



**REPORT ON THE PCC'S CONSULTATION ON PROPOSALS ON THE POLICING
PRECEPT LEVEL**

1. Purpose of Report

1.1. To provide the Police and Crime Panel (PCP) with a summary of the PCC's public consultation on the proposed 7% increase in the policing precept (policing part of council tax).

2. Background and Main Considerations for the Panel

2.1. The public consultation on the policing precept began on 2 January 2018 and will close on 31 January 2018. Due to dates of the PCP meeting, this report only covers up to and including the 29 January 2018.

2.2. Building on the improved consultation in 2017 I hope to increase awareness and encourage public participation through a variety of channels. This will include:

- High profile media campaign launching the precept proposals for consultation
- Short video to the precept proposals
- Social media Q&As sessions – where the public could ask questions directly
- Telephone Q&A session
- Online responses
- Participation in local radio programmes and phone-ins
- Snap twitter polls
- Stakeholder distribution including Councillors and MPs asking for their views on behalf of the people they serve
- Presenting and discussing with area boards and parish councils to make them aware of consultation and request presentation of consultation video

3. The Consultation

3.1. I am pleased to say that more than three times the number people have participated in the consultation this year. A total of 635 people provided comments, feedback or statements had questions.

3.2. Whilst I will always strive to increase awareness and there is always more that can be done. I am delighted that this has started a debate about the level of funding for Wiltshire, the local contribution to that and the level of police service the public expect.

3.3. The table below breaks down the responses by mode of response, how many supported the proposals, are undecided or do not support them.

Mode of Response	Yes	No	Undecided
Email	130 (68%)	49 (25%)	15 (7%)
Website	248 (69%)	112 (31%)	0
Facebook	3 (50%)	3 (50%)	0
Community Messaging	62 (86%)	7 (10%)	3 (4%)
Postal	1 (33.3%)	1 (33.3%)	(33.3%)
TOTAL 635	TOTAL 444 (70%)	TOTAL 172 (26%)	TOTAL 19 (3%)

3.4. As the figures outline, the vast majority of respondents were supportive of the proposed increase. The overall sentiment was that respondents wanted to protect the police and wanted it spent on local, visible policing.

3.5. 70% of respondents support my proposed increase, 26% do not and 3% are undecided.

3.6. This matches my priorities to protect community policing and then future investment in police officers in future years as outlined in my medium term financial strategy.

3.7. To provide balance, I have set out the main themes for respondents not agreeing to the proposals and my response to these themes in appendix A.

4. Recommendations

4.1. Panel members are asked to note and consider this report.

Appendix A

Theme	PCC response
<p>Their own personal financial situations</p>	<p>I recognise that it is extremely difficult for many people across Wiltshire and Swindon and that is why the policing precept increases have been capped at 2% for the last few years.</p> <p>These increases generate £7m raised locally for policing but at the same time central funding has reduced by £19m. This means a gap of £12m, which has been saved by Wiltshire Police.</p> <p>Without this proposed increase I would have to find around £3m in 2018/19, 2019/20 and beyond. With 80% of my costs going on officers and staff this would affect frontline policing and their ability to keep us all safe.</p>
<p>Policing should be funded by government</p>	<p>Policing is funded by both central government and a policing element of council tax. Central funding follows a funding formula. I am lobbying for change as it is unfair and does not recognise rurality, the impact of vulnerability and non-crime demands on the police and the capability required to support national threats and harms.</p> <p>The proportion of this funding has been changing since 2010 with government playing less as a proportion. I have committed that locally raised funding should support local policing and local services. As set out in my plans this is the case and I am working to increase this amount of money spent locally.</p> <p>However criminality is not limited by geography and issues such as cybercrime, fraud and terrorism mean that victims and offenders are both local and international. So to protect the residents of Wiltshire and Swindon we must also have more specialised regional capability.</p>
<p>Wasted money on the investigation of Sir Ted Heath</p>	<p>In relation to the investigation conducted by Wiltshire Police on behalf of 14 police forces into Sir Edward Heath, I would expect serious allegations to be investigated by police. Police must consider allegations and have operational independence on the manner of those investigations.</p> <p>The investigation has been reviewed externally by the national team and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC). The national investigative role, the investigation processes and costs were reviewed by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and approved by the Home Secretary in the allocation of £1.1 million to cover the costs of this investigation.</p>

<p>The state of Wiltshire Police is currently not good enough. This covered issues such as the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burglary • Rural communities • Policing presence. • Contacting the police and 101 	<p>Like all police areas, there are areas we need to improve. There are clear plans in place to address the issues raised such as burglary, investment in rural policing and further resourcing of community policing. These are all issues I have raised with the Chief Constable and my office and the force are working to address them. This work is then scrutinised, supported and challenged by the Police and Crime Panel.</p> <p>Despite these challenges, I am proud that Wiltshire Police has been consistently rated 'good' by HMIC for its effectiveness, efficiency and in legitimacy. Broadly we have a good police service which uses the money given by taxpayers well.</p> <p>This is against the backdrop of being the fourth lowest funded police area in the country with both very low central funding and below average policing precept.</p>
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