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7 February 2022

Sent via Email.

Dear Commissioner,

Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner Precept for 2022/23

Pursuant to Schedule 5 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 and the Police and Crime Panels (Precepts and Chief Constable Appointments) Regulations 2012, I am writing to you to formally notify you of the decision of the Surrey Police and Crime Panel regarding your proposed precept for 2022/23.

At its public meeting of 4 February 2022, the Panel agreed the following recommendations:

- 1. The Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner Precept for a Band D property be increased by £10 to £295.57 in 2022/23.*
- 2. The Police and Crime Commissioner should not increase the budget of her Office using funds which could instead be provided to Surrey Police, as the Panel is of the view that such funds would be better used to support the Force's operations.*

In reaching this decision, the Panel noted:

- The compelling case made for increasing the precept to sustain the police service in Surrey.
- Your view that your Office is under resourced relative to other police and crime commissioner's offices as a result of historic decisions during a period when the role of Police and Crime Commissioner has grown and the demands on the Office have increased.
- The assumption made by the Home Office that all police and crime commissioners maximise their precept flexibility.
- The extent to which Surrey Police is uniquely disadvantaged by the current funding formula, being the only force in England where the contribution from ratepayers exceeds that from Government.
- The limitations placed upon the deployment of resources by the ringfencing of police officer numbers.
- That a £1 increase in the precept equates to approximately a £500,000 increase in the overall police group budget.
- That an amount approximately equal to that generated by a precept increase of 40pence is proposed for allocation to the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

at the expense of the Force, with the remaining proposed budget increase for the Office to be met from reserves in 2022/23.

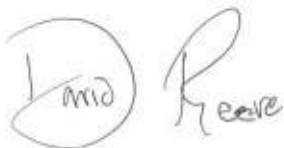
Some Members supported your well-reasoned proposal to increase the operational budget of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner to an amount equivalent to 0.5% of the Surrey police group budget. However, in light of Surrey Police's financial challenges, the majority of the Panel were unconvinced that increasing the budget of the Office at the expense of the Force reflects an appropriate balance of resources relative to the needs of Surrey Police, which is faced with maintaining a staff vacancy rate of at least 8% in 2022/23 due to the limited funding available to it. The Panel arrived at its decision in the context of increasingly strained household finances, considering that increasing residents' council tax burden can only be justified if it is to directly support the Force's operations, which is known to be a priority for residents.

The Panel considered the tension between the ongoing demands upon police staff – such as digital forensics, police community support officers, investigating officers, and contact centre staff – coupled with the consequences of ringfencing, and the demands upon the staff of your Office, and recognises the value of the Office's work, including the services it commissions and grants it gives.

The Panel's majority view, which we encourage you to consider most seriously, is that you should not increase your Office's budget by the amount proposed because of the impact that will have on the Force's ability to deliver to our residents and deliver against the priorities articulated in the Police and Crime Plan 2021-25, including in relation to safeguarding women and girls.

Thank you for your engagement with the precept scrutiny process and for the clear and insightful briefings which staff from your Office and Surrey Police provided to the Police and Crime Panel's Finance Sub-Group.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Reeve'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, circular initial 'D'.

Councillor David Reeve
Chairman, Surrey Police and Crime Panel