The Panel is recommended to:

- a) Note the current position of the precept consultation and the outcome.
- b) Consider the PCCs proposal for a £13 precept increase at Band D.
- c) Decide whether to veto the PCCs proposal.
- d) Produce a report setting out the Panel's views.

**Joy Allen**  
**Police and Crime Commissioner**

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## Appendix 1: Risks and Implications

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### **Finance**

The outcome of consultation will influence the size of the PCC's, and the Constabulary's, budget in 2024/25.

### **Staffing**

None

### **Equality and Diversity**

None

### **Accommodation**

None

### **Crime and Disorder**

None

### **Children's Act 2004**

None

### **Stakeholder/Community Engagement**

A consultation exercise has taken place as set out in the report

### **Environment**

None

### **Collaboration and Partnerships**

None

### **Value for Money and Productivity**

None

### **Potential Impact on Police and Crime Plan Priorities**

Size of budget will influence delivery of priorities

### **Commissioning**

None

### **Other risks**

None

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