

This matter is being dealt with by:

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## **Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Panel**

Mr Paddy Tipping  
Police and Crime Commissioner  
Arnot Hill House  
Arnot Hill Park  
Arnold  
NG5 6LU

cc Kevin Dennis, Chief Executive

9 February 2016

Dear Paddy

### **OUTCOME OF PANEL'S CONSIDERATION OF POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S PROPOSED PRECEPT AND BUDGET 2016/17**

I am writing to confirm the outcome of the Police and Crime Panel's consideration of your proposed precept at the Panel meeting of 1 February 2016.

As you are aware, eleven of the fifteen Panel Members present for the vote supported your proposed precept increase of 1.99%.

The Panel had supplied you with a wide range of questions about the precept and the various elements of the budget in advance of the meeting. You clarified a number of those queries within discussions at the meeting, including the following aspects:-

- you had received formal written notification from the Chancellor that Police and Crime Commissioners were able to increase the Council Tax precept to 1.99% and increase their base budget by 0.5% and you confirmed your intention to do both. You clarified that the new funding formula was likely to be introduced from 1 April 2017;
- the increase in the tax base would help to counter the real-terms cut in grant from Government;
- the proposed precept increase would generate an additional £1.2m;
- you recognised Nottinghamshire Police's previous record of not achieving its planned Capital Programme and felt that the Programme for 2016/17 remained ambitious (with a strong focus on ICT transformation, collaboration and sharing of premises). You were comfortable with the amount of slippage from the current Programme to the 2016/17 Programme;

- you underlined your unhappiness at the proposed savings for 2015/16 not being achieved, although you felt that this was largely as a result of the collaboration with Northamptonshire being put on hold to accommodate Leicestershire's involvement also;
- you highlighted the problems arising from ongoing temporary cover of the Force's Head of Finance post and the existing joint arrangement with the Head of Finance from Leicestershire Police (an arrangement which you hope can be made permanent in the coming weeks). This new arrangement has also introduced improved processes to enable regular budget meetings;
- with regard to the previous concerns raised by the Panel about errors within the budget and forecasts, you have had robust discussions with the Chief Constable about this and you feel that both of you have been acting on information that proved to be incorrect but that the new arrangements and systems would give you greater assurance;
- you believe that the recruitment freeze, the Redesigning the Future transformation programme and an end to acting up arrangements would help to achieve the necessary level of savings in 2016/17. The rapidly changing nature of crime with issues such as terrorism could have wider implications and require closer working with other Forces. In response to Members' concerns that the recruitment freeze could result in a further increase in overtime expenditure, you acknowledged that there were cultural issues related to the use of overtime which were being addressed. The Chief Constable added that the new financial systems meant that overtime could be monitored and managed more dynamically than in the past;
- Nottinghamshire Police has the third lowest level of reserves of any Force nationally and has never varied far from the current level of 3.75%;
- an increase in income from the Council Tax base had already been built into the budget assumptions to reflect an increase in the number of homes in the area;
- in response to the Panel's query as to whether the plans that had been put in place in preparation for a significant reduction in Government grant could still be utilised in order to achieve savings, you underlined that your only real option would have been to reduce staffing, primarily Police and Community Support Officers (PCSOs). Your view is that a 25% reduction is sufficient and the Force is likely to lose another dozen PCSOs in the current year due to people leaving. You feel that this level of staffing will still enable an effective Neighbourhood Policing approach.

In summary, the Panel overall supported your proposed increase in the precept.

Yours sincerely,



Christine Goldstraw OBE  
Chair of the Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Panel