

Contact: Mr M Nundy
Direct Dial: (01724) 296014
Our Ref: PCP/03-02-15
E-Mail: policeandcrimepanel@northlincs.gov.uk
Date: 6 February 2015



Dear Mr Grove,

HUMBERSIDE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL - TUESDAY 3 FEBRUARY 2015 - POLICE PRECEPT FOR 2015/16 AND MEDIUM TERM RESOURCE STRATEGY 2015/16 TO 2019/20

I write to inform you of the Humberside Police and Crime Panel's formal response to your precept proposals for 2015/16.

As I'm sure you're aware, Schedule 5 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act (2011) states that you must notify the Police and Crime Panel, by 1 February, of the precept which you were proposing to issue for the financial year 2015/16.

Under the requirements of the Act, the Police and Crime Panel must review the proposed precept notified to it and must make a report to yourself on the proposed precept. The report may include recommendations, including recommendations as to the precept that should be issued for the financial year.

The Panel met on Tuesday 3 February 2015 to consider your Police precept for 2015/16 and the medium term resource strategy for 2015/16 to 2019/20.

The Panel's report is enclosed.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that appears to read "M. Nundy".

Simon Driver
Secretary to the Humberside Police and Crime Panel

The Police and Crime Commissioner for Humberside
Tower Grange Police Station
Holderness Road
HULL
HU8 9HP



HUMBERSIDE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

RESPONSE TO THE HUMBERSIDE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S PRECEPT PROPOSALS FOR 2015/16

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to set out the Humberside Police and Crime Panel's formal response to the Humberside Police and Crime Commissioner's precept proposals for 2015/16.

INTRODUCTION

The Police and Crime Commissioner has a statutory requirement to set an annual Police and Crime budget and, as part of that process, to consult with the Police and Crime Panel regarding any proposals in relation to the council tax precept.

At the meeting of the Police and Crime Panel on 3 February 2015, the Commissioner set out his proposed Police precept for 2015/16 and the medium term resource strategy for 2015/16 to 2019/20.

ROLE OF THE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

Schedule 5 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act (2011) states that the Commissioner must notify the Police and Crime Panel, by 1 February, of the precept which the Commissioner is proposing to issue for the financial year 2015/16.

Under the requirements of the Act, the Police and Crime Panel must review the proposed precept notified to it and must make a report to the Commissioner on the proposed precept. The report may include recommendations, including recommendations as to the precept that should be issued for the financial year.

The Police and Crime Panel has the power to veto the proposed precept if at least two-thirds of the Police and Crime Panel members (the full membership rather than those present at a meeting) vote in favour of making that decision.

If the Panel vetoes the proposed precept, the report made to the Commissioner must include a statement that the panel has vetoed it.

COUNCIL TAX

As part of the budget setting process, the Commissioner is required to consider whether or not to propose any changes to council tax. The amount of the council tax precept is a decision for the Commissioner who will take account of the views of the Police and Crime Panel and the Government's Council Tax increase limit in making that decision.

The Commissioner has proposed a precept increase of 1.99%. The financial implications for residents are that the Band D Council Tax amount would increase to £180.08 for 2015/16, an increase of £3.51.

The government announced details of its Council Tax Freeze Scheme 2015/16 on 18 December 2014, alongside the provisional police grant announcement. Any Police and Crime Commissioner who freezes or reduces their council tax in 2015/16 will receive a grant equivalent to a 1% increase in the council tax. The government has indicated that this grant will be included within future funding settlements.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations which the Police and Crime Panel were asked to consider were as follows –

- Endorse the Commissioner's preferred option of increasing the precept for 2015/16, by 1.99% (from £176.57 to £180.08 for a Band D property), the increase that the Commissioner consulted upon and that has significant public support based on responses to that consultation and to note:
 - The first decision required of the Panel is to support or reject the recommendation on precept options and to respond by 8 February.
 - The s.151 officers can confirm that the budgets set out in each of the options contained within the MTRS are robust and that the level of reserves in each case is adequate.

DECISION

The Police and Crime Panel considered the Commissioner's proposal to increase the precept by 1.99% and the reasoning behind that proposal.

Having considered the evidence submitted by the Commissioner and Mr Bates, Deputy Chief Executive and Treasurer at the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, and their responses to questions from members of the Panel, the Panel agreed to -

- 1) Endorse the Commissioner's preferred option of increasing the precept for 2015/16, by 1.99% (from £176.57 to £180.08 for a Band D property),
- 2) Note the availability of the Council Tax Freeze Grant and how it would transfer some costs from local to national taxpayers. However, it would also reduce the funding available for police and crime services both in 2015/16 and on a longer term basis. Members therefore supported the Commissioner's decision not to apply for the Council Tax Freeze Grant, and accept that freezing council tax in 2015/16 would increase the longer term risk to maintaining the number of police officers.
- 3) Support the Police and Crime Commissioner's statement that Humberside Police Force cannot continue to lose Police Officers and Police Staff (including Police Community Support Officers) and continue to deliver a service that is fit for purpose and meets the needs and expectations of Humberside residents.
- 4) Write to the Chief Constable, expressing the Panel's gratitude to all Police Officers, Police Staff and their families for the professional and diligent way they undertake their duties, despite the severe financial constraints facing the organisation and the uncertainty surrounding the implementation of the 'building the future' restructure of the Force.