

West Mercia Police and Crime Panel

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

7 February 2023

Dear Mr Campion

PROPOSED PRECEPT

In accordance with Schedule 5 to 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 3 February 2023 in a public meeting at County Hall, Worcester. 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 5.94% for 2023/24, adding £14.84 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 Scrutiny Task Group as included with its agenda. The Panel made the following main points:

- Whether the communities of West Mercia would be able to see the operational implications of the funding if the 5.4% precept proposal was not implemented, in particular the protection of the Force's problem-solving capability and key organisational enabling services. You advised that although the Police would respond to reports of crime, the proactivity of the Force's response would be a casualty of not approving the 5.94% increase to the annual Council Tax.
- The increase of the precept would allow for the bridging of the financial deficit as well as investment in services.
- The Panel welcomed the Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) which would provide the Panel with the opportunity to monitor the outcome of the investment. When asked if the additional funding would show a significant improvement in KPI's, you reassured the Panel that improvements would be seen as a result of the investment made including improvements in public confidence and victim satisfaction.

**Cllr Barry
Durkin**
Vice-Chairman,
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Panel

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- A Member suggested that the Council Tax flexibility offered to PCC's was as a result of poor government decisions and inadequate funding for Police Forces which left PCC's with no option but to use the flexibility offered to them and thus pass the increase on to taxpayers.
- Although you were not aware of every PCC's precept proposal in the Country, most PCC's in the West Midlands PCC's were proposing to take advantage of the precept flexibility.
- The increase in the precept would enable you to fund 40 additional police officers and thus provide more visible policing across the Force area, which included the roll out of the Stronger Communities Programme.

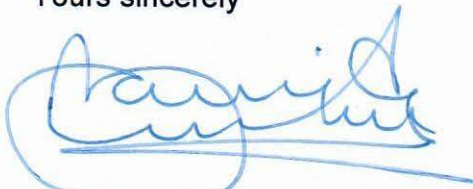
Having considered the reports, the following recommendation as proposed by the Panel's Budget Task Group was considered:

That the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel support the PCC's proposal for an increase of Council Tax to £14.84 (equivalent to 5.94%) providing that the Panel receives a quarterly budget monitoring report which includes key performance indicators (as attached) to monitor the outcomes against the Budget so that it is possible for the PCP to identify trends, service improvements and satisfaction against the commitments in the West Mercia PCC's Safer West Mercia Plan. This recommendation also sets out to ensure that in future years base budgets have been maintained to maximise investment and flexibility.

This recommendation was agreed by Members of the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel by a majority vote of 8 in favour, 3 against the recommendation.

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



**Cllr Barry Durkin
Vice-Chairman of the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel
(and Chairman for the Panel meeting of 3 February 2023)**