

Contact: Clare Madden
Tel: 07816370512
E-mail: clare.madden@surreycc.gov.uk



Lisa Townsend
Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner
Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey
PO Box 412
Guildford
Surrey
GU3 1YJ

Surrey County Council
Democratic Services
Woodhatch Place
11 Cockshot Hill
Reigate
Surrey
RH2 8EF

6 February 2024

Sent via Email.

Dear Commissioner,

Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner Precept for 2024/25

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 2024/25.

At its public meeting of 2 February 2024, the following recommendation was presented to the Panel:

- **That the Panel endorse the Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner's proposal to increase the Precept for a Band D property by £13 (being a 4.2% increase) to £323.57 in 2024/25.**

The Police and Crime Panel reviewed the precept proposal. In accordance with paragraph 3.7 of the Surrey Police and Crime Panel's Constitution, **a recorded vote** was requested by three Panel members. Seven Panel members voted for the precept proposal, seven Panel members voted against. With the Chairman's casting vote the majority of the Surrey Police and Crime Panel did not approve the PCC's proposal to increase the Band D Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner Precept by £13 to £323.57

In accordance with the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 a veto must be agreed by two-thirds of Panel members, which equates to ten Panel members. That requirement was not met, therefore the Panel:

- (i) **Accepted that the PCC's proposal to increase the Band D Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner Precept by £13 to £323.57 would come into effect.**
- (ii) **Expressed disappointment at the government settlement and the unfair funding formula which places a disproportionate burden on Surrey residents to fund the Force. This lack of appropriate level of government funding**

should be resolved and is a more appropriate way to meet Surrey's needs in the long term.

- (iii) Would formally report to the Commissioner by 8 February 2024, noting its concerns and reasons for Panel members not supporting the proposed precept.**

In reaching its position, Panel members noted the following:

- Your case that the full precept was required to deliver the Chief Constable's Vision for the Force, to make the improvements required by the latest HMICFRS Inspection and to secure the future financial sustainability of the force.
- The savings of £3.8m that were required in 2024/25 and the estimated further savings of £14m that would be needed over the remainder of the medium-term financial period.
- That an extensive transformation and efficiency programme was underway to reduce costs including through redesign of enabling services such as HR and Estates plus tactical savings initiatives which had already delivered cost reductions in light and heating bills, fuel and IT licences.
- The limitations on the Force's ability to make savings through headcount reductions since Officer numbers are ringfenced by central Government.

However, Panel members also noted:

- The cost-of-living crisis and pressure on residents, with taxes rising in all areas.
- That the Force was predicted to be underspent at the end of 2023/24, as it had been in previous years, and that this was in part due to income which was not factored into the 2024/5 budget but was likely.
- The results of the public consultation on the precept which showed that 59% of residents wanted the precept increase to be set at £12 or less.

All Panel members were agreed that Surrey Police is uniquely disadvantaged by the current funding formula, being the only force in England where the contribution from council taxpayers exceeds that from Government and that a revised funding formula, rather than an increased precept, was a more appropriate way to meet Surrey's needs in the long term.

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,



Councillor John Robini, Chairman of Surrey Police and Crime Panel