

# AGENDA

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**Meeting:** Wiltshire Police and Crime Panel  
**Place:** Kennet Room - County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge,  
BA14 8JN  
**Date:** Thursday 16 January 2025  
**Time:** 10.30 am

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Please direct any enquiries on this Agenda to Matt Hitch of Democratic Services, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, email [matthew.hitch@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:matthew.hitch@wiltshire.gov.uk)

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**Membership:**

Cllr Steve Bucknell, Wiltshire Council  
Cllr Junab Ali, Swindon Borough Council  
Cllr Stanka Adamcova, Swindon Borough Council  
Denisa Ahmeti  
Cllr Abdul Amin, Swindon Borough Council  
Cllr Ross Henning, Wiltshire Council  
Cllr George Jeans, Wiltshire Council  
Cllr Vijay Manro, Swindon Borough Council  
Cllr Kelvin Nash, Wiltshire Council  
Cllr Tony Pickernell, Wiltshire Council  
Cllr James Sheppard, Wiltshire Council  
Cllr Ian Thorn, Wiltshire Council  
Louise Williams

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**Substitutes:**

Cllr Ernie Clark, Wiltshire Council  
Cllr Gayle Cook, Swindon Borough Council  
Cllr Claire Crilly, Swindon Borough Council  
Cllr Adrian Foster, Wiltshire Council  
Cllr Suresha Gattapur, Swindon Borough Council  
Cllr Sarah Gibson MP, Wiltshire Council  
Cllr Jon Hubbard, Wiltshire Council  
Cllr Gordon King, Wiltshire Council  
Cllr Dominic Muns, Wiltshire Council  
Cllr Dr Nick Murry, Wiltshire Council  
Cllr Sam Pearce-Kearney, Wiltshire Council  
Cllr Caroline Thomas, Wiltshire Council  
Cllr Graham Wright, Wiltshire Council

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Please see the agenda list on following pages for details of deadlines for submission of questions and statements for this meeting.

For extended details on meeting procedure, submission and scope of questions and other matters, please consult [Part 4 of the council's constitution](#).

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# AGENDA

## Part I

*Items to be considered when the meeting is open to the public*

1 **Apologies**

To receive any apologies or substitutions for the meeting.

2 **Minutes** (Pages 5 - 16)

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 14 November 2024 as a true and correct record.

3 **Declarations of interest**

To receive any declarations of disclosable interests or dispensations granted by the Standards Committee or Monitoring Officer.

4 **Chairman's Announcements**

To receive announcements through the Chairman.

5 **Public Participation**

The Panel welcomes contributions from members of the public.

Statements

If you would like to make a statement at this meeting on any item on this agenda, please register to do so at least 10 minutes prior to the meeting. Up to 3 speakers are permitted to speak for up to 3 minutes each on any agenda item. Please contact the officer named on the front of the agenda for any further clarification.

Questions

To receive any questions from members of the public received in accordance with the constitution.

**Please note that questions must relate to the [responsibilities and functions](#) of the Panel and must not relate directly to operational policing matters.**

Those wishing to ask questions are required to give notice of any such questions in writing to the officer named on the front of this agenda no later than 5pm on 9 January 2025 in order to be guaranteed of a written response. In order to receive a verbal response, questions must be submitted no later than 5pm on 13 January 2025. Please contact the officer named on the front of this agenda for further advice. Questions may be asked without notice if the Chairman decides that the matter is urgent.

Details of any questions received will be circulated to Committee members prior to the meeting and made available at the meeting and on Wiltshire Council's website.

6 **PCC Draft Budget 2025/26 and Precept Consultation** (Pages 17 - 24)

To receive a presentation from the Police and Crime Commissioner including the following reports:

- i) Draft Budget Settlement
- ii) Use Your Voice: Precept and Budget consultation

7 **Forward Work Plan** (Pages 25 - 26)

To note the forward work plan.

8 **Date of the Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on 5 February 2025.

Other future meeting dates will be held as follows:

- 26 March 2025
- 26 June 2025
- 11 September 2025
- 25 November 2025

9 **Urgent Items**

Any other items of business which the Chairman agrees to consider as a matter of urgency.

**Part II**

*Item(s) during whose consideration it is recommended that the public should be excluded because of the likelihood that exempt information would be disclosed*

**None**

## **Wiltshire Police and Crime Panel**

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### **MINUTES OF THE WILTSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL MEETING HELD ON 14 NOVEMBER 2024 AT COMMITTEE ROOM 6, SWINDON BOROUGH COUNCIL OFFICES, EUCLID ST, SWINDON SN1 2JH.**

#### **Present:**

Cllr Steve Bucknell (Chairman), Cllr Junab Ali (Vice-Chairman), Denisa Ahmeti, Cllr Abdul Amin, Cllr Ross Henning, Cllr George Jeans, Cllr Vijay Manro, Cllr Kelvin Nash, Cllr James Sheppard, Cllr Ian Thorn, Louise Williams and Cllr Claire Crilly (Substitute)

#### **Also Present:**

Cllr Gayle Cook  
Police and Crime Commissioner, Philip Wilkinson, OBE, MPhil  
Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer of the OPCC, Naji Darwish  
Chief Constable Catherine Roper  
Assistant Chief Constable Ian Saunders  
Strategic Lead Criminal Justice and Reoffending, Caz Deverall-Hart  
A/Head of Probation Delivery Unit, Swindon and Wiltshire, Huw Wilford  
Integrated Offender Manager Supervisor at Wiltshire Police, Mark Wilkinson  
OPCC Head of Strategy, Performance and Oversight, James Griffin (online)  
Swindon Borough Council Committee Services Officer, Annie Vickers  
Wiltshire Council Democratic Services Officer, Matt Hitch

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#### 64 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from:

- Cllr Stanka Adamcova – substituted by Cllr Claire Crilly
- Cllr Tony Pickernell

#### 65 **Minutes and Matters Arising**

Assistant Chief Constable Ian Saunders said that he would provide information about whether the police had the authority to add additional padlocks to doors.

On the proposal of Cllr Vijay Manro, seconded by Cllr Ross Henning, it was resolved to make the:

#### **Decision**

**To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2024 as a true and correct record.**

66 **Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

67 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman informed the Panel that the [Ride Along](#) scheme, allowing Panel members and members of the public to shadow the police when they were out on operations, was scheduled to be up and running by mid-December. All the Panel members confirmed that they were interested in participating in the scheme. It was noted that further information would be provided to the Panel and that the final arrangements would be made with the relevant police teams.

68 **Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

69 **Wiltshire Chief Constable Update**

Chief Constable Catherine Roper updated the Panel about the findings of recent inspections into the performance of Wiltshire Police. She was pleased to report that the latest Police Efficiency, Effectiveness and Legitimacy (PEEL) report from His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) had found that Wiltshire Police had made progress in all, bar two, areas. An in-depth analysis had been undertaken to understand why progress had not been made in the two areas that had been static and HMICFRS had been assured that the foundations had been put in place to enable progress in these areas in future.

The way that Wiltshire Police had been implementing Operation Soteria, the government's programme to improve the investigation of sexual offences, had also been inspected. Although the formal report had yet to be published, the Chief Constable noted that the force had received positive feedback, including about how it was tackling stalking. Furthermore, Wiltshire Police had undergone an inspection about how it was tackling serious and organised crime. The results of the inspection were expected to be published in the new year.

The Chief Constable explained that Wiltshire Police were keen to embed the progress that had been made. The force was due to hold a strategic summit the following week to review their three-year plan and financial position.

Members of the Panel praised an increase in the visibility of neighbourhood policing teams. The Chief Constable welcomed the feedback from the Panel and explained that she had reversed a change, introduced in 2014, that had merged neighbourhood and response teams. The new model was bearing fruit and empowered neighbourhood teams to carry out more proactive community policing.

The Panel noted that they would welcome further information about the powers that Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) had to tackle issues such as cycling on pavements.

In reply to concerns raised about the restructure of Wiltshire Police's response teams, specifically, that the reallocation of officers from Warminster to Trowbridge was impacting response times in Mere, the Chief Constable explained that the aim of the new process was to create greater resilience. She highlighted that Wiltshire Police had its highest number of police officers in a decade, so had a relatively high proportion of new recruits. The response teams operated a spoke and hub approach where officers would gather and then cars would disperse throughout their areas of responsibility. The Chief Constable was optimistic that, as the level of experience grew within the force, the spoke and hub model could be relaxed so that the officers did not have to gather as frequently. She provided assurances that the model would be closely monitored and refined so that they could provide the best level of service. As it had been reported that a large number of vehicles from other police forces had attended an incident in Mere, she also noted that Wiltshire Police worked closely with neighbouring forces to ensure that cars could respond as quickly as possible in border areas.

The Panel stated that they would welcome greater continuity in staffing within neighbourhood police teams to ensure that local knowledge was retained. The Chief Constable agreed that continuity was important and stated that this was a focus of the force.

In response to a query about whether there was a target date for Wiltshire Police to be rated as outstanding, the Chief Constable explained that they had a focus on continual progress and that HMICFRS inspected Wiltshire Police every two years.

When asked about why only 70 percent of 999 calls were answered within the target of 10 seconds, the Chief Constable observed that the figures in the PEEL report dated from March, when Wiltshire was the worst performing of the 43 forces in England and Wales, when measured against that metric. However, she explained that Wiltshire had made significant recent progress, becoming the thirty third best performing force in September and rising to become the seventeenth best performing at the time of the meeting. She argued that the progress made evidenced a fundamental change in the way that the force was operating.

When asked about how the Chief Constable was ensuring that all staff bought into her vision to reform the service, the Chief Constable emphasised the importance of collaborative and reflective working. She acknowledged that people often found change hard but stated that officers were determined to provide a good service and were committed to continuing to improve. She highlighted the large number of volunteer special constables in Wiltshire as an example of the goodwill and passion for policing in the county. She also noted that over 100 Guides had completed the Girl Guide Policing Challenge and that a similar scheme was being replicated with the Scouts.

Assistant Chief Constable Ian Saunders also took the opportunity to praise the work done by special constables in areas ranging from harm reduction to drone usage.

## 70 **CCC Improvements**

Assistant Chief Constable Ian Saunders updated the Panel about the measures being put in place to improve performance at the Crime and Communications Centre (CCC). Points included:

- The Assistant Chief Constable had joined Wiltshire Police in June and had found that the force was full of enthusiastic people that were keen to improve the service.
- As the CCC had a relatively high number of inexperienced staff, the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), Philip Wilkinson, OBE, MPhil, had agreed to fund 165 people staff to cover 145 posts. It was anticipated that the numbers of staff would decrease over time as the average level of experience increased.
- As well responding to calls, the CCC had a responsibility to accurately record crimes within statutory timescales.
- The CCC received around 111,000 999 and 92,000 101 calls per year as well as processing 65,000 crimes reported using the online system.
- The CCC were looking at robotics and automation to help improve efficiency, as demand for services was increasing by approximately five percent a year.
- The government had set a target for 90 percent of 999 calls to be answered within 10 seconds, but currently only five of the 43 police forces in England and Wales were meeting this goal.
- As the staff in CCC gained experience they were able to answer a wider variety of calls, which allowed for greater flexibility in the way that resources could be deployed. There were good opportunities for progression and many CCC staff went on to become police officers.
- The force had recently invested in the EISEC geolocation system which allowed calls to be transferred automatically from BT.
- Digital boards had been installed at the call centre to help staff to review demand. The data on the boards had been updated to allow operators to improve their situational awareness.
- As stated by the Chief Constable under her update, there had been a significant improvement in performance since August. The CCC were now just two percent away from the national target of answering 90 percent of 999 calls within 10 seconds.
- The recent Police Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Legitimacy (PEEL) inspection found that 25.8 percent of 101 calls were abandoned. However, it was likely that the true abandonment rate was significantly lower, as many people 'phoned back or reported crime online. QueueBuster technology had been introduced so that the public could hang up and be called back. Some forces did have technology that



allowed them to differentiate between calls that had truly been abandoned and those that got in touch at a later time.

- The Assistant Chief Constable chaired an improvement board about transformational change and engaged with the Chief of Corporate Services, John Derryman, about the resources required to continue improvement. The Assistant Chief Constable's role was to embed the technology and utilise the investments that had been made in the best possible way.

During the discussion, points included:

- The Panel thanked the Assistant Chief Constable for his update and welcomed the progress that had been made in the time that it was taking to answer calls.
- It was highlighted that EISEC technology had been around for 20 years.
- In response to a query about whether it would be possible to set up a general enquiries line to reduce demand on the 101 and 999 services, it was noted that the contact details for neighbourhood teams were available on Wiltshire Police's website and on social media.
- There had been a technical glitch with the call centre on Monday 10 November, leading to a delay in some 101 calls being answered. No 999 calls were missed as they were picked up in Gablecross Call Centre and diverted to other forces. People that had abandoned calls were 'phoned back so that no emergencies were missed.
- Assurances were sought that when landline 'phones went fully online Wiltshire Police would have the resilience to keep 'phone lines open during a power outage. The Chief Constable explained that there had recently been a multi-agency exercise to test a response to a complete power outage. She noted that a series of recommendations had been developed based on the exercise and that they had been shared with the agencies that had taken part. She could also share the relevant findings with the Panel. The Panel said that they would welcome this information and that they were keen to add it to their forward work plan.
- In response of a query about the length of time that 90 percent of calls were being answered in, the Assistant Chief Constable noted that he did not have those figures available but reassured the Panel that the calls there were not answered within 10 seconds did not take significantly longer. He stated that he could share further data about call response times.
- The introduction of robotics would be a significant step forward as it would allow crimes reported online to be seamlessly integrated without the need to manually copy information. This would improve accuracy and allow call-centre staff to use their time more flexibly.
- The PCC emphasised the importance of collaborating with other forces on procurement to secure economies of scale and explained that forces in South West England had taken the initiative in driving this forward. He noted that the government would be likely to mandate further co-

operation and emphasised the importance of police forces ensuring that their views were taken account of in the process.

- When asked about the prevalence of nuisance calls, the Assistant Chief Inspector confirmed that there had not been a significant rise in this issue. He highlighted that repeat calls were often made by people suffering with mental health issues and reported that the Thrive process had been embedded within CCC to help support people to get support in the appropriate way.

Other issues discussed under this item included:

- Chief Constable Catherine Roper confirmed that there was no set target for the number of special constables in the force, but they were blessed to have a high number. The special constables volunteered thousands of hours and had recently played important roles in tackling youth violence in Swindon and Devizes. A new recruitment drive was underway.
- The Assistant Chief Constable explained that the average length of service of a special constable was three and a half years. However, there were a number of special constables that had been with Wiltshire Police for decades.
- The PCC explained that his office was now paying the federation fees for special constables, whereas previously, they had had to pay their own. He explained that in each year an award was given to the best special constable. This year, the award had been won by a drone pilot who had developed technology that could be attached to drone and detect mobile 'phone signals.

## 71 **Update from the Police and Crime Commissioner**

Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Philip Wilkinson, OBE, MPhil gave a wide-ranging update about the progress towards his Crime Plan, the National Police Air Service (NPAS), collaboration between forces and the financial position of Wiltshire Police. Points included:

- The National Police Chiefs' Council was undertaking a review of the strategic framework for how police forces accessed air support. The PCC welcomed the review but noted that he expected that a revised framework would still not be in place for a number of years.
- The PCC expressed frustration that Wiltshire Police were contributing financially to NPAS to pay for fixed wing aircraft that they rarely used. He highlighted that 80 percent of missions were now carried out using drones and that he had been leading collaboration at a regional level to improve capability.
- The new government were keen to strengthen collaboration between police forces in a range of areas. The PCC explained that forces in South West England had been leading the way by looking at how they could deliver efficiencies by sharing facilities.

- It was anticipated by the PCC that the role of PCCs would continue to develop and that PCCs were keen to strengthen powers and local input into criminal justice coordination, such as probation and youth justice services. He explained that, in his view, the current justice system would benefit from having more coordination and joint planning.
- At a recent meeting that the PCC had with the new Minister of State for Policing, Fire and Crime Prevention, Dame Diana Johnson DBE, she had been unable to confirm what Wiltshire's central grant for policing would be for 2025/26. The PCC was also seeking clarity about whether central government grant funding, such as the Safer Streets Fund, would be rolled over for another year.

During the discussion, points included:

- The Panel thanked the PCC for his update.
- It was not yet confirmed whether the police would have to pay the increase in national insurance announced in the government's October budget. The PCC was concerned that if Wiltshire Police had to pay the increase it would place significant strain on their resources and would reverse the improvements that been made.
- In response to a question about drones, the PCC gave a detailed answer about the number and variety in service with Wiltshire Police. He argued that the police could learn from other organisations, such as the Maritime Agency, that had a long track record of drone usage. He also highlighted the potential strategic advantages that drones could bring, such as helping to inform the number of officers that might be required to attend a particular incident.
- The Safer Streets Fund and the Serious Violence Duty were government funded schemes that were mostly spent on additional police patrols and street wardens. The PCC believed that these additional resources had made a significant contribution to the 16 percent reduction in reports of anti-social behaviour across Wiltshire. The Chief Executive of the Office of the PCC (OPCC), Naji Darwish, explained that the Safer Streets Fund was used to provide additional patrols in specific locations and that quarterly updates were sent to the Home Office so that they could monitor the impact that the programme was having.
- When asked to comment on the discrepancy between the decline in the reporting of anti-social behaviour and the findings of the public consultation on the PCC's draft Police and Crime Plan, which showed a perception that anti-social behaviour was increasing, the Chief Executive explained that there had been conflicting data in perception for a long period. However, he stressed that the OPCC were continually looking at how they could improve public confidence, feelings of safety and engagement.
- The Chief Constable explained that she saw improving public perceptions as one of the police's responsibilities. She outlined a series of steps that Wiltshire Police were undertaking to improve engagement,

such as posting more on social media, visiting community groups and Area Boards.

- In response to a query about the drop in satisfaction in the victim journey, including how victims were kept informed about the investigations into their case, the Chief Constable acknowledged that further work was required. She explained that the force was improving oversight and increasing training about this issue. She also noted that the recent Police Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Legitimacy (PEEL) inspection had found an overall improvement in Wiltshire Police's investigations.
- The Chairman encouraged the press to attend the Panel's meetings.
- The Chief Constable reminded the Panel about Wiltshire Police's [community commitments](#) and their role in improving trust in the police. She also highlighted that Project Vigilant was underway to help protect the public from being victims of sexual offences on nights out.
- The PCC emphasised that the Chief Constable and he shared the Panel's desire to make communities feel safer and the need to improve communication, such as the response time to 101 calls. He stressed that the increased emphasis on neighbourhood policing and attendance at community events were important ways of showing the public the improvement that was taking place. He also explained that many negative perceptions about the police related to national, rather than Wiltshire specific, issues.
- Assistant Chief Constable Ian Saunders explained that responses to attend incidents were broken down into two categories, priority incidents and immediate incidents. He reassured that Panel that the times taken to respond to incidents were heading in the right direction. A review of the logs of priority incidents had been undertaken to analyse how response times could be improved. There had also been a dramatic improvement in the control room since the introduction of the 'task not ask' system in November 2023, after which officers were told, not asked, where to go.
- Immediate response times in Swindon were within the service level agreement. The rural nature of the rest of the county did present challenges for immediate response times. However, studies were underway to review demand and to identify hotspots where response times could be improved.
- A member of the Panel noted that he had recently sat on a public scrutiny panel that studied police complaints. The scrutiny panel identified a significant backlog in the number of complaints and questioned whether there were enough staff allocated in the OPCC to address the backlog.
- The PCC welcomed the additional scrutiny that would come from the new public panel. He explained that serious disciplinary complaints were referred to professional standards and that the OPCC processed complaints that related to the quality of service that had been provided and aimed to rectify this. He acknowledged that the number of complaints had increased but stated that the OPCC were ensuring that the process was as efficient as possible and that included the appropriate level of staffing. A rigorous analysis of complaints was

underway to identify trends and the potential opportunities for learning and prevention of complaints by improving policing.

- The Chief Executive of the OPCC explained that there was lots of statutory guidance relating to complaint processes and that he was keen to take onboard feedback as the new scrutiny group developed greater experience.
- When asked about the Further Action Taken (FAT) rate for rape and serious sexual offences, the PCC explained that Wiltshire Police had a FAT rate of two percent when he started his role and that this had increased to over eight percent. Although significant progress had been made, and the FAT rate for these types of offences was above the national average, the PCC was keen to stress that far more progress was needed. The Chief Constable reiterated the PCC's message that they were keen to drive improvement, not just in the FAT rate, but also in victim support. She reported that Wiltshire Police had recently received positive feedback about how they had implemented Operation Soteria, to protect women and girls.

## 72 **Draft Police and Crime Plan 2024-28**

Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Philip Wilkinson, OBE, MPhil, introduced the latest draft of his Police and Crime Plan for 2025-2029, and thanked the Panel for the feedback that they had given at the previous meeting. He explained that the improvements made in Wiltshire Police, gave him the confidence to set more specific goals than his previous Crime Plan. He noted that the draft was a working document that had been developed following a wide consultation.

During the discussion, the Panel thanked the PCC for the updated draft and welcomed the changes made. They also suggested that the Crime Plan could better articulate what good practice looked like in tackling the PCC's second priority of reducing violence and serious harm.

The PCC welcomed the comments and noted that he would revisit that part of the report. He noted that design work would be undertaken and anticipated that the final version of the Crime Plan would be published in the new year.

## 73 **Reducing Reoffending**

Representatives from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC), Wiltshire Police and the Probation Service gave a presentation about the multi-agency work that was going on to reduce reoffending.

Caz Deverall-Hart, Strategic Lead Criminal Justice and Reoffending at the OPCC, explained that female offenders were one of the priority groups supported as there had been a significant increase in the rate of female offending in recent years. She then outlined some of the holistic work that was being carried out by the Wiltshire Female Justice Support Board (FJSB), which was established in 2020 to tackle the issue. She explained that the FJSB

helped to commission services and develop pathways for female rehabilitation while also ensuring that the work in Wiltshire aligned to national strategies.

Mark Wilkinson, Integrated Offender Manager Supervisor, provided information about the Integrated Offender Management (IOM) programme that was introduced nationally in 2012. He reported that, although 85 percent of the 77 people currently going through the programme in Wiltshire were there on a statutory basis, 15 percent were there voluntarily, which was the third highest proportion in the country. He explained that the IOM programme tackled criminality in people with entrenched behaviours by studying their traits and the triggers that made them commit offences. People going through the programme were supported for at least a six-month period, to understand their motivations, and were then monitored for a further six months. The effectiveness of the of the scheme was shown by the significant reduction in reoffending rate in the six months after people had completed the IOM programme. Although costs to the criminal justice system increased during the period that offenders were on the programme, as they were integrated into their communities, the costs fell significantly afterwards and were lower than the costs before people entered.

Huw Wilford, Acting Head of the Probation Delivery Unit, gave a brief update about recent changes to the standard determinate sentences, which allowed some prisoners to be released 40, rather than 50 percent, of the way through their sentence. He explained that the aim of the scheme was to reduce pressure on prison places but noted that the number of people released early in Wiltshire was relatively small.

The Acting Head of the Probation Delivery Unit also gave an update about the probation reset programme. He explained that, overall, the probation service in Wiltshire was currently supervising 1,832 individuals, including 908 based in Swindon. He noted that there were pressures on staffing in probation and the prison service, so they were trying to use their resources in the most effective way. It had been identified that the service was most impactful in the first two thirds of the time that they spent with their clients, so there had been a shift to focus more resources on this period. Two thirds of the way through the programme, cases would be categorised as rest cases, although people would still be actively monitored. Research suggested that early intervention and support on a licence, or community order, was likely to have the greatest impact.

During the discussion, points included:

- The Panel thanked the officers for their presentation and praised the multi-agency work that was taking place to reduce reoffending.
- In response to a query about whether six months was long enough to monitor people coming out of the IOM programme, the Integrated Offender Manager Supervisor confirmed that it was an appropriate level of time. He noted that his team received a daily intelligence briefing about offenders that had gone through the six-month period after

completion IOM, so that they could take a proactive approach to supporting individuals where necessary.

- The table on the left-hand side of page 51 of the agenda pack showed financial data for the six-month period before and after the IOM.
- When asked about which offenders might be eligible for early release 40 percent of the way through their sentence, it was confirmed that no one in prison because of a conviction for a violent offence would be released early.
- It was confirmed that all Behaviour Change programmes took place face-to-face. Online interventions were used for some out of court resolutions for lower-level offences and were closely monitored. There were around 40 crime types which out of court resolutions could be used for and work would take place in the new year to ensure that online interventions were having the required impact.
- It was noted that Police Community Support Officers were doing valuable early intervention work with young people.
- When asked about what was being done to improve the timeliness of reports for court, the Integrated Offender Manager Supervisor explained that active steps were being put in place to try to address the issue. He noted that there were both national and regional rolling recruitment drives. The court system was understaffed, but resources were being moved to try to address this issue. Nearly 100 new, fully funded, officers had been recruited in South West England in 2024.

#### 74 **Forward Work Plan**

The Panel noted their forward work plan. They agreed to add an item about the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner's police complaints handling process to the plan.

They also noted that they would like further information to be provided about Wiltshire Police's emergency plans in response to power outages, with a particular focus on the future requirement for landline 'phones to rely on online connectivity.

Additional details about the call abandonment rate in the Crime and Communications Centre were also requested.

#### 75 **Communications**

Apologies were given for a technical glitch which prevented the start of the meeting from being broadcast.

The Chairman noted that the Panel had improved its communications over the past year by broadcasting its meetings online and submitting an annual report to the Full Council meetings of both local authorities. He also noted that the Panel were open to further ideas as to how they could improve their communications.

#### 76 **Commissioner's Question Time**

There were no questions for the Commissioner.

77 **Future Meeting Dates**

The next meeting of the Police and Crime Panel will be on Thursday 16 January 2025, at 10:30am, in Kennet Room, County Hall.

Other future meeting dates were confirmed as:

- Wednesday 5 February 2025, 10:30am
- Wednesday 26 March 2025, 10:30am
- Thursday 26 June 2025, 10:30am
- Thursday 11 September 2025, 10:30am
- Tuesday 25 November 2025, 10:30am

(Duration of meeting: 10.30 am - 1.00 pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Matt Hitch of Democratic Services,  
direct line , e-mail [matthew.hitch@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:matthew.hitch@wiltshire.gov.uk)

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Meeting	Police and Crime Panel
Date	16 January 2024
Report Title	Draft Budget Settlement
Report presented by	Philip Wilkinson, Police and Crime Commissioner
Author	David Moran, Interim Chief Finance Officer

## **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1 This paper provides the panel with information on the draft budget and precept being considered. It also shows the draft Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) which estimates the financial position over the next 4 financial years.

## **BACKGROUND**

- 2 On the 17 December the provisional settlement was announced by the government. Whilst the settlement reported a 6.0% total increase across policing in England and Wales, of which there was a reported 6.2% increase of funding in Wiltshire, this assumed a precept increase of £14/band D property across all forces for 2025-26.

## **CENTRAL GRANT**

- 3 The total grant announced is an increase of £5.6m (6.4%). This is inclusive of additional costs including additional Employers National Insurance Contributions (£2.4m), additional pay award increases agreed 2024/25 and expected increases 25/26 (£5.1m), consolidation of officer increases and other pressures including non-pay inflation of £1.4m, and additional costs of changes to the Dangerous Dogs Act.
- 4 The above Home Office settlement is also inclusive of Wiltshire's share (£0.8m) of an additional £100m nationally for a new phase of 13,000 additional police officers, PCSOs and special constables into neighbourhood policing roles. Full details of the requirements and criteria for Wiltshire are yet to be quantified by the Home Office, hence it is not included in the planning assumptions at this time.
- 5 To continue to meet national police officer requirements following the national uplift programme, the number of Full Time Equivalent Officers will remain at 1,194. [The Home Office definition is against total officer headcount. This will be at least 1,203 employed officers.]

## **COUNCIL TAX**

- 6 In the Local Government policy statement of 28th November, the government permitted PCCs to have the flexibility to raise the police precept to £14 for a Band D property in

2025-26. The government expects this to generate up to £329.8m nationally for police forces as compared with 2024-25.

- 7 For Wiltshire Police this £14 increase from £269.27 in 2024/25 to £283.27 in 2025/26 for a Band D property, being an increase of 5.2%.

**8 Table: Proposed Precept per banded property**

Council tax band	Precept contribution 24/25	Proposed contribution 25/26
A	179.51	188.84
B	209.43	220.32
C	239.35	251.80
D	269.27	283.27
E	329.11	346.22
F	388.95	409.18
G	448.78	472.12
H	538.54	566.54

- 9 The Council Tax receipt is dependent on the council tax base (the number of dwellings paying the tax). Provisional information provided by the councils reports an increase in the base of 0.6% in 2025-26.
- 10 A 1% increase in the police part of the Band D council tax in 2025-26 is worth £0.734m. Any increase in council tax in 2025/26 secures future years funding at a higher level.
- 11 A net surplus of £0.837m is expected on the Collection Fund, which is higher than previous years however this partly due to a review of Swindon Borough Council’s debt impairment policy and should therefore be considered a one-off.
- 12 Information has been provided by Swindon Borough Council and Wiltshire Council which provisionally expects the tax base to increase by 0.6%.

**INFLATION**

- 13 The Consumer Prices Index (CPI) rose by 2.6% in the 12 months to November 2024, up from 2.3% in October, but well below its recent peak of 11.1% in October 2022. On a monthly basis, CPI rose by 0.1% in November 2024, compared with a fall of 0.2% a year earlier. It should be noted that inflation has started to increase and is expected to increase further as the impact of the ERNIC increase takes affect from April 2025.

**PAY AWARDS**

- 14 The settlement on pay awards for 2024 was a 4.75% increase, being 2.25% higher than the assumption of 2.5% pay award.
- 15 It be noted that these increases in inflation driven in part by ERNIC are expected to affect many non-pay contracts and may also influence the pay negotiations and settlement. For 2025-26 initial government comments suggest a working assumption of 2.8%. We should assume if increases are much higher than the 2.8% there will be a reluctance by HM Treasury to support an additional grant support via the Home Office, hence a potential significant adverse financial impact will occur.

## BASE RATE

16 In December 2024 the bank base rate is 4.75% having reduced from 5.25%. Many expect the Bank of England to reduce rates further in 2025. This will make borrowing cheaper but will also reduce our investment returns. Plans for investment income are reduced to £727k (2024/25 assumed £1.197m).

## TOTAL FUNDING

17 The table below shows the estimated funds with a £14, per year, per Band D household, increase

	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	Variance £m
Central Grant	74.910	77.703	2.793
Local Precept (Council Tax)	73.448	77.637	4.189
Legacy Council Tax Grant	5.235	5.235	0.000
Collection Fund Surplus	0.023	0.837	0.814
Contributions from Reserves	0.273		(-0.273)
<b>Core Police Funding (Net Revenue Expenditure)</b>	<b>153.889</b>	<b>161.412</b>	7.523
Investment Income	1.197	0.727	(-0.470)
<b>Total Funding (NRE plus Investment Interest)</b>	<b>155.086</b>	<b>162.139</b>	7.053
			0.000
Uplift Grants	3.741	3.620	(-0.121)
Police Pensions Grant	3.619	3.345	(-0.274)
ERNIC Support Grant		2.372	2.372
<b>Total Funding (Core settlement &amp; Precepts)</b>	<b>162.446</b>	<b>171.476</b>	9.030

18 In 2025-26 the PCC is expected to only receive a grant for Victims of £1.450m from the Ministry of Justice. This is a reduction from previous years and cost pressures will be absorbed by the OPCC through re prioritising planned activity. Further funds may be announced by government in due course.

19 The investment income return is estimated to decrease in 2025-26 to £0.727m

20 A £14 per annum increase, per Band D property, in Council Tax will result in Wiltshire's Band D police precept increasing from £267.27 to £283.27 (5.2% increase). The table below shows the relative level of precept for Wiltshire as compared to the rest of the South West for 2024/25, and with a £14 increase is expected to be the norm across forces, it will remain the lowest in the South West region.

Authority	2024-25 Band D Council Tax	Wiltshire £14 increase 2025-26	Wiltshire £14 increase 2026-27	Wiltshire £14 increase 2027-28
Gloucestershire	£308.08			
Dorset	£305.58			
Avon & Somerset	£279.20			
Devon & Cornwall	£274.50			
<b>Wiltshire</b>	<b>£269.27</b>	<b>£283.27</b>	<b>£297.28</b>	<b>£311.28</b>

## **FUNDING**

21 In comparison to other police forces in England and Wales, Wiltshire is the third lowest funded per head of population.

22 As stated above, the 2025-26 provision settlement initially shows a £5.6m (6.4%) increase in Home Office grant funding. However, this increase needs to fund the following.

- (i) Increases in pay of 4.75% in 2024/25 (nationally set) when planning assumptions were 2.5% for 2024/25, plus the 2.8% planning assumption for 2025/26 pay award (extra costs in 2025/26 are (i) £2.9m for the higher than planned 2024/25 settlement and (ii) £2.2m for the 2025/26 settlement).
- (ii) The increase in Employers National Insurance costs at £2.4m
- (iii) Increased expectation regarding the Government's Neighbourhood Guarantee initiative of £0.8m.
- (iv) Top-up effects of moving separate funding into the main grant for additional officers previously agreed (£0.5m)
- (v) Non-pay inflation assumed at £1.4m
- (vi) Other pressures (£4.1m) including staffing changes, training and legislation changes including those to Dangerous Dogs.
- (vii) Cessation of the annual drawdown of Reserves (circa £2.5m)
- (viii) The above additional costs of £16.8m need to be not only offset. Savings are therefore also being explored to generate £6.8m of savings through reductions in staff, rationalisation of the fleet and the reduction of the current estate.

23 With a grant increase of £5.6m, less additional pressures of £16.8m, and with planned savings to reduce 2025/26 costs by £6.8m (made up of £1.6m of already agreed savings and an additional £5.2m to be identified), there remains a net effect of circa £4.6m which needs to be met from Precept increases.

## **POLICE OFFICER AND STAFF NUMBERS**

24 Whilst there is a savings requirement, the PCC is proposing to maintain budgeted Police Officer FTE numbers at 1,194 in 2025-26.

25 As part of the continued focus on value for money and drive for efficiency the number of staff employed by Wiltshire Police is expected to reduce, although this is not expected to impact public access to officers.

## **CAPITAL FINANCING STRATEGY (CFS)**

- 26 With no central capital grant and reducing reserves the financing of essential capital ICT and estates investment has become an additional challenge. This places additional demands on revenue funding (via direct contributions and the financing of borrowing) to fund capital.
- 27 The PCC has also announced that the current shared facility in Salisbury is not fit for purpose. Options have been considered alongside the business requirement. This Strategy includes £23.552m for a large southern policing hub and touchdowns. This figure does not include the provision of a custody unit. The current operational advice is given the current operational and against the capital and revenue cost this would not offer value for money however we are looking to ensure the site layout is flexible so a custody can be added in future years if the business case is proved. During the next 12 months further work will occur which will lead to firmer costs for planning purposes. The PCC remains committed to delivering a Southern Policing Hub.
- 28 Known improvement projects on the Estate have been included in the strategy. Examples of this are £2.164m for Environmental Projects and £2.033m for the Fire Safety Bill. Detailed plans of expenditure and their benefits will be produced before these capital projects are approved.
- 29 The ICT capital expenditure plan is now produced as part of the Digital, Data and Technology (DDaT) strategy. ICT managers have looked ahead to forecast costs up to 2025-26, this has been utilised for the whole period of this strategy. Due to the length of the strategy and the speed in which technology changes there are many unknowns. To acknowledge this £1m has been included in every year from 2025-26 for Infrastructure. Plans will need to be submitted before projects utilising these funds are approved. The total cost over the 8 years is £27.802m
- 30 The Devizes HQ site will continue to be maintained. An already announced regeneration of the London Road Headquarters will be paused and reviewed. Due to operational advice and the need to look at whole efficiency and effectiveness of all police estate, here are now no immediate plans to significantly develop the site. This is primarily driven by the financial challenges ahead.

## THE REVENUE BUDGET PROPOSAL

31 The table below identifies a summary of the current budget proposal with the £14 Council Tax increase.

Wiltshire Police Medium Term Financial Plan	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m
<b>WP Financial Requirement:</b>				
Expenditure Brought Forward	152.352	162.139	167.751	174.075
Specific Grant changes and Inflation on Income	(-1.997)	(-0.417)	(-0.425)	(-0.434)
Staffing Pressures including enhanced 2024/25 pay awards (set nationally):	13.356	3.616	3.709	3.322
Commercial Contract and Non-Salary Pressures:	3.723	3.103	1.418	2.054
Efficiencies Currently Under Development:	(-8.028)	(-4.589)	(-2.879)	(-0.003)
Capital changes:	2.734	3.900	4.500	1.500
<b>Financial Requirement for the year</b>	<b>162.139</b>	<b>167.751</b>	<b>174.075</b>	<b>180.514</b>
<b>Funding:</b>				
Home Office Grant	82.938	84.491	86.077	87.692
Precept £14 Band D	78.474	82.585	87.323	92.147
<b>Core Police Funding (Net Revenue Expenditure)</b>	<b>161.412</b>	<b>167.076</b>	<b>173.400</b>	<b>179.839</b>
Investment Interest	0.727	0.675	0.675	0.675
<b>Total Funding (NRE plus Investment Interest)</b>	<b>162.139</b>	<b>167.751</b>	<b>174.075</b>	<b>180.514</b>
<b>Allocations:</b>				
OPCC	6.576	7.420	7.825	8.178
Chief Constable	114.022	112.985	112.533	115.491
Corporate Services	38.807	40.712	42.582	44.212
Capital Contributions	2.734	6.634	11.134	12.634
<b>Total Budget Allocation</b>	<b>162.139</b>	<b>167.751</b>	<b>174.075</b>	<b>180.514</b>

## RISK ASSESSMENT

32 It should be noted that this is a provisional settlement which can change.

33 The savings proposed are based on the risk involved in reducing investment in certain areas. These have been reviewed and proposed by the Wiltshire Police Chief Officer Group on a risk basis.

## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

34 The MTFs includes plans to rationalise the number of vehicles and reduce the estates footprint. This will not only reduce the overall costs and drive improved efficiency but will also help reduce our carbon footprint of Wiltshire Police.

## CONCLUSION

35 The MTFs and the current thinking surrounding the proposed 2025-26 precept increase of £14 per Band D property, is both necessary and appropriate to ensure the continued improvements in the services provided by Wiltshire Police. I am also consulting the public on the level of precept.

David Moran  
Interim Chief Finance Officer  
Office of Police and Crime Commissioner and Wiltshire Police

Meeting	Police and Crime Panel
Date	16 Jan 2025
Report Title	Use Your Voice: Precept and Budget consultation
Report presented by	Philip Wilkinson, PCC

## 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This paper provides the panel with a summary of the public consultation process and engagement currently being undertaken on behalf of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) on the proposed budget for Wiltshire Police, including a proposed policing precept increase for 2025/26.
- 1.2 Further top-line analysis of the full engagement and feedback received from Wiltshire and Swindon’s residents will be available at the next Panel meeting in February.

## 2. PRECEPT AND BUDGET CONSULTATION (2025/26)

- 2.1 The public survey reference next year’s (2025/26) policing budget and precept element of the council tax started on 6 January 2025 and will end at midnight on 31 January 2025.
- 2.2 There are minimal insights to capture for this paper (written on 7 Jan 25) but there have been more than 400 responses, both internal and external, since the launch. A verbal update on the current position will be given in person.
- 2.3 The survey is now open for the next four weeks and aims to collate as much feedback, from as many residents, as possible. As further top-line analysis will be available for the next panel meeting in February, with full survey analysis carried out and published by the beginning of April 2025 on the PCC’s website.
- 2.4 This is the fourth budget consultation undertaken by my team and the approach combines a communications and public engagement plan, using both offline and online communication tools, and informed by learning from previous iterations.
- 2.5 I believe in the value of residents feeling engaged and empowered to have their say on matters affecting their policing service. Setting the police precept and the police budget is one area where the public has a voice, which is actively listened to, and is another avenue for me to be able to hear from local communities.
- 2.6 We have continued to give space for feedback from residents who wanted more space to voice their opinion on several aspects of policing. The survey was also broadened, as a result, to include safety perception questions, and public confidence points of view.
- 2.7 In order to enable as many people across Wiltshire and Swindon to be aware of the police precept, and to give their feedback about the proposed increase alongside the

police budget, the team is using a combined approach of online, digital, presence but are also carrying out targeted in-person, face-to-face engagement sessions across the county, to increase engagement where residents' response is traditionally lower.

2.8 Last year's precept and budget survey collected 2,610 responses, just over 100 responses short of the previous year. This approach utilised a combination of newspaper and radio adverts, digital marketing and in-person engagements. My team have since analysed which avenue gave the best response rate and have adjusted their approach to concentrate on these areas.

2.9 The focus of this year's consultation will be to ensure as wide an awareness of the proposed increase to this year's policing precept as possible, as well as obtaining statistical significance numbers of respondents to the survey. As ever, the aim to gather more responses than previous years, and across the demographic areas which have traditionally not engaged with my office, is prevalent.

### **3. APPROACH**

3.1 Using our online survey, which is open to Wiltshire police officers, staff and volunteers as well as the public, we are asking a variety of questions relating to precept increases, free text to gather feedback as well as safety perception and public confidence questions. As the Police and Crime Plan has been recently refreshed, questions about policing priorities were removed – making this survey short and less time intensive.

3.2 Using information gathered regarding best response rates, we have concentrated our approach by using targeted digital advertising and organic social media, as well as frequent use of Community Messaging, in-person engagements across Wiltshire and Swindon, as well as direct correspondence with stakeholders and key community charities, organisations etc.

3.3 The OPCC and PCC Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn channels were used to engage with the different audiences of each platform.

3.4 The OPCC's in-person engagements cover high footfall shopping areas, with harder to reach groups with specific effort made to secure presence within the Hindu, Sikh and Nepalese communities within Swindon and the Muslim communities in Wiltshire and Swindon.

3.5 The team will also utilise traditional media coverage, at zero cost, to secure sustained, media coverage across Wiltshire's radio stations and traditional print media throughout January.

3.6 A digital toolkit comprising of social media and web graphics, Meta story videos, suggested copy and survey links will also be distributed to contacts among Parish and town councils, Swindon Borough Council, Wiltshire Council, Wiltshire Police and other OPCC stakeholders and partners, including all local MPs and councillors. <sup>[OBJ]</sup>

### **4. RECOMENDATION**

4.1 Panel members are asked to note the report and the planned consultation process with Wiltshire and Swindon residents.



## Wiltshire Police and Crime Panel Forward Work Plan – January 2025

<b>Wednesday 5 February 2025, 10:30am</b>	Council Chamber, Monkton Park, Chippenham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Precept Public Consultation</li> <li>• PCC's Precept Proposal 2025/26</li> <li>• Communications</li> </ul>
<b>Wednesday 26 March 2025, 10:30am</b>	Kennet Room, County Hall, Trowbridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PCC Quarterly Plan Delivery Update</li> <li>• OPCC Commissioning, Grants, and Partnerships</li> <li>• Neighbourhood Harm Reduction</li> <li>• List of future topics for Panel consideration (including updates on Power Outage Resilience and Complaints Handling by the OPCC)</li> <li>• Communications</li> </ul>



<b>Thursday 26 June 2025, 10:30am</b>	The Old Firestation, 2 Salt Lane, Salisbury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PCC Update</li> <li>• Quarterly Plan Delivery Update</li> <li>• Focus Topic - TBC</li> <li>• Communications</li> </ul>
<b>Thursday 11 September 2025, 10:30am</b>	Committee Room 6, Swindon Borough Council Offices, Swindon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PCC Update</li> <li>• Quarterly Plan Delivery Update</li> <li>• Focus Topic - TBC</li> <li>• Communications</li> </ul>

