

## Wiltshire Police and Crime Panel

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### MINUTES OF THE WILTSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

#### ON-LINE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 4 FEBRUARY 2021

#### **Present:**

Cllr Junab Ali, Cllr Abdul Amin, Mamie Beasant, Cllr Alan Bishop, Cllr Richard Britton (Chairman), Cllr Brian Mathew, Cllr Tom Rounds, Cllr Jonathon Seed and Cllr John Smale

#### **Also Present:**

Angus Macpherson – Police & Crime Commissioner  
Kieran Kilgallen – OPCC  
Clive Barker – OPCC

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#### 119 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr Ross Henning – Wiltshire Council and Anna Richardson – Co-opted Independent member

#### 120 **Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest

#### 121 **Chairman's Announcements**

The chairman explained that he intended to consider the results of the PCC's consultation on the precept before the precept paper itself

#### 122 **Public Participation**

There was no public participation

## 123 **Formal consideration of PCC Precept proposal**

The Commissioner outlined the report on the consultation process which sought to provide the Police and Crime Panel (PCP) with a summary of the PCC's public consultation and the public's view on the proposed £15 a year, per household, increase in the policing precept on a band D property.

Points made included:

- The public consultation on the policing precept began at 11am on Tuesday 5 January 2021 and closed on Tuesday 2 February.
- The consultation strategy was built on experience in recent years and the increased public awareness. This year, the priority had been to direct all consultation responses through a short and simple survey. The survey consulted on views on the proposed increase, priorities and age/location of those taking part.
- A range of channels were used to raise awareness and encourage completion and feedback, including; high-profile media campaign launching the precept proposal, social media awareness campaign, video setting out the proposal, community messaging, engagement with local media and press statements, PCC and D/PCC virtual engagement with local communities at area boards and parish councils in January.
- Despite the response rate being down on last year, the Commissioner was pleased with the response from the public and the comments received. In total, 1526 responses to the consultation were received.

The PCP were concerned re the low response rate and hoped that the OPCC would look into how the response rate particularly amongst young people could be improved for future consultations.

Clive Barker - Chief Finance Officer outlined the Proposed Precept for 2021-22 report.

Points made included:

- That in January 2021 the PCP were presented a report that identified the initial thinking on the 2021-22 budget and the draft MTFs (Medium Term Financial Strategy).
- The paper identified that whilst overall funding levels had been announced no specific information had been received, this remained the case.
- During January more information had been released on the Local Council Tax support grant and the Local Tax Income Guarantee for

2020-21. Information on these was included in the paper however there remained great uncertainty surrounding their implementation.

### **Central Grant**

- That as detailed in the January paper the grant for Wiltshire had risen by £3.383m to £72.944m (excluding Pensions Specific Grant). This was Wiltshire's portion of the £415m provided by the government to fund nationally an additional 6,000 officers. No funding had been provided to finance any inflation or growth pressures.

### **Local Funding Grants**

- That Local funding was the sum of the precept plus collection funds.
- With the pandemic and higher unemployment the cost of local support had increased. This and a reduction in payments, which in the long term may be collectable, had led to deficits being forecasted.
- To assist precepting authorities the government had proposed two financial support schemes.

The OPCC advised that the savings contained in the report were achievable.

Cllr Abdul Amin raised concerns that the precept continued to be raised year on year and that many residents living in his ward in Swindon could not afford the increases.

The Commissioner advised that local MPs had shown little appetite to fight Wiltshire Police's corner re its lack of central government funding. Only one MP had shown any interest in pursuing this issue.

*It was agreed that the Commissioner would consider the level of policing in Cllr Amin's wards in Swindon and update Cllr Amin directly on this matter*

*It was agreed that the OPCC would provide details of the Top slicing costs of membership support to Cllr Jonathon Seed*

### **Decision**

- **That the PCP supported the Commissioner's precept proposal to increase council tax by £15 per annum (6.9%)**

The Chairman thanked the Panel members and Commissioner for their input in the discussion

124 **Forward Work Plan**

The 2021 Forward Work Plan was noted

125 **Future meeting dates**

The next meeting of the Police and Crime Panel will be on Thursday 18 March 2021 at 10am

Future meeting dates were:

- Thursday 10 June 2021 – 10am
- Thursday 9 September 2021 – 10am
- Thursday 9 December 2021 – 10am

126 **Close**

(Duration of meeting: 10.00 - 11.00 am)

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