

Survey on an increase in council tax to help protect operational policing is launched

The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Thames Valley, Anthony Stansfeld, has today launched a survey seeking public views on an increase in the police element of the council tax by £1 a month (for a band D property).

On Tuesday 19th December the Home Secretary announced a substantial £450 million increase in police funding across England and Wales. However, this funding package assumes that all PCCs will raise the police element of council tax by £1 a month (or £12 a year) for a band D property which, collectively, will raise £270 million of the £450 million increase. This settlement will allow forces to continue to provide an effective service in their critical work to fight crime and protect the public.

At present around 60% of Thames Valley Police's £393 million annual policing budget is funded by central government, with the policing element of council tax making up the remainder. Since 2010/11 the police grant has been cut by around 38% in real terms which has resulted in Thames Valley Police (TVP) having to make £99 million of savings in order to balance the budget. These cuts have already led to a manpower reduction of over 1,000 full time equivalent posts, including more than 450 police officers.

Anthony Stansfeld, Police and Crime Commissioner said: "Setting the budget for 2018/19 needs to be considered in the context of an already constrained financial position as well as the additional pressures policing faces as demand in some of the most complex and challenging areas continues to increase.

"This includes rising reports and cases of hidden crimes such as domestic abuse, child abuse, sexual offences, serious violence and exploitation have all increased the pressure on police resources.

"Needless to say this is proving to be extremely challenging and without the increase of £12 per year in council tax, as recommended by the Home Secretary, we would have to make further significant reductions in police officers and staff which will affect the level and quality of policing service we are able to offer you.

"In November 2017 TVP was judged by the Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) to be 'outstanding' in the efficiency with which it keeps people safe and reduces crime. This includes an 'outstanding' for its understanding of demand and its use of resources to manage demand, and its planning for future demand was judged to be 'good'. Thames Valley Police was one of only two forces nationally to have been awarded an overall rating of outstanding.

"Ideally I would not choose to consult over the busy Christmas and New Year period and particularly on such an important issue, however, the Chief Constable and I only received the provisional police grant settlement for 2018/19 from the Home Office on Tuesday 19th December.

"Unfortunately due to budget decisions needing to be finalised by the end of January I am only able to run the consultation until 11th January.

"I apologise for the timing and length of the consultation period but I hope you will take the time to complete the survey which will help the Chief Constable and I to make an informed decision on the budget for 2018/19."

The short online survey and further background information can be found on the Thames Valley PCC website:

<https://www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/get-involved/police-funding-survey-have-your-say/>

Closing Date: Midday Thursday 11th January 2018

Those residents who do not have access to the internet can write to the **Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Thames Valley Police Headquarters, Oxford Road, Kidlington, Oxon, OX5 2NX** with their answers to the below questions.

Question 1

Do you think an extra £12 per year in council tax, for a Band D property, to help protect operational policing in Thames Valley would be money well spent?

Question 2

If not, please explain why and what annual increase you believe is justified and will enable Thames Valley Police to do their job effectively?

Please note that all postal responses needs to be received by midday on Thursday 11th January 2018

ENDS

Notes

- Further background information about the financial position and pressures is attached
- Please can you share this with residents in your area and publicise using your existing communications channels
- Any further questions or queries should be sent to
ian.thompson@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk or Tel: 01865 541959

Impact on different Council Tax bands

The figures quoted are based on a Band D household. The impact on residents living in properties with a council tax banding of A to H are set out below.

Council Tax Band	£
A	8.00
B	9.33
C	10.67
D	12.00
E	14.67
F	17.33
G	20.00
H	24.00

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