

Report of the Staffordshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel (The Panel)

to the

Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Staffordshire (PFCC)

With regard to:

**The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Staffordshire's
Draft Policing Service Budget and Precept 2023/24**

As required under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 this is the formal report by the Panel on their consideration of, and decision on your proposed Policing Service Budget/Precept for 2022/23. The legislation gives us the power to veto your Precept if we consider it to be too low or too high and sets out the procedures to be followed both by the Panel and yourself in the event of the veto being exercised.

The Panel met on Monday 6 February 2023. You attended, accompanied by your Deputy Commissioner and your Director of Finance.

The Panel received your proposed budget and precept proposals for the Police and Crime element of your portfolio for 2023/24. You reported that the proposed budget/precept showed a total net revenue budget requirement of £242.902million for 2023/04. The report also included details of the Home Office Police Grant for Staffordshire which had been set at £129.860million, an increase of £.450million on the previous year. Other sources of funding were from the Police Pension Grant £1.825million; uplift ring-fenced grant £4,100million; Council Tax freeze grant £3.541million; and Revenue Support Grant of £8.423million. You explained that you were proposing to part fund the balance from Council Tax funding of £93,883,136 with an increase of 4.83% per annum (an increase of £12 per annum) increasing the Council tax to £260.57 p.a. per Band D property.

You informed the Panel that the Police Officer pay award was set nationally and the MTFs included an amount based on Home Office guidance and forecasting and that if the settlement was higher than anticipated next year, any gap in funding would hopefully be funded by Government.

You stated that you were confident that the proposed budget was adequate to deliver the services Staffordshire needed and allowed

for an additional 60 Officers in 2023/34. You were also confident that the budget balanced what the public wanted to see in terms of value for money and improvements and also gave the Chief Constable sufficient funds to address the HMICFRS inspection report findings and invest in technology and personnel. Your office would also continue to invest in prevention; diversionary activities for young people and supporting victims.

The Panel felt that despite Staffordshire being reported as being a low crime area and a low-cost service, the public in some areas of the County felt that this was not the case. We acknowledge that you are carrying out a piece of work into the links between crime levels and public perception and would like to see this when the work is complete.

You assured the Panel that appropriate levels of reserves remained within the budget should they be required. Guidance had been issued by the Home Office and this had been followed in terms of budget assumptions.

The Panel acknowledged the challenging situation facing the Commissioner but felt that this was a high increase in precept and the public needed to be assured that this would lead to visible results in the communities. You agreed, and suggested a briefing note to a future Panel meeting containing a summary of where the investments have been made following last years precept increase, thus demonstrating past delivery.

At the conclusion of our discussions on your proposal, we resolved to support your Precept increase of 4.83% and Revenue Budget for 2023/24.

As required, this Report will be published on the County Council's webpages for the Staffordshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel.

R Cox

Vice Chairman (Chair for the meeting)
Staffordshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel
On behalf of the Staffordshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel.