

West Mercia Police and Crime Panel

Mr John Campion
West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner
Hindlip Hall
Worcester
WR3 8SP

13 February 2024

Dear Mr Campion,

PROPOSED PRECEPT

In accordance with Schedule 5 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, I write to confirm that the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel reviewed your proposed precept on 7 February 2024 in a public meeting at the Civic Centre, Pershore. Thank you for attending and answering questions.

As required in the Act, the Panel must formally make a report to you as Commissioner on your proposed precept; please accept this letter as the formal report of the Panel.

The precept proposal you recommended to the Panel was to increase the precept by 4.91% for 2024/25, adding an average extra £13.00 to the annual Council Tax bill for a typical band D home.

The Panel considered the details in the Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan report and the report of the Panel's Budget Sub-Group as included with its agenda. The Panel made the following points:

- The importance of ensuring that the Panel continues to receive a quarterly budget monitoring report including key performance indicators (KPI's) to enable the Panel to monitor the outcomes against the Budget. It is crucial that the KPI's are robust, concise and clear in order to enable effective monitoring and for the Panel to have confidence in their scrutiny of the service. The Panel was pleased to receive your commitment to this process going forward.
 - With the rapid growth of cyber-crime, currently accounting for 50% of all crime, assurance was sought that sufficient resources were being directed to this area to protect the public. The Panel was pleased to learn that this issue is central to your strategic decision-making process on funding, and to receive details of the multi-faceted approach in place to tackle this threat and support victims.
 - The lack of budget certainty for future years was discussed. The Panel noted that Government's funding was based on a 1-year settlement and therefore there was only certainty about the funding for the current year.
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- Members sought assurance that the proposed increase in precept level would see improvement in some key priority areas, highlighting in particular, the public being able to contact police officers in person and an improved response rate from the 101 service. The Panel obtained your commitment to improvement in this area, for which the Chief Constable had made resources available.
- The support available for victims of crime was raised as a concern. Whilst it was acknowledged that the support you were already providing to support putting victim and survivors first was welcomed by communities, it was questioned what additional support would be provided for victims as a result of the increase in the precept. In response, the Panel received your commitment to drive forward an improved universal offer for the delivery of services and that you were confident that the planned investment would facilitate this.
- It was noted that the increase in precept would allow 10 additional police officers to be assigned to front line policing. This was welcomed by the Panel as was the fact that safer neighbourhood teams would be protected in the year ahead. The Panel was assured that policing resources were deployed to ensure that a universal level of services was provided across West Mercia.

Having considered the reports, the following recommendation as proposed by the Panel's Budget Sub-Group was considered:

That the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel support the PCC's proposal for an increase of Council Tax by £13.00 for an average Band D home (equivalent to 4.91%) providing that the Panel continues to receive a quarterly budget monitoring report which includes key performance indicators (to monitor the outcomes against the Budget so that the PCP can identify trends, service improvements and satisfaction against the commitments in the Safer West Mercia Plan) and continue to have a baseline for precept reviews in future years.

This recommendation was agreed by Members of the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel by a majority vote of 12 in favour, no votes against the recommendation and 2 abstentions.

I note that you are required to have regard to the Panel's report and provide a response which will be published. I look forward to receiving this response in due course.

Yours sincerely,



Barry Durkin
Chairman of the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel
13 February 2024

Cllr Barry Durkin
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