



Councillor David Reilly

Warwickshire Police and Crime Panel Chair

Shire Hall

Warwick

CV34 4RL

davereilly@warwickshire.gov.uk

www.warwickshire.gov.uk

Mr Philip Seccombe
Warwickshire Police and Crime Commissioner
3 Northgate Street,
Warwick
CV34 4SP

7 February 2020

Dear Mr Seccombe,

Warwickshire Policing Precept 2020/21

Thank you for presenting your budget proposals to the meeting of the Police and Crime Panel on 3 February 2020, and for addressing the broad ranging questions posed by Panel members.

I write to confirm that all Members of the Panel present at the meeting voted to support your proposal of an increase of £9.99 (4.38%) in the local policing precept for Band D properties (and equivalent percentage increase for all other bands) in the 2020/21 financial year. In their deliberations the Panel identified several areas of significance that they will seek to scrutinise further over the coming year:

2020/21 Uncertainties

The Panel recognised that the development of a predominantly independent police force following termination of the Strategic Alliance represented a significant achievement. However, it was highlighted that, given the diminished level of reserves and uncertain resolution of the financial settlement with West Mercia, increased vigilance will be required to safeguard against overspending. In these conditions, the Panel noted that limited scope was available to respond effectively to unforeseen circumstances such as a shortfall in anticipated income derived from the Vetting Service.

The Panel observed that the National Policing Settlement had been determined for a period of one year only and recognised that the longer-term outlook of the budget will be subject to future governmental funding allocations. The Panel will continue to monitor the financial position in detail through the Budget Working Group.

Precept Consultation

The Panel acknowledged that the delayed declaration of the National Policing Settlement presented a challenging timescale for the precept public consultation, however, it was felt that wider engagement with Warwickshire residents would contribute to improved representation. The Panel would therefore urge you to consider strategies to broaden the scope of future precept consultations to encourage improved participation.

Climate Change

The Panel emphasised the importance of ensuring that the proposed review of the policing estate includes consideration of priorities determined by the climate emergency and highlighted the potential additional costs of retrofitting. The Panel would welcome information in respect of the energy efficiency standards of refurbished buildings.

Fairer Funding

The Panel emphasised that the issue of fairer funding remained a concern for Warwickshire residents and expressed support for your efforts to secure a more equitable Policing Settlement formula and redress the bias towards urban forces.

The Panel acknowledged that progress in advancing the issue had been impeded by parliamentary time being occupied by other matters. The Panel would welcome an update in due course.

Conclusion

The Panel will continue to work as your 'critical friend' supporting and challenging as you navigate the delivery of new policing arrangements for Warwickshire in 2020/21.

The Panel would like to record its thanks for the quality of information they have received and commend the open and transparent approach that your office and Warwickshire Police have taken in setting the budget.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Reilly', written over a circular stamp or watermark.

Councillor David Reilly
Warwickshire Police and Crime Panel Chair