

Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey – Decision Making Record

Title: Council Tax Precept for the Financial Year 2014/15
Decision number: 053/2014
Author and Job Role: Alison Bolton, Chief Executive
Ian Perkin, Chief Finance Officer
Protective Marking: Part One

Executive Summary:

Under Schedule 5 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, the Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) has to notify the Police & Crime Panel of the precept that he proposes to issue under section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. The Police & Crime Panel must review the proposed precept notified to it. This process took place at the meeting of the Panel on 6th February 2014.

For the Financial year 2014/15 in line with the legislation, the PCC proposes to set a precept of £211.70 (for a Band D property), an increase of 1.99% on the 2013/14 precept of £207.55 (for a Band D property).

At the time of preparing his report to the Police & Crime Panel, the Government had not confirmed the Council Tax Lock for 2014/15 (i.e. the level of increase which, if exceeded, would trigger a referendum). The PCC received confirmation on 5th February that the threshold for triggering a referendum would be a precept increase of 2% or above. This late notification meant that the PCC was required to put forward a revised recommendation to the Panel on 6th February of a 1.99% increase, as opposed to the 2% previously anticipated.

This proposal meant that the PCC was not entitled to receive the 1% Council Tax Freeze Grant from the Government. If he had accepted this grant, a permanent and recurring reduction of £1million per annum to the PCC's income base would have resulted – the equivalent to employing 23 fewer police constables.

With Surrey Police already having to find efficiencies and savings to cope with central government funding reductions, the PCC has carried out consultation exercises and events with the Surrey public on his precept proposals and could not find any significant support for a policy of reducing front line policing in the county. This could well be the long term result if he had been minded to recommend freezing the precept at last year's level.

To inform the Panel's consideration of the precept proposal, the PCC submitted a number of supporting documents which showed how the precept requirement was arrived at and a breakdown of budgets by operational areas and departments. This information can be seen on the Panel's website.

The precept proposals received the support of the Police & Crime Panel at its meeting on 6th February 2014.

Recommendation

That, following the agreement of the Police and Crime Panel, the proposed precept of £211.70 for a Band D Property is agreed.

Police and Crime Commissioner Approval

I approve the recommendation(s):

Signature:



Date: 08/04/2014

Areas of consideration**Consultation**

The PCC has consulted with the Police & Crime Panel. In addition, he undertook public consultation to inform his decisions on setting the precept.

Financial implications

As discussed in the report.

Risks

None arising. The PCC's proposed precept would not trigger a costly referendum.

Equality and diversity and Human Rights

No issues arising.