



## Dear Warwickshire resident

As your Police and Crime Commissioner, it is my job to set the budget for Warwickshire Police for the next financial year and, with it, the amount you contribute through your council tax for policing services in the county.

Funding for police forces is made up of grants from central government and an amount raised locally from the council tax, known as the police precept. In Warwickshire, around 58% of the police budget is funded by central government, with your council tax making up the rest.

I know that these are difficult financial times for many of you and that's why I want to give all Warwickshire residents the chance to have your say, before I set the budget. I want to know how much you feel we should pay more per household to ensure that our police continue to have the right technology, training and officers to protect communities and deal with the changing nature of crime.

*Please spare a few moments to read the information which follows and then go online to give me your views.*

The survey can be completed at [www.warwickshire-pcc.gov.uk/preceptsurvey](http://www.warwickshire-pcc.gov.uk/preceptsurvey) or alternatively you can send me your views by email to [opcc@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:opcc@warwickshire.gov.uk). You can also fill in the form at the back of this pack and post your views to: Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, 3 Northgate Street, Warwick CV34 4SP.

**The consultation will close on Friday January 19, 2018.**



## A message from your PCC

Since becoming Police and Crime Commissioner in May 2016, I have become increasingly aware of the challenging situation policing is in. Recorded crime is increasing, while the resources available to investigate and bring offenders to justice and protect communities from harm have become ever scarcer.

While I have been able to maintain overall police officer numbers since taking office, it nevertheless remains the case that we now have 21% fewer officers than we did 10 years ago. As a result, Warwickshire has among the lowest ratios of police officers per head of population in the country and those officers we do have are now dealing with much bigger workloads.

In common with the national picture, recorded crime has increased in Warwickshire—up by 24% in the last year alone. Our increasingly global and technological world means these are also often more complex and time-consuming to investigate, creating additional pressures on the force.

Last year I was able to freeze the police precept—the portion of your council tax that pays for policing—while using funding from reserves to ensure that the Chief Constable had the resources he needed to keep communities safe, ensure that frontline policing remained a priority and that Safer Neighbourhood Teams formed the bedrock of policing in the county. Of course, financial reserves can only be spent once and this option cannot be sustained in the longer term, though I am proposing to invest a further £3.8 million from reserves to support the force budget in 2018/19.

Costs continue to rise through inflation and there remains increased pressure on operational



policing through the rising demand for services. Despite the major transformations happening within our force, which have raised efficiency and been recognised by our external inspectors as 'ambitious and innovative', the simple reality is that the police require more funding just to maintain current service levels. This means I am not in a position to be able to freeze the police precept once again. To do so would leave the force with a significant shortfall in funding and some very unpalatable decisions to make over a reduced level of service to the public.

Over the past 12 months I have been making this position clear to central government, arguing the case that policing needs more funding if it is to continue keeping the public safe and maintaining law and order satisfactorily. I am



pleased to report that the ministers have listened to these representations. Alongside additional funding for counter terrorism, national policing priorities and projects to support the transformation of policing, the Government has given Police and Crime Commissioners the flexibility needed to raise extra money through council tax.

We have been given a static settlement for the financial year ahead, with the amount we receive from central government remaining the same as in 2017/18 in real terms. As I have stated previously, however, this will not be sufficient on its own to maintain the levels of service you expect while continuing to modernise the force. I am therefore proposing to increase the police precept for 2018/19, in order to protect frontline policing and ensure that I can deliver a safer and more secure Warwickshire.

Where previously I could raise the police precept by up to a maximum of 2%, the Government has now given me the greater flexibility to set an increase of up to £12 per year on an average Band D property. That added pound a month would equate in Warwickshire to a 6.25% increase over 2017/18 funding levels and could help to raise around £1.7 million. Taking into account the amount we also receive from central government, this would mean a total of £2.9 million is then available to invest in frontline policing services.

Even with this boost to funding, Warwickshire Police will still need to continue making efficiency savings in order to provide a balanced budget, with the amounts raised through the police precept helping to offset losses in staffing that might otherwise occur. I will continue to ensure that public money is used efficiently and responsibly. Equally, I will ensure that the additional money that is raised is used directly to fund police officers, while also leaving a secure and viable financial future for the force.

I remain conscious however, that these remain challenging financial times for many of you and so I want to hear your views before I make a final decision on the level of the precept early in the New Year. I have put forward options for different levels of increase of the police precept, outlining the consequences for each and I am keen to get feedback from a wide spectrum across the county.

Please take the time to carefully read the proposals and the supporting information before taking the survey. I look forward to hearing from you between now and Friday 19 December.

**Philip Seccombe TD**

Police and Crime Commissioner for Warwickshire



## Consultation options

Each of the options being consulted on include an investment of £3.8 million from reserves and will continue to require the force to make efficiency savings in order to provide a balanced budget.

### **OPTION 1: INCREASE THE POLICE PRECEPT BY £12 PER YEAR (BAND D)**

This equates to a rise of 6.25% and would mean a Band D taxpayer would pay an extra £1 per month. This funding option would mean the force could retain around 33 police officer posts that might otherwise have been lost.

### **OPTION 2: INCREASE THE POLICE PRECEPT BY £10 PER YEAR (BAND D)**

This equates to a rise of 5.21% and would mean a Band D taxpayer would pay around an extra 83 pence per month. This funding option would mean the force could retain around 25 police officer posts that might otherwise have been lost.

### **OPTION 3: INCREASE THE POLICE PRECEPT BY £8 PER YEAR (BAND D)**

This equates to a rise of 4.17% and would mean a Band D taxpayer would pay around an extra 67 pence per month. This funding option would mean the force could retain around 18 police officer posts that might otherwise have been lost.

### **Why is there no option to freeze council tax?**

As I have stated, costs continue to rise through inflation and there remains increased pressure on operational policing through the rising demand for services. Freezing the precept would leave the force with the need to save £5.7 million and this would lead to very difficult decisions around officer numbers and reduced levels of service to the public. It is not therefore an option that I consider is viable or would wish to consider.



The table below shows what each Council Tax band would pay for each of the options:-

	2017/18	Proposed 2018/19		Proposed 2018/19		Proposed 2018/19	
		£8 increase		£10 increase		£12 Increase	
	Actual charge (£)	Increase (£)	Actual charge (£)	Increase (£)	Actual charge (£)	Increase (£)	Actual charge (£)
Band A	127.99	5.33	133.32	6.67	134.65	8.00	135.99
Band B	149.32	6.22	155.54	7.78	157.10	9.33	158.65
Band C	170.65	7.11	177.76	8.89	179.54	10.67	181.32
Band D	191.98	8.00	199.98	10.00	201.98	12.00	203.98
Band E	234.64	9.78	244.42	12.22	246.86	14.67	249.31
Band F	277.30	11.56	288.86	14.44	291.75	17.33	294.64
Band G	319.97	13.33	333.30	16.67	336.63	20.00	339.97
Band H	383.96	16.00	399.96	20.00	403.96	24.00	407.96

You can check your council tax band at: [www.gov.uk/council-tax-bands](http://www.gov.uk/council-tax-bands)

## Having considered the information from the PCC, which of the options would you support?



The consultation can be completed online at [www.warwickshire-pcc.gov.uk/preceptsurvey](http://www.warwickshire-pcc.gov.uk/preceptsurvey)

Alternatively, state your preference below (tick one):

- Option 1—a £12 increase (Band D)
- Option 2—a £10 increase (Band D)
- Option 3—a £8 increase (Band D)

Which district of Warwickshire do you live in?

- North Warwickshire
- Nuneaton & Bedworth
- Rugby
- Stratford-on-Avon
- Warwick

Any other comments

Please cut out and send your completed survey to: Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, 3 Northgate Street, Warwick, CV34 4SP to arrive no later than Friday 19 January 2018.