



SURREY PCP

Minute Item 5/21

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Mr David Munro
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8 February 2021

Dear Commissioner,

Proposed Precept for 2021-22

In accordance with Schedule 5 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 and the Police and Crime Panel (Precepts and Chief Constable Appointments) Regulations 2012, I write to inform you of the Surrey Police and Crime Panel's decision with regard to your proposed precept for 2021-22.

The following recommendation was presented to the Panel on 5 February 2021:

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Police and Crime Panel:

- i) Review the precept proposal: to increase the Band D Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner Precept by £15 for 2021/22 from £270.57 to £285.57; and
- ii) Report to the Commissioner on the proposed precept.

RESOLVED:

The Police and Crime Panel reviewed the precept proposal.

In accordance with paragraph 3.7 of the Surrey Police and Crime Panel's Constitution, a **recorded vote** was requested by three Panel members.

Three Panel members voted for the precept proposal, seven Panel members voted against the precept proposal and there were no abstentions.

In accordance with the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 a veto must be agreed by two-thirds of Panel members, which equates to ten Panel members (the full membership rather than those present at the meeting) and as that requirement had not been met, the Panel:

- (i) Accepted that the PCC's proposal to increase the Band D Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner Precept by £15 for 2021/22 from £270.57 to £285.57 would come into effect; and
- (ii) Would formally report to the Commissioner (by 8 February 2021), noting its concerns and reasons for Panel members not supporting the proposed precept (see the Panel's minutes for the detailed discussion).

A summary of Panel members' concerns and reasons for not supporting your proposed precept is provided below for your consideration:

- That despite the precept increase last year, Surrey Police had limited presence on the beat and as part of the proposed precept increase; increasing frontline officers was vital to provide reassurance to residents.
- That as Surrey's district and borough councils were keeping Council Tax increases predominantly low within 2 to 3% it was difficult to justify the Commissioner's proposed precept increase of 5.5% due to the financial difficulties many were facing as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic; with many using food banks and seeking financial aid for the first time.
- That the proposed precept increase needed to be translated into an increase in performance, vague statements on increased performance were outlined in the Chief Constable's investment case. The Commissioner's duty was to hold the Chief Constable to account, there had been a flatline in performance indicators and outcomes which could not continue.
- That the length of time to recruit officers and staff was too slow, a year was a long time for those recruits to be trained and ready for frontline duties.
- That residents provided comments within Commissioner's Council Tax Survey 2021/22 in which 51% said that they were not in favour of the proposed precept noting the difficulty in funding that thirty pence a week increase in addition to Council Tax rises from district and borough councils; particularly for those on restricted incomes.
- That the financial burden on Surrey's council taxpayers was great and so sought clarification on the use of reserves, spending efficiency, the use of savings as alternatives to reduce that burden; as well clarification on the split within the Surrey Capital & Investment Programme of funding for the Estate Strategy compared to Operational Equipment - to ensure adequate funding for frontline officers and staff.

In respect of the above concerns, the Panel requests that:

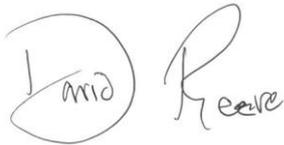
- Going forward it has sight of the various scenarios of proposed precept levels that you consider in order to understand the effect of different precept levels.
- You provide a regular report on the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that you will be using to assess how Surrey Police delivers against the Chief Constable's investment case, including:
 - The setting of targets for the Chief Constable to achieve in respect of the three focus areas where the increase in officers and staff is financed through the precept: 'more police officers and frontline staff - reducing the most serious accidents on Surrey's roads', 'better crime prevention - a dedicated rural crime team'; and 'more crimes solved - more police staff focused on assisting local investigations'. Regarding crimes solved, the Panel stress that improvements are needed in the volume of crimes resolved including increasing positive outcome rates, the identification of suspects and prosecution rates particularly for high harm offences as well as total notifiable offences.
 - How the investment case supports all six priorities within the Police and Crime Plan.
 - The measures put in place to ensure that the public get value for money on the £4.1 million additional investment provided as a result of the 2021/22 precept.
- The length of time to recruit officers and staff needed to be speeded up where possible as it is unacceptable that there is a year's delay.
- You continue to lobby the Government and Surrey Members of Parliament (MPs) for a fairer funding formula as Surrey Police received the lowest grant from Government

per head of population in the country, so that the precept next year should not be used to redress the unfair funding placing the burden on council taxpayers.

- Any future Council Tax Survey should give residents the opportunity to select where they want an increase in Council Tax used.

I would like to thank you for your communication with the Police and Crime Panel's Finance Sub-Group regarding your proposed precept and budget position in the lead up to the formal Panel meeting.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of the first name 'David' and the surname 'Reeve' written in a cursive style.

Councillor David Reeve
Chairman, Surrey Police and Crime Panel

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