

REPORT ON THE GWENT POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S PROPOSED PRECEPT FOR 2019/20

Background

This report is made in accordance with the Gwent Police and Crime Panel's statutory duty contained in Paragraph 3(2), Schedule 5 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.

Review of Proposed Precept

The Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner notified the Panel on 18th January 2019 of his proposed Police and Crime Budget and Precept for 2019/20.

The Panel considered a detailed report outlining the proposed precept for 2019/20 at their meeting held in Monmouthshire County Hall on 25th January 2019. A copy of the report is available on the Panel's website www.Gwentpcp.org.uk

The following Members of the Panel were present:

Cllr John Guy, Chair (Newport City Council)
Cllr William Routley (Newport City Council)
Cllr Jason Jordan (Newport City Council)
Cllr Peter Clarke (Monmouthshire County Borough Council)
Cllr Tony Easson (Monmouthshire County Borough Council)
Cllr Gez Kirby (Caerphilly County Borough Council)
Cllr Colin Mann (Caerphilly County Borough Council)
Cllr Stewart Healy (Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council)
Cllr Mike Jeremiah (Torfaen County Borough Council)
Cllr Emma Rapier (Torfaen County Borough Council)
Mrs Gillian Howells (Co-opted Member)
Mr P. Nuttall (Co-opted Member)

The Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner recommended a 6.99 % increase in the 2019/20 precept and a budget requirement of £130,355,726. The Panel debated the proposed increase and, in particular, considered the impact on the residents and communities of Gwent who are under increasing financial pressures.

The Panel acknowledged that the Commissioner has identified efficiency savings of £0.791m and further planned efficiency savings of £1.137m until 2024 (totalling £1,927m and proposals to utilise reserves and committed funds.

The Panel considered the Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner's five strategic priorities and the significant service pressures within Gwent Police and discussed the precept flexibility announced by the Government, acknowledging that Gwent PCC were proposing the lowest precept across England and Wales

The Panel discussed the public consultation on the proposed Council Tax Precept for 2019/20 which consisted of an online survey and face-to-face engagement at 19 events across all 5 Gwent Local authority areas. This resulted in 104,493 online responses which considered the initial assumed 4.99% precept and 1,085 people engaged in the face-to-face interviews that were asked about the revised precept of 6.99%.

Panel Member expressed reservations regarding the need for £1m to be allocated for policing in respect of a decision on the M4 relief road.

Following a detailed discussion with the Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Finance Officer, the Panel considered the Commissioners proposal to a 6.99% increase in the policing precept and voted to endorse the Commissioner's proposed precept for 2019/20.

The Panel wished to place on record their thanks to Mr Darren Garwood-Pask, Chief Finance Officer, for engaging the Panel in early discussions about the Commissioner's Medium Term Financial Plan and the detailed budget and precept report.

Recommendation

Following a full debate about the proposed Precept, Gwent Police and Crime Panel resolved by the majority present to:

Accept the 6.99% increase in the 2019/20 precept and a budget requirement of £130,355,726.

Recommend that that Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner consider the need for £1m allocation to fund potential policing needed for protests in respect of the M4 relief road should Welsh Government decide not to proceed and examine alternative uses for the funding.

28 January 2019