

**MINUTES** of the meeting of the **SURREY POLICE AND CRIME PANEL** held at 10.30 am on 4 February 2022 at Woodhatch Place, Reigate, Surrey.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Panel at its next meeting.

**Members:**

(\*Present)

- \*Councillor David Reeve (Chairman)
- \*Councillor Bruce McDonald (Vice-Chairman)
- \*Councillor Keith Witham
- \*Councillor Mick Gillman
- \*Councillor Fiona White
- \*Councillor Paul Kennedy
- \*Councillor Victor Lewanski
- \*Councillor Bernie Spoor
- \*Councillor Valerie White
- \*Councillor John Furey
- \*Councillor John Robini
- \*Councillor Will Forster
- \*Mr Philip Walker
- \*Mr Martin Stilwell

**1/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [Item 1]**

None received.

**2/22 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: 24 NOVEMBER 2021 [Item 2]**

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2021 were agreed as a true record of the meeting.

**3/22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]**

None received.

**4/22 PUBLIC QUESTIONS [Item 4]**

None received.

**5/22 PERFORMANCE MEETINGS [Item 9]**

**Witness:**

Lisa Townsend, Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey

### **Key points raised in the discussion:**

1. The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) noted that the first public and live broadcast performance and accountability meeting with the Chief Constable was held on 31 January 2022, and was available to watch online. The next public, likely to be scheduled in May, would be held during the evening to try and generate greater public engagement. The PCC encouraged Panel Members to watch the meeting and welcomed any feedback. Private performance meetings would continue, considering matters including Force finances, savings, and IT.
2. A Panel Member highlighted the low crime clear-up rate and asked what was preventing its improvement, and noted a lack of detail in the report. The PCC explained that the performance meetings were held to challenge and she would look into adding more detail to future reports. The Panel Member asked what rate would meet the Force's ambition of a top-quartile clear-up rate. The PCC agreed to provide a response from the Chief Constable following the meeting. The Chairman noted that the Panel were looking forward to receiving a refreshed performance dashboard and requested that the response from the Chief Constable included the steps to be taken to achieve the target clear-up rate.
3. A Panel Member asked about the Force's commitment to be carbon-neutral by 2030 and the likelihood of achieving this. The PCC explained that the Force had assured her that it could meet this target and brought attention to the ability to redevelop the Mount Browne site in a sustainable and carbon-neutral way. The Panel Member queried the amount of money required to redevelop the site and highlighted that police stations would need to be evaluated in the same manner and against the same target. The PCC agreed and explained that the Building the Future Board and Estates Board oversaw this work.
4. A Panel Member asked for a timescale for the Force's planned deep dive into domestic abuse victim satisfaction and improvement of those levels. The PCC noted that the topic was covered in the recent performance and accountability meeting. The PCC did not have a timescale for the project. A Panel Member shared his concern regarding domestic abuse victim satisfaction and requested relevant data on the satisfaction levels in the next performance and accountability report to the

Panel and explanatory wording if the levels did not improve. The PCC explained that this information was included in the Force performance report and would be shared with Panel Members.

**RESOLVED:**

The Panel noted and commented on the report.

**Actions/further information requested:**

1. **R1/22** – The OPCC to provide a response from the Chief Constable regarding the target set for the clear-up rate in percentage terms and actions to be taken to achieve the target.
2. **R2/22** – The PCC to write to the Panel with further information on the Force’s deep dive into domestic abuse victim satisfaction levels.
3. **R3/22** – The OPCC to share the January 2022 Performance report with the Panel.

**6/22 PCC FORWARD PLAN AND KEY DECISIONS [Item 10]**

**Key points raised in the discussion:**

None.

**RESOLVED:**

The Panel noted the report.

**7/22 COMMISSIONER'S QUESTION TIME [Item 11]**

**Witnesses:**

Lisa Townsend, Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey

Kelvin Menon, Chief Finance Officer – OPCC

Alison Bolton, Chief Executive – OPCC

Ellie Vesey-Thompson, Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey

### **Key points raised in the discussion:**

1. A Panel Member asked for the total costs incurred by the abandoned project to move the Force's headquarters to Leatherhead and whether any value could be retrieved for the benefit of the Force or the Leatherhead community. The Chief Finance Officer (CFO) explained that the responses to the Member's questions were under question 46 and 47 of the supplementary agenda. The CFO explained that the total spend on the project so far was £1.5 million, which had been charged as revenue over a number of years. The senior responsible officer had provided a list of areas where the consultancy work could be reused. The Chairman noted the upcoming visit to Mount Browne for Panel Members to receive an informal briefing on the project.
2. A Panel Member asked about the review of Surrey Police's CCTV strategy, as well as the revenue and capital expenditure included in the proposed budget for CCTV monitoring and infrastructure. The CFO responded that there was £800,000 in the revenue budget for CCTV for the whole of the county and there was nothing in the capital budget for CCTV. Funding was not allocated on a district and borough basis and the OPCC was working with district and borough councils to secured funding for CCTV, such as from the Community Infrastructure Levy. The PCC added that this topic was covered in the recent performance and accountability meeting.
3. A Panel Member requested information on the use of CCTV by Surrey Police and expressed his view that the Force's contributions were not proportionate to the investment of district and borough councils. The PCC responded that there had been conversations at the Surrey councils Leader's Group around CCTV, where it was a standing agenda item. The PCC explained that the provision and funding of CCTV was not a cost to be borne by the Police alone and a county-wide approach was required, with the Districts and Boroughs leading it. The Vice-Chairman raised that this was a burden which had been increasingly shifted onto the Districts and Boroughs and there would be an advantage to having a clear policy across Surrey between the Police and Districts and Boroughs.
4. A Panel Member highlighted that other Police Forces around the country held a register of residents who had 'Ring Video

Doorbells' and personal CCTV. The PCC shared that Surrey Police did not maintain such a register but frequently used both personal and commercial CCTV footage and agreed with the usefulness of Ring doorbell footage. A Panel Member asked whether there would be a CCTV register, as he was aware of local issues around accessing CCTV from different sources. The Chairman suggested that this point could be raised at the Leader's Group.

5. A Panel Member asked whether Surrey Police would operate a similar system to Kent Police whereby vehicles could be confiscated as a result of unsafe driving by young people. The Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner (DPCC) explained that Surrey Police had a different process in place whereby there were attempts to resolve issues by other means prior to confiscation. The DPCC would provide further information following the meeting.
6. A Panel Member sought assurance that the PCC and Chief Constable had discussed police culture in light of reports of inappropriate behaviour by Met Police officers and that a zero-tolerance approach was adopted within Surrey Police. The PCC replied that this was discussed with both the Chief Constable and Deputy Chief Constable at the recent performance and accountability meeting, and it was taken seriously. Work had been undertaken with Surrey Police around workplace culture and the PCC assured the Panel that she had not witnessed anything troubling by a police officer or staff member of Surrey Police.

**Actions/requests for further information:**

1. **R4/22** – The OPCC to provide information on the Force's use of CCTV in the county.
2. **R5/22** – The DPCC to provide further information, including data, on Surrey Police's approach to tackling unsafe driving by young people.

**8/22 COMPLAINTS RECEIVED SINCE THE LAST MEETING [Item 12]**

**Key points raised in the discussion:**

None.

**RESOLVED:**

The Panel noted the report.

**9/22 RECOMMENDATIONS TRACKER AND FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME  
[Item 13]**

**Key points raised in the discussion:**

1. A Panel Member thanked Surrey Police for their breakdown of police officer allocation by District and Borough and requested for the report to be repeated to track progress.

**RESOLVED:**

The Panel noted the report.

**10/22 SURREY POLICE GROUP FINANCIAL REPORT FOR MONTH 8  
FINANCIAL YEAR 2021/22 [Item 5]**

**Witnesses:**

Kelvin Menon, Chief Finance Officer – OPCC

Alison Bolton, Chief Executive – OPCC

**Key points raised in the discussion:**

1. The CFO introduced the report and highlighted that the revenue budget was predicted to be underspent by £1.9 million (0.7%) by the end of the year. This was largely due to police officer salaries being lower than budgeted, due to the new recruits starting at the bottom end of salary bands and the phasing of recruitment. If the underspend was as predicted, it would be used to fund a number of one-off change projects. The Force had predicted that it would meet the target for uplift investment officer numbers by the end of the year. The CFO noted that uplift was worked out by the increase in headcount against a baseline set two years ago. Gross recruitment was higher than it appeared in the report as the Police had to replace those retiring as well as the uplift numbers. The capital budget was forecast to be underspent largely due to the phasing of the Building the Future and ICT projects.
2. A Panel Member queried the variance for Corporate Services capital expenditure. The CFO explained that included within

Corporate Services were Building the Future project, estates, and vehicles. The majority of the underspend in this area was due to the rephrasing of the Building the Future project. The Panel Member highlighted that leasing would need to be recorded as a debt on balance sheets in the future and queried the impact this would have on Surrey Police. The CFO explained that this was to be introduced from the end of this financial year and stated that the Police had few leases and thus, this change would have a minimal impact.

3. In response to a question on other sites included in the Building the Future project, the CFO explained that work on the other sites was paused whilst deciding a strategic direction to prevent the incurring of unnecessary costs.

**RESOLVED:**

The Panel noted and commented on the report.

**11/22 OFFICE OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FINANCIAL UPDATE FOR MONTH 9 FINANCIAL YEAR 2021/22 AND ESTIMATE FOR YEAR END OUTTURN [Item 6]**

**Witnesses:**

Kelvin Menon, Chief Finance Officer – OPCC

Alison Bolton, Chief Executive – OPCC

**Key points raised in the discussion:**

1. The CFO introduced the report and explained that the OPCC's budget was split into operational costs and monies allocated for commissioning and grants. The CFO highlighted that many Panels do not receive such detailed information on their respective OPCC's expenditure, and this was provided to maintain transparency as established by the former PCC. The CFO explained that there was an overprediction in expenditure for the year end outturn, especially for the DPCC's salary.
2. A Panel Member queried what was meant by the 'Member's Attendance Allowance' as included in the report. The CEX explained that was likely for the OPCC's independent members or legally qualified chairs, as the OPCC had a role in recruiting those individuals.

3. The Chairman queried why the cost of 'other contributions' was at £46,724 when it had a budget of zero. The CFO could not recall what made up this cost so would report back to the Panel in due course.

**Actions/requests for further information:**

1. **R6/22** – The Chief Finance Officer to provide further information on 'other contributions' of the OPCC for the 2021/22 financial year.

**RESOLVED:**

The Panel noted and commented on the report.

**12/22 OFFICE OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S BUDGET FOR 2022/23 [Item 7]**

**Witnesses:**

Lisa Townsend, Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey

Kelvin Menon, Chief Finance Officer – OPCC

Alison Bolton, Chief Executive – OPCC

**Key points raised in the discussion:**

1. The PCC acknowledged that any increase in any budget was not taken lightly but she needed to ensure that the OPCC as an organisation was suitably equipped to meet increased demand and deliver her and the Office's statutory functions. The increase in operational budget would fund new posts where the OPCC was currently at its weakest. Investment would mean those contacting the Office would have their case dealt with in a timely manner, which was not always the case currently. The PCC believed that greater work could be undertaken with Criminal Justice System (CJS) partners, and this would require a new role within the Office. Increasing the visibility of the PCC and OPCC to the public was necessary to further transparency and public understanding of their work and thus, investment in a communications role was also proposed. Commissioning services and giving grants to support victims required additional resource to secure funding and achieve value for money. The PCC highlighted that Surrey's OPCC was considerably smaller



than other OPCCs in the region, with only three being smaller within England and Wales.

2. It was raised by the PCC that the Office owed considerable amounts of overtime to almost all staff members and the PCC shared her concern that this could result in a loss of staff members. The PCC assured Panel Members that the proposed increase in the operational budget for the OPCC was to the benefit of both Surrey Police and residents and following the increase would account for 0.5% of the total Police budget. It was noted that £270,000 of the increase was to fund new posts and the remainder was to meet other costs including cost of living and pay increases for existing staff. The PCC provided Panel Members with an overview of the work of the OPCC, including new initiatives since her election. The services that the OPCC commissioned were said to directly support vulnerable residents within the community. The OPCC had successfully bid for over £2.3 million of government funding, which included £1.1 million for domestic abuse and sexual violence support and had worked with partners to secure £2.8 million from the Changing Futures funding.
3. A Panel Member recognised that there was a lack of understanding by the public regarding the role and functions of the PCC and her Office. The Panel Member disagreed with the idea that an increased budget for the OPCC would take away from front-line policing services, when rather, their work supported that of front-line services. The Panel Member highlighted the importance of understanding where to go with a concern about policing and receiving a response in a timely manner. The Panel Member expressed his support for the OPCC budget proposal. The PCC shared that since May 2021, the OPCC had received 2,222 contacts from residents and the average number of complaints per month had increased to 169, from 45 when PCCs were first introduced.
4. A Panel Member congratulated the OPCC for successfully bidding for a number of government grants, acknowledging the requisite time and effort. The PCC agreed and informed the Panel that her Office had begun work to bid for part of the government funding that had been made available for 'Safer Streets' as part of the 'Levelling Up agenda'.

5. A Panel Member noted that every £1 increase of the precept equated to a £500,000 increase in the budget and the increase the OPCC had proposed was £500,000, with half funded by reserves and half by the precept increase. It was highlighted that it would be difficult to 'sell' to residents that equivalent to 1/10<sup>th</sup> of the precept increase would be funding the OPCC. The Panel Member questioned whether the proposed balance of funding between the OPCC and the Police was correct. The PCC explained that although it was a substantial increase, this was due to a historic lack of investment despite increased demand. The PCC recognised that the commissioning work undertaken by the OPCC was crucial in supporting residents and delivering the Police and Crime Plan. The CFO noted that the Panel Member made the distinction between the PCC and the Police as two separate entities, when in reality they worked together for the same cause.
6. A Panel Member raised concern over justifying an increase in the precept to fund a service which residents may consider to be administrative and thus, he could not fully support the proposal. The Panel Member felt that the OPCC should be aiming to maximise the efficiency of its resources rather than increase its budget.
7. The Vice-Chairman emphasised that the only decision the Panel had was regarding the precept and it was the PCC's decision to allocate the funding from the precept and remained her decision to justify. The Vice-Chairman shared that the discussions held at the Finance Sub-group focussed on proportionality and prioritisation of resource allocation. It was understood by the Vice-Chairman that the PCC was trying to address the lack of resources of the OPCC as a result of former decisions, but acknowledged that all Panel Members were part of organisations which reflected historical funding decisions. The Vice-Chairman stated that the current balance of funding proposed was not right. He noted that the ringfencing of police officer numbers also had an impact on budgetary decisions which then impacted Police Staff. The PCC responded that it was through prioritisation that she had decided to increase the size of the Office by three posts.
8. A Panel Member noted that he was shocked at the amount of overtime the OPCC owed its staff members, as this would not be tolerated at his Borough Council. The Panel Member

acknowledged that the size of communications departments in many Councils had risen over the recent years and were now a crucial part of an organisation and so required investment. The Panel Member expressed his support for the budget proposal.

9. A Panel Member explained that he could not accept the proposal on behalf of his community, as his residents wanted more police officers on the streets and thus, all additional funding should go towards front-line policing. The PCC understood the desire for more front-line policing but also explained that one of the most important roles of the OPCC was working with partners to reduce reoffending and prevent crime.
10. A Panel Member noted that the work of the PCC and OPCC was complementary to that of the Police. The understaffing of the OPCC needed to be rectified and the amount of overtime owed to staff was not acceptable. The Panel Member expressed his support for the proposal, despite going into the meeting unsupportive, as it would improve outcomes for residents; although, it was acknowledged that the proposed increased precept would place financial pressure on some residents. The CEX explained that her staff were passionate about their role in policing and that was why they had worked so many additional hours. This was the third PCC that the CEX had worked for and over the years she had witnessed a growth in the role and responsibilities of the PCC, whilst the OPCC had remained small. The OPCC's resourcing was such that it was now increasingly difficult to effectively fulfil its role.
11. A Panel Member shared that she had previously been sceptical of the proposal but felt that the PCC had adequately justified the budget increase. The Panel Member sought assurance that the posts the PCC planned to introduce would help support front-line policing.
12. A Panel Member raised concern over the unsustainability of drawing from reserves and queried how the new staff members would be funded in future years; and noted that an increase of £10 a year would add to the strain on some residents' budgets. An increase of £10 a year could only be justified by the Panel Member if it ensured that fewer police staff would be lost. The CFO confirmed that if the precept was increased by £10, no significant reductions in police staff would be required for 2022/23. The Panel Member acknowledged the hard work of the

OPCC staff and the pressures they faced but she could not support an increase in their budget in conjunction with a precept increase in the current financial climate. The CFO clarified that the actual increase in the OPCC budget from the precept was £200,000, which was the equivalent to a 40p a year increase for a resident. The use of funding from reserves was designed to phase the increase of the budget over a number of years.

13. A Panel Member thanked the OPCC for their answers to his questions submitted in advance. The Panel Member queried the proposed 33% increase in OPCC staffing and suggested that some pressures on staff members would ease in the short term as there would not be a new Police and Crime Plan to develop and the PCC and DPCC were now familiar with their roles. The Panel Member asked whether the OPCC had any externally funded staff members and it was confirmed that there were none. The CEX acknowledged that there was always more work prior to and following an election. The PCC had been highly visible since being elected which resulted in an increased workload for the Office. The CEX did not agree with the Panel Member's assertion that the OPCC's workload would stabilise, rather she expected demands on PCCs to continue to increase. It was noted that not all OPCCs were completely transparent regarding the staffing numbers shared. The number of staff on the website of Surrey's OPCC was accurate and they did not have any externally funded posts. The CFO contextualised the OPCC staffing percentage increase quoted, explaining that it appeared large due to the small size of the Office.

**RESOLVED:**

The Panel noted and commented on the report.

**13/22 SURREY POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S PROPOSED PRECEPT 2022/23 [Item 8]**

**Witnesses:**

Lisa Townsend, Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey

Kelvin Menon, Chief Finance Officer – OPCC

### **Key points raised in the discussion:**

1. The PCC explained that since being elected she had spent a significant amount of time talking to police officers and staff to understand the pressures they were under, as well as speaking to residents to understand their priorities. The police officer uplift had been an enormous success and Surrey were to recruit 249 of the 2,000 police offers under the government initiative. The PCC noted that government funding for policing had been increased for 2022/23; however, it did not cover the total cost of increases in National Insurance contributions and pay. Surrey Police received the lowest amount of funding per head from government and as a result, funding from council tax was extremely important. The government had also assumed in its funding announcements that all PCCs would utilise the maximum £10 increase in precept. The Chief Constable supported an increase of £10 which was needed to sustain current Police services, improve performance and deliver the Police and Crime Plan. The impact on the Force of a lower precept was discussed at the most recent performance and accountability meeting. The PCC noted that there was a clear majority of responses to the public consultation in support of increasing the precept by at least £10. After consideration of the Chief Constable's comments, the result of the consultation, the government funding assumption, and the need to sustain Police services, the PCC believed there was no alternative but to increase the precept by £10.
2. A Panel Member queried why the line on the OPCC's reserves remained unchanged in the proposal for 2022/23, despite stating that £250,000 would be taken out of the reserves to fund the budget increase. The CFO replied that it should have come out of that line of the budget and that was the intention.
3. A Panel Member stated that he would support the full £10 increase of the precept in order to sustain Police services that Surrey residents deserved. The Panel Member noted the intention for transformational savings in the medium and long term and hoped this would continue. The PCC explained to the Panel that despite a government assumption that the precept would be increased to £10 for the next three years, she had made clear to the Force that it should not rely on that assumption and that she expected to see significant transformational savings. The Panel Member stated that he

expected to see more regular reporting on the Building the Future project, as a significant amount of money was lost on the Leatherhead site. The PCC agreed with the Panel Member and requested for an item on the next agenda to include an update on estates.

4. A Panel Member noted that any local authority that was required to precept against the council tax had difficult conversations regarding any increase, whilst acknowledging that it was a fundamental source of income. The Panel Member expressed that he did not believe that any resident would oppose paying an extra 40p per year for the OPCC.
5. A Panel Member expressed that she found it difficult that the government assumed that the increase in precept would cover additional pressures, such as pay. The Panel Member would support the full £10 increase, as to veto it would not result in the entire increase going to the Police. In other financial circumstances, the Panel Member would not have had an issue with the increase. The Panel Member recommended the PCC reconsider the allocation of additional funding to the OPCC and provide it to the Police instead to minimise any reduction in police staff. The CFO clarified that the Chief Constable was to maintain the existing vacancy margin of 8% if the precept was increased as proposed.
6. The Vice-Chairman provided a summary of the view of the Panel. It was acknowledged that there was a strong view in support of the PCC's precept proposal. The Panel Member highlighted the unique disadvantage of Surrey in terms of police funding, whereby the council tax funding exceeded that of central government. The Panel's concern over the consequences of the ringfencing of police officers was emphasised. The Panel Member highlighted that Force finances not entirely sustainable as significant savings were required in the medium term. The Panel Member stated that some Panel Members felt strongly that they would favour the maximum amount of resource going directly to the Force. The Chairman invited Panel Members to comment on the summary provided. A number of Panel Members expressed that they disagreed with recommending that the Commissioner not increase her Office's budget.

7. The Chairman put the recommendations to a vote. Recommendation one was carried unanimously and recommendation two was carried by a majority of one.
  
8. The PCC noted all of the Panel Members comments on the precept proposal.

**RESOLVED:**

The Surrey Police and Crime Panel recommends that –

1. The Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner Precept for a Band D property be increased by £10 to £295.57 in 2022/23.
  
2. The Police and Crime Commissioner should not increase the budget of her Office using funds which could instead be provided to Surrey Police, as the Panel is of the view that such funds would be better used to support the Force's operations.

**Actions/requests for further information:**

1. **R7/22** – An item on wider estates planning to be added to the agenda of the next Panel meeting in April.

**14/22 DATE OF NEXT MEETING [Item 14]**

The Panel noted that its next public meeting would be held on Thursday, 21 April 2022.

Meeting ended at: 1.01 pm

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**Chairman**

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Democratic Services  
 Woodhatch Place  
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7 February 2022

*Sent via Email.*

Dear Commissioner,

### **Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner Precept for 2022/23**

Pursuant to Schedule 5 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 and the Police and Crime Panels (Precepts and Chief Constable Appointments) Regulations 2012, I am writing to you to formally notify you of the decision of the Surrey Police and Crime Panel regarding your proposed precept for 2022/23.

At its public meeting of 4 February 2022, the Panel agreed the following recommendations:

1. *The Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner Precept for a Band D property be increased by £10 to £295.57 in 2022/23.*
2. *The Police and Crime Commissioner should not increase the budget of her Office using funds which could instead be provided to Surrey Police, as the Panel is of the view that such funds would be better used to support the Force's operations.*

In reaching this decision, the Panel noted:

- The compelling case made for increasing the precept to sustain the police service in Surrey.
- Your view that your Office is under resourced relative to other police and crime commissioner's offices as a result of historic decisions during a period when the role of Police and Crime Commissioner has grown and the demands on the Office have increased.
- The assumption made by the Home Office that all police and crime commissioners maximise their precept flexibility.
- The extent to which Surrey Police is uniquely disadvantaged by the current funding formula, being the only force in England where the contribution from ratepayers exceeds that from Government.
- The limitations placed upon the deployment of resources by the ringfencing of police officer numbers.
- That a £1 increase in the precept equates to approximately a £500,000 increase in the overall police group budget.
- That an amount approximately equal to that generated by a precept increase of 40pence is proposed for allocation to the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

at the expense of the Force, with the remaining proposed budget increase for the Office to be met from reserves in 2022/23.

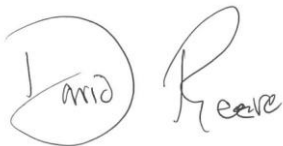
Some Members supported your well-reasoned proposal to increase the operational budget of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner to an amount equivalent to 0.5% of the Surrey police group budget. However, in light of Surrey Police's financial challenges, the majority of the Panel were unconvinced that increasing the budget of the Office at the expense of the Force reflects an appropriate balance of resources relative to the needs of Surrey Police, which is faced with maintaining a staff vacancy rate of at least 8% in 2022/23 due to the limited funding available to it. The Panel arrived at its decision in the context of increasingly strained household finances, considering that increasing residents' council tax burden can only be justified if it is to directly support the Force's operations, which is known to be a priority for residents.

The Panel considered the tension between the ongoing demands upon police staff – such as digital forensics, police community support officers, investigating officers, and contact centre staff – coupled with the consequences of ringfencing, and the demands upon the staff of your Office, and recognises the value of the Office's work, including the services it commissions and grants it gives.

The Panel's majority view, which we encourage you to consider most seriously, is that you should not increase your Office's budget by the amount proposed because of the impact that will have on the Force's ability to deliver to our residents and deliver against the priorities articulated in the Police and Crime Plan 2021-25, including in relation to safeguarding women and girls.

Thank you for your engagement with the precept scrutiny process and for the clear and insightful briefings which staff from your Office and Surrey Police provided to the Police and Crime Panel's Finance Sub-Group.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'D' followed by 'avid' and 'Reeve'.

**Councillor David Reeve**  
Chairman, Surrey Police and Crime Panel

Office of the Police and Crime  
Commissioner for Surrey

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Sent via email

9<sup>th</sup> February 2022

Dear Cllr Reeve,

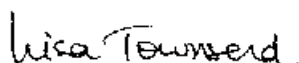
**Re: Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner Precept for 2022/23**

In accordance with Schedule 5 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act and having had regard to your report of 7<sup>th</sup> February, I am writing to set out my formal response to the Panel's recommendations. I am very pleased that the Panel unanimously accepted my proposed increase to the precept for a Band D property by £10 and am grateful for Members' time and engagement on this issue, both at the meeting and at the finance sub-committee meetings. This increase will help to sustain the policing service for Surrey that residents expect and deserve.

I note the Panel's second recommendation concerning the budget for the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner (OPCC). This subject was discussed exhaustively at the meeting last Friday, with the debate and resulting vote split almost evenly between those who supported my position and those who did not. I was heartened however, to see support across the board for the hard work of those staff currently in the OPCC and an understanding of the pressures currently placed on them. I do not propose to rehearse again my rationale for increasing my operational budget, as the report and debate will be matters of public record. Whilst I note the concerns of some members, I will not be making changes to my budget and strongly maintain that this small increase in staffing will bring benefits to Surrey Police, to victims of crime and to Surrey residents.

Thank you once again for the contribution of the Panel on this matter.

Yours sincerely,



**Lisa Townsend**  
Police and Crime Commissioner

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