



**Philip Seccombe
Police and Crime
Commissioner
for Warwickshire**

Decision Application WPCC20136

Application Date:	21 April 2020	Name of Applicant:	S. Ansell
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Application Decision Reference: WPCC20136

1. Summary of the application

As a result of the Coronavirus pandemic, forces nationally are incurring additional costs in coordinating their local responses. This decision notice seeks approval for the additional expenditure and its' financing in Warwickshire, as this falls outside of the approved budget for 2020/21.

2. Background information:

On the 23rd March 2020, the Prime Minister announced that the country would go into lockdown to stem the spread of the Coronavirus pandemic. A number of emergency measures were introduced by the Government to deal with the lockdown, including new legislation for policing.

In order to prepare and undertake the policing response in Warwickshire effectively, the force is incurring additional expenditure in a number of key areas as outlined in summary below.

Personal protective equipment (PPE) : In accordance with national guidance and in order to protect the health and wellbeing of officers and staff, the force have procured additional PPE. Dependent on how the circumstances evolve, this area of expenditure is likely to be one of the most significant. Local supply chains have been sourced and are currently relatively strong. National PPE schemes for policing have also been developed and will be accessed as necessary or appropriate, based on operational demand and guidance by the force. The force currently holds what it currently considers are adequate supplies for the medium term period, but the situation will be monitored and kept under constant review to ensure that national guidance on PPE usage is adhered to as the pandemic continues. All Officers and staff continue to receive regular communications regarding national and local guidance on the usage of PPE in carrying out their roles.

Staffing costs: Other areas of anticipated expenditure arising from the pandemic are for staffing, particularly overtime for some officers. The evolving situation and operational demand will be the key factors in determining the levels of expenditure in this area. However, these costs will be mitigated, by the increased numbers of

officers within the force, which provides greater resilience for policing across Warwickshire.

The current forecast of additional expenditure arising from the Covid response in Warwickshire is £0.500m. These costs are not budgeted for within the 2020/21 budget and will have to be financed separately. It is envisaged that a drawdown of reserves up to £0.500m will be necessary. The reserves strategy is in the process of being reviewed following the finalisation of the outturn for 2019/20 and based on a settlement on costs being reached with West Mercia in respect of the Alliance termination.

Clearly the quantum of the additional expenditure in respect of Covid will be largely dependent on the developing situation. The current cost forecast is based on a 3 month period, and will be reviewed and adjusted as time progresses if necessary.

There is currently no formal confirmation from central government that additional costs incurred by forces in relation to Covid will be reimbursed, but this picture is a relatively fast moving landscape and decisions on funding are being made on a daily basis to protect all areas of the economy and public services. Forces have however, been asked to collate such costs and if confirmation is forthcoming on reimbursement, the force will be in a position to make a claim, enabling any draw down from reserves to be restated.

A number of longer terms financial impacts of Covid are anticipated on police funding. This is likely to be in the form of reduced council tax bases, and collection fund deficits. These will be monitored in conjunction with Local Authority partners and the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) assumptions will be adjusted to reflect the most up to date information. The spending review anticipated in 2020-21 will not now occur, and a one year finance settlement is expected in the Autumn in respect of the 2021/22 budget. All of these will be considered as part of the wider budget setting process for 2021/22, but Warwickshire will also ensure that they participate fully in any surveys or returns from central government to collate costs and financial implications to ensure that they inform Government thinking and planning on future funding.

3. Whether additional information/report is attached to support this decision application

NO

List of additional information/report

4. Expected benefits (non financial)

The additional expenditure will ensure that staff and officers have the correct PPE enabling them to remain protected whilst carrying out their roles. This will enable local communities to be better served by Warwickshire police throughout the pandemic as policing services will continue to be delivered effectively.

5. Impact of not approving the application

If the application is not approved, staff and officers will not have the PPE available to them in accordance with national guidance, putting them at personal risk. This will inevitably lead to increased numbers of staff and officers being sick and having to self-isolate which will inevitably have an impact on service delivery.

6. Costs

Revenue: Costs are currently forecast to be £0.500m based on a 3 month period. Costs are being recorded separately to inform any future reimbursement claim from central Government. The cost forecast may have to be reviewed if the crisis continues for a prolonged period or the situation changes significantly.

Capital: None anticipated currently.

7. Savings:

Some minor savings are likely to emerge most notably from the free fuel issues by BP for Emergency vehicles for a short time limited period during the crisis. The current savings forecast is c £.0.040m. Any other savings may emerge and be evident from budget monitoring processes and will be reported as part of the regular process.

8. Equality and Diversity Implications:

All relevant policies apply

9. Treasurer's comments

The forecast costs of Covid of £0.500m will be financed from a draw down from reserves at the end of 2020/21, if no other areas of underspending are available within the in-year budget to finance these costs.

If the national crisis continues for a period of time beyond 3 months, and costs are likely to exceed £0.500m, the decision will be reviewed, to ensure that costs can be appropriately financed.

These costs should form part of any future claim for reimbursement from central Government. Assurance from the force has been received that they are engaging with this process nationally.

10. Legal/Monitoring Officer comments

The reasons for this decision notice and the additional funds required to safely police the COVID 19 crisis are clearly set out. These additional funds which lie outside of the agreed budget are required to support the national health emergency in the country.

Decision of the Police and Crime Commissioner

Agreed.

PCC Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul J. Jones". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'P' and 'J'.

Date of Decision : 12th May 2020