

**Report to the Police Fire and Crime Panel – 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2025**

**Police and Crime Budget Report for 2025/26**

**(Including Medium Term Financial Strategy)**

Report of the Staffordshire Commissioner

## **Introduction**

The purpose of this report is to set out the proposed budget and precept proposal for the police and crime element of the Staffordshire Commissioner's portfolio for 2025/26. This is the Commissioner's fourth budget in office and delivers one of his key responsibilities under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.

The report sets out the following:

- Net police and crime budget requirement for 2025/26
- Proposed precept for the police and crime element of the council tax 2025/26
- Proposed policing Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)
- Outline policing capital budget

The report should be read in conjunction with the accompanying:

- Treasury Management Strategy
- Reserves Strategy
- Capital Strategy

## **Recommendations**

The Police, Fire and Crime Panel is asked to:

- Examine the information presented in this report, including:
  - The total 2025/26 net revenue budget requirement of £277.640m (**see Appendix 1**), including
  - A council tax requirement for 2025/26 of £106.274m before the collection fund deficit is considered (**see Appendix 5**)
- Support the proposal to increase the 2025/26 precept for the policing element of the council tax bill by **27 pence per week** (£14 per annum), increasing the council tax to £287.57 for a band D property, an increase of 5.12%.

- Note that the council tax base has increased to 369,558 Band D equivalent properties, equivalent to an increase of 1.01% **(see Appendix 4)**.
- The council tax collection fund has also been finalised delivering a deficit of £0.259m **(see Appendix 3)**.
- Note the use of £3.645m of revenue reserves to balance the 2025/26 budget (this is in addition to use of other earmarked reserves to support identified purposes).
- Note the MTFS summary financials **(Appendix 6)** and MTFS assumptions **(see paragraph 5.5)**
- Note that it has been assumed that there will be a requirement to invest in full the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee funding of £1.5m; for the purposes of setting the budget, it has been assumed that this will be earmarked for officer pay. Panel are asked to note at the point of writing the conditions of use, or performance metrics, for the grant have yet to be published.
- Support the delegation to the Director of Finance for the Staffordshire Commissioners Office and the Director of Resources of Staffordshire Police to make any necessary adjustments to the budget as a result of late changes to central government funding (including changes due to the final funding settlement being announced) via an appropriation to or from the budget support reserve.
- Support the proposed four-year Capital Investment Programme **(see Section 8)** totalling £90.569m and the Capital Strategy and Capital Programme paper.
- Note the outcome of the Staffordshire Commissioner's budget consultation within the Commissioner's foreword which included a survey regarding the proposed level of precept for 2025/26 **(see Appendix 9)**.

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## Commissioner's Foreword



This is my first budget and council tax precept proposal following my re-election in May 2024 as Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner. I continue to be impressed with the progress that Staffordshire Police has made in recent years, recognised in the most recent inspection report by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS). The improvement in nearly all the areas assessed is testament to the hard work and dedication of the Service's staff, officers, leaders and Chief Constable. I would like to thank them for this. I am certain that they will continue to strive to fulfil the ambitions set out in my refreshed Local Police & Crime Plan.

Challenges such as last summer's violent disorder reminded us all of the bravery and resilience of our officers, rightly earning the respect and support of communities across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.

This 2025/26 budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) is set against a backdrop that includes some significant uncertainties and new financial pressures. Even when increasing the council tax precept by the maximum permitted without a local referendum, reductions in Government grant, a shortfall in the funding required to cover the increase in employers National Insurance Contributions and the cost of the Government manifesto pledge to expand neighbourhood policing mean that Staffordshire Police face real and significant cuts. I also remain concerned about the impact of future pay awards should nationally negotiated pay agreements continue to exceed our budget assumptions.

Staffordshire Police are currently well placed to meet the demands of tackling organised criminals, responding to increases in domestic abuse, and protecting children and vulnerable people. With council tax payers' support, I have been able to invest in the technology, training and people required to help the force meet these daily challenges, weighing up risk and potential harm to prioritise tasks.

Both crime and anti-social behaviour have fallen compared to last year, more suspects are being arrested and stop searched, 999 and 101 calls are being answered more quickly and effectively. People are seeing significantly improved criminal justice outcomes and levels of victim satisfaction are rising.

Staffordshire's additional police officers have helped the force to respond more quickly and they are using their powers more often to address continued high demand, particularly in domestic violence. A new Road Crime Team is robustly tackling crime on our road networks and making them safer, providing our communities with a more focused and localised service than previously. The new Proactive and Rural Crime Team

is addressing the issues that impact our rural communities, such as wildlife crime, burglary and organised gangs stealing machinery from businesses and farms.

My office has worked with Staffordshire Police to address budget challenges over the past three years with savings targets consistently being met as part of a comprehensive transformation programme. The force is already lean, consistently benchmarking as providing good value for money, however, there is more to do to protect what has been achieved in recent years. To further improve efficiency and productivity as part of a renewed transformation programme a further £10m of new savings is required next year.

This budget must ensure that the Chief Constable has the resources he needs. With this and inflation and wage pressures in mind, I have concluded that the 2025/26 Police council tax precept should increase by 5.12%, equivalent to £14 per year or 27p per week for a band D property. This is in line with the referendum limit which was set at £14 for 2025/26.

This proposed increase, alongside the updated transformation work, is essential to limit reductions in service. I am acutely aware that household budgets are tight so I will always aim to keep council tax as low as possible without compromising the safety of officers and the community they serve. Not to take these measures now will mean bigger cuts in service and potentially bigger council tax increases in the future. Together, this budget and MTFS will put Staffordshire Police in the best possible position to continue to keep us safe.

## 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report, and the council tax precept proposal within it, considers public and stakeholder consultation, demand for policing services as well as key government announcements.
- 1.2 Following the announcement of the council tax referendum levels and police grant settlement by government, the Commissioner has considered; current and future funding requirements, together with the factors included within his Police and Crime Plan, the results of the survey with local residents, as well as actual and expected cost pressures and efficiency savings from the force and his own office.
- 1.3 The budget considers the current and emerging operational challenges, both nationally, regionally and locally, with particular reference to those areas included within the Force's Strategic Assessment and the most recent inspection from His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS).
- 1.4 It has been welcome to see HMICFRS remove Staffordshire Police from an Engaged level of inspectorate oversight as well as an inspection report that demonstrates real and tangible progress in improving the service.
- 1.5 Staffordshire Police continues to deliver Value for Money. In the latest HMICFRS Value for Money profiles, Staffordshire Police is the 8<sup>th</sup> lowest funded force in England and Wales on a per head of population basis but continues to be one of the safest places to live, work and visit in the United Kingdom.
- 1.6 Pay and inflationary pressures were higher in 2024/25 than forecast in the MTFS with the average pay award of 4.75% being announced (3% was budgeted for). In addition, the increase on employers National Insurance charges from April 2025 has increased inflationary pressure into 2025/26. These significant inflationary pressures on both pay and prices have been captured in the 2025/26 MTFS, however have necessitated difficult choices on both precept and also savings. There has been no further draw on the budget support reserve to manage these pressures in the MTFS.
- 1.7 These inflationary increases, alongside a settlement that did not fully cover centrally imposed costs and have made setting the 2025/26 MTFS challenging. The current external environment, seen through inflationary pressures and a move towards above inflation pay awards, remains volatile, increasing the likelihood of budget assumptions being materially challenged in year.
- 1.8 The table below demonstrates the impact of central government decisions on the 2025/26 budget since the MTFS was set in February 2024.

	£m
Headline increase in funding (excluding precept increase)	9.6
Minus: Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee costs	(1.5)
Minus: National insurance cost	(3.9)
Minus: Pay pressures excl. NI (4.75% pay award Sept24, 2.8% Sept25) adjusted for assumed full-year effect of pay award grant	(9.2)
Minus: Above inflation increase in HO IT charges	(0.6)
Minus: New Burdens	(0.3)
<b>Underlying government policy impact on funding (decrease)</b>	<b>(5.9)</b>

- 1.9 With such a deficient funding settlement the Force's transformation programme will require in the region of 70 to 80 non police officer posts to be deleted from the establishment. The majority of these come from not recruiting to posts that have become vacant through turnover.
- 1.10 The Commissioner has considered the adequacy and level of reserves and the impacting of future financial challenges and opportunities in the MTFS. The MTFS assumes a net drawn on reserves of £5.141m, of which £4.268m is from the budget support reserve to support the MTFS revenue budget in years 1 and 2. There are other reserves being used for the purpose for which they are earmarked over the life of the MTFS.
- 1.11 As at Quarter 3, the forecast outturn for 2024/25 is a £0.032m underspend, after a contribution of £0.151m into the budget support reserve (it is assumed that this is used in 2026/27. In this financial year, 93% of the £6.558m MTFS savings target has been delivered.
- 1.12 This position assumes that the disorder witnessed over the summer is funded as per the Home Secretary's August letter of comfort to Chief Constables and Police and Crime Commissioners. At the point of writing, following submissions of cost in the Autumn, no final determination on this has been made by the Home Secretary. Funding of £1m, based on the letter of comfort, has been recognised in 2024/25 based on the costs as at the end of December 2024. There will be further pressure on the forces budget if the funding is not received. Costs continue to be accrued in relation to the prosecutions but no provision has been made in 2024/25 or subsequent years budgets for these additional costs.
- 1.13 The draft policing settlement was published on 17th December 2024. There are items such as the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee that have yet to be announced – this presents a real challenge both operationally and financially given the intention to bring these reforms in at the start of April 2025.
- 1.14 Panel should note the budget assumes that the £1.5m allocated for the Neighbourhood Policing guarantee is ringfenced for this purpose. No further guidance has been received and the MTFS assumes this is spent in full on delivering the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee and is not funding to support the core Force budget. For the purposes of setting the budget, this has been treated as a specific grant and the associated spend has been assumed against officer pay.
- 1.15 The MTFS assumptions for future years funding are that core funding will increase by 2% in cash terms (a real terms reduction taking account of inflation & population growth) and a precept referendum limit of 2.99%. The Home Office has provided a one-year local settlement only. This makes future budget estimates and assumptions inherently risky.
- 1.16 In addition, interest rates are forecast to be higher and for a longer period of time. In the short term this presents an opportunity to generate more income on balances but over the medium-term increases interest cost on borrowing. This, alongside a desire to reduce the investment backlog in IT and Estates, sees an increase in

capital financing charges into the revenue budget over the life of the MTFS. The Force and Commissioner remain committed to investing in the capital programme.

1.17 After consideration of all of these aspects, the Commissioner is proposing a precept increase of 27 pence per week from April 2025. Panel should note the settlement assumes PCC's increase funding by the maximum allowed. This increase supports the budget as the cash funding from grant is lower than the cost of pay awards and NI increases imposed on Policing by the Government since the last MTFS.

1.18 The Commissioner and Chief Constable will make the following headline investments into Policing and Crime since the last MTFS, above and beyond those provided for by central government in:

- Supporting the recruitment of 16fte additional Police Officers for 2025/26 & 2026/27;
- EV infrastructure and sustainability schemes to meet unfunded obligations placed on policing by the government;
- Funding to invest in technology improvements to improve contact systems to better meet public expectation and improve public contact and feedback;
- Recruitment of transferees, bringing experience at pace into Staffordshire Police to complement our existing recruitment of student officers;
- Automated document redaction software to ensure legislative compliance, freeing up time to be reinvested back into Policing;
- A dedicated proactive team to tackle important priorities in rural communities;
- A new specialist Roads Crime Team to tackle crime committed on our roads.

Further detail is contained in **Section 4**.

1.19 The Commissioner will continue to support the Chief Constable's transformation programme and has committed to providing a capital funding envelope which includes a £20.4m operational investment programme for estates. This paper is accompanied by a Capital Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy which explain how this investment will be afforded. Further detail on the proposed capital investment is contained in **Section 8**.

1.20 If the proposals in this document are supported then the Staffordshire Commissioner will have the following funding available in 2025/26:

Table 1 Net Budget Requirement Comparison 2024/25 to 2025/26

	2024/25	2025/26	Change
Funding	£'000	£'000	£'000
Home Office Police Core Grant	137,622	142,718	5,096
Revenue Support Grant	8,423	8,423	0
Council Tax Freeze Grant	3,541	3,541	0
Police Pension Grant	5,677	5,291	(386)
Officer Maintenance Ringfenced Grant	6,406	5,275	(1,130)
Additional Recruitment Top-Up	1,824	2,845	1,021
National Insurance Contribution	0	3,532	3,532
Precept	100,091	106,274	6,183
Council Tax Fund Surplus/(Deficit)	1,239	(259)	(1,499)
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>264,824</b>	<b>277,640</b>	<b>12,816</b>

	2024/25	2025/26	Change
Spend	£'000	£'000	£'000
Staffordshire Commissioner	7,538	7,563	25
Staffordshire Police	249,886	262,117	12,231
Capital Financing & Revenue Contribution to Capital	8,596	8,647	51
Investment Income	(1,196)	(688)	509
<b>Total Spend</b>	<b>264,824</b>	<b>277,640</b>	<b>12,816</b>

The detailed budgets are shown in **Appendix 1**

## 2. The Budget Process

- 2.1 The 2025/26 budgeting round continues to use a risk-based approach to budget setting which has sought to align the budget process with identified strategic operational priorities and risks, making strategic investments where funding allows in line with the Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan.
- 2.2 Underpinning the budget and MTFs process are the principles of setting a good and balanced budget. Whilst setting a balanced budget is a legal requirement, significant focus is spent on ensuring it is a 'good budget'.

A **Balanced Budget** means that:

- Income equals expenditure
- Cost reduction targets and investment proposals are credible and achievable, and;
- Key assumptions are 'stress tested'



A **Good Budget** means that:

- It has a medium term focus, supporting the Policing Plan
- Resources are focused on our priority outcomes
- It is not driven by short term fixes
- It demonstrates how we have listened to our communities through consultation
- It is transparent and well scrutinised
- It is integrated with the capital programme; and
- It maintains financial stability

- 2.3 The Commissioner and Staffordshire Police have considered key corporate risks when setting the budget. Essentially these risks are operational and organisational around managing people, infrastructure assets, information, commissioning etc.
- 2.4 The force continues to identify its strategic operational risks as part of the Force Management Statement (a requirement of His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Service). This has been used to inform resourcing strategies at both command and departmental level.
- 2.5 The latest MTFs and, in particular, the 2025/26 budget contained within this report aligns financial resources to areas of greatest risk and therefore is fundamental to the performance management of Staffordshire Police and the Staffordshire Commissioner's Office. It should be noted however that the lateness and deficiency within the funding settlement compared to government costs imposed has meant accelerating areas of savings that, whilst are those believed to have minimal impact on performance, will have an impact on capacity and individuals.
- 2.6 Both Section 151 Officers have worked closely with the wider finance team throughout the year during the budget monitoring process and in preparation of the revenue and



capital budgets for 2025/26. In respect of the budget, this has included (but was not limited to), the identification and agreement of assumptions and methodology and challenge and scrutiny of the budget workings across both the Staffordshire Commissioners Office (SCO) and Staffordshire Police.

- 2.7 The Commissioner and his management team have held regular discussions with the Chief Constable and his Chief Officers throughout the year on the MTFS. These discussions have culminated in a number of full and robust discussions of the budget requirement, the right sizing and funding of the capital programme, national and local operational and financial challenges, the precept options available to the Commissioner and a review of the MTFS and associated risks.
- 2.8 Furthermore, there has been a significant degree of scrutiny and challenge undertaken by the Commissioner and his team, prior to, during and post the January Strategic Governance Board, culminating in final discussions on the policing budget and decision on precept by the Commissioner. The decision around precept is taken by the Commissioner applying his judgement based upon the above budget process.
- 2.9 The approach taken to the MTFS is one where we continually seek to be a well-run organisation, scrutinising areas of spend as well as containing pressures. The overall approach to the MTFS process, in the order below, is:

**1. Well run**

- Containment of pressures,
- Identifying and achieving savings which involve no change to the operating model or incurring redundancy costs,
- Spending every £ wisely

**2. Commercially astute**

- Income generation
- Asset sales
- Balance sheet management
- Procurement and purchasing efficiencies

**3. Transformation**

- Changing the way we do things
- Leveraging capital investment to support changes to our staffing model
- Right sourcing of services and support

### **3. Precept Strategy and 2025/26 Proposal**

- 3.1 The 2025/26 proposed precept increase is 5.12%. This increase is 27 pence per week for a Band D property (equivalent to 18 pence per week for the lowest banded property – Band A).
- 3.2 The Council Tax Referendum Principles for 2025/26 state that PCCs can increase the policing element of council tax by £14 per annum before triggering a referendum. This assumption of a maximum increase was made by the Government as part of its decisions on funding Policing nationally for cost pressures imposed on it.

- 3.3 The Commissioner has engaged with local residents and stakeholders on a wide range of matters. In relation to the precept, the recent consultation showed that the majority of respondents support an increase in the police and crime precept.
- 3.4 The Commissioner has listened to this feedback and his intention to increase funding in the coming year by £6.183m (excluding the collection fund positions) from the precept, which will provide additional investment to policing as well as ensuring that material cost pressures are met for the budget year 2025/26. Importantly this increase provides additional protection to services in the medium term.
- 3.5 The table below illustrates the financial impact of the precept changes on the council Band D rate and increase in funding for Police and Crime in Staffordshire.

Table 2: Precept changes

Council Tax (Police & Crime Element)	2024/25	2025/26
Band D Council Tax Proposed	£273.57	£287.57
Increase on Prior Year	£13.00	£14.00
Percentage increase on Prior Year	4.99%	5.12%
Total Precept Levied	£6,207,408*	£6,183,227*
Weekly Increase	£100,090,544	£106,273,771

*\*This includes changes in the tax base as well as precept rate changes*

- 3.6 The increase in council tax funding also takes in to account the actual tax base increase for 2025/26 (1.01%) when calculating the financial impact of the precept flexibility. The proposed council tax increase by banding is shown in **Appendix 5**.

## 4. Investments in Policing

- 4.1 The Commissioner, in reaching a decision to increase the policing precept, has considered the need to balance increases in local taxation against the investments required in local policing to continue building back in capability and capacity, as well as enabling Staffordshire Police to respond to new and emerging threats.
- 4.2 The Commissioner has supported the recruitment of 16fte additional Police Officers for 2025/26 and 2026/27. This will provide additional uniformed capacity. It is hoped that the governments manifesto policing pledges enable these to be centrally funded over the medium term and therefore baselined into the budget.
- 4.3 Recruitment of transferees, bringing experience at pace into Staffordshire Police to complement our existing recruitment of student officers. Bringing in experienced officers has been key to injecting experience into the Force, a Force that has proportionately one of the most inexperienced front lines in the country.

- 4.4 EV infrastructure and sustainability schemes to meet unfunded obligations placed on policing by the government. Currently the government is consulting on banning the sale of Internal Combustion engine vehicles from 2030 (brought forward from 2035). In Staffordshire this will mean significant amounts are required to be spent on both buying EV vehicles as well as installing charging points. In addition, certain policing tactics and vehicle uses are currently not tenable with Electric Vehicles.
- 4.5 Funding to invest in technology improvements to improve contact systems to better meet public expectation and improve public contact and feedback. The first phase of this system went live in autumn 2024 with initial positive feedback from the public as well as helping to support the overall programme to improve call wait times.
- 4.6 Automated document redaction software to ensure legislative compliance with Crown Prosecution Service requirements is automated, freeing up time to be reinvested back into Policing;
- 4.7 A dedicated proactive team to tackle important priorities in rural communities and a new specialist Roads Crime Team to tackle crime committed on our road networks and help make them safer.
- 4.8 Within the wider capital programme there remains a commitment to build a new firearms training facility and re-provision of the public order training facility. Upgrades to both custody facilities to ensure safe detention and upgrades to operational police stations are to be considered as part of the operational investment programme for estates.

## 5. The Medium-Term Financial Strategy

- 5.1 The Medium-Term Financial Strategy has been updated as follows and is shown in detail in Appendix 6.
- 5.2 The MTFS is an important document in the overall financial framework of the group's planning. It builds on the budget for 2024/25 and incorporates plans to meet changes in available financing with the need to meet current and future commitments.
- 5.3 It is a requirement that the Police and Crime Plan must cover the period until the end of the financial year however it is prudent to prepare a medium-term financial strategy over a longer period than this and therefore the report focusses on a four-year timeline.
- 5.4 The MTFS is based on full delivery of a number of savings arising through Resource Allocation Challenge panels as included in **Appendix 8**.
- 5.5 The MTFS includes a number of key assumptions covering likely funding levels, inflationary increases and expenditure items. A summary of the main MTFS assumptions are shown below for consideration:

Table 3: Assumptions

Description	2025/26 Budget	2026/27 Estimate	2027/28 Estimate	2028/29 Estimate
<b><u>Police Officers</u></b>				
Pay Award	2.8%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%
Incremental uplift	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%
Pension Contribution	35.3%	35.3%	35.3%	35.3%
<b><u>Police Staff</u></b>				
Pay Award	2.8%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%
Incremental uplift	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%
Pension Contribution	21.5%	21.5%	21.5%	21.5%
<b><u>Non Pay Inflation</u></b>				
General	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%
Utilities & Fuel	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%
<b><u>Funding &amp; Income</u></b>				
Government Funding*	4.97%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%
Council Tax Base Increase	1.01%	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%
Variable Income Charges	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%
Council Tax Precept Increase	5.12%	2.99%	2.99%	2.99%

\*For 2025/26 includes Core Grant, Pensions Grant, NI Funding, Officer Maintenance Grant & Additional Recruitment Top Up

- 5.6 All assumptions in the MTFS are subject to change however they are useful in establishing the general size of the underlying pressures in the budget.
- 5.7 Assumptions on inflation have been cross-referenced with other policing and local public sector organisations and believe they are consistent. Panel should note however that in relation to inflation this is continues to be significantly more difficult to forecast.
- 5.8 There remains a significant risk in relation to future pay awards across the public sector. Whilst the most recent pay award for Policing was above inflation it was one of the lowest in the public sector, with other sectors receiving significantly enhanced offers. The Commissioner's view is that any nationally agreed pay awards over inflation should be covered by national government funding.
- 5.9 Based on forecast energy usage and the proposed energy prices from our energy advisors we have seen a maintenance of this budget at the level for 2024/25. However, this remains an area of volatility that underpins the need to hold sufficient general fund reserves.
- 5.10 The tax base forecasts are based upon economic growth forecasts from the Office for Budgetary Responsibility (OBR) blended with local insight and knowledge from billing authorities.
- 5.11 The triannual revaluation of the police staff Local Government Pension Scheme has occurred. Several options for employer contribution rates for the ensuing three

years have been presented by the actuary, with a decision to be made regarding approach. Whilst not reflected in the 2025/26 MTFS given that a decision is yet to be made, the employer contribution rate should decrease from 2026/27 onwards.

## 6. Risks and Sensitivity Analysis

- 6.1 The table below sets out a sensitivity analysis on key assumptions within the 2025/26 budget.

Table 4: Sensitivity Analysis on Assumptions

Cost Area	Change	£'000
Police Pay	1%	1,418
PCSO/Police Staff	1%	888
Utilities	1%	23
Vehicle costs	1%	39
Supplies & Services	1%	101
Police Pension Contribution	1%	904
Police Core Grant Funding	1%	1,427
Precept	£1	370
Precept	1%	1,063

- 6.2 Inflationary pressures remain a significant concern both over the short term and are more likely than not to present a significant challenge around non-pay spend.
- 6.3 There is a risk that higher than inflation increases are experienced during 2025/26 as third-party providers pass on the costs of increased National Insurance contributions. A separate allowance of £0.1m has been included as a contingency.

## 7. Reserves Position

- 7.1 The Commissioner's Reserve Strategy sets this out the minimum general fund reserve to be 3% of the net revenue budget, with the general fund reserve currently at 3.64% of the 2024/25 net revenue budget.
- 7.2 A number of earmarked reserves are included within the overall reserves position; these reserves exist to cover increased risks in the external environment such as pay and pension changes.
- 7.3 The 2025/26 MTFS includes the use of £3.645m from the budget support reserve to balance the underlying gap, with a further £0.623m in 2026/27.
- 7.4 In 2025/26, in addition to the unwinding of the budget support reserve, other material movements include planned use of the IT transformation reserve (£0.400m) to support the Digital, Data and Technology department as set out in the 2024/25 MTFS, and PCC ring-fenced reserves to support commissioned services (c.£1.331m).

- 7.5 Should a pay award be higher than budgeted (as was the case in 2023/24), this may necessitate the use of the pay and pensions reserve, if this is not fully-funded.
- 7.6 If the proposals in this report are adopted then the reserves position will be as shown in **Appendix 2**.

## 8. Capital Programme 2025/26 to 2028/29

- 8.1 The Capital Programme and Capital Strategy for 2025/26 to 2028/29 has been developed and is reviewed within the Capital Strategy. The Capital Programme has been developed by the operational budget holders in discussion with the Head of Financial Accounting and the Director of Resources.
- 8.2 The revenue consequences of the proposed programme have been considered in the development of the revenue budget and the required prudential indicators are set out in the accompanying Treasury Management Strategy.
- 8.3 Panel should note that over the last 4 years the Force and Commissioner have reduced the capital financing requirement (e.g. 'debt') to support investment in front line policing. Long term this direction of travel cannot be maintained without incurring further significant backlog maintenance and driving in inefficiency by not exploiting technology.
- 8.4 The Force has carried out a comprehensive review of the capital programme for the 2025/26 MTFS, re-baselining the programme and ensuring greater congruence between corporate change programmes and the capital programme.

Table 5 – Changes to Capital Financing Costs

	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	2028/29 £000
<b>Capital Financing Costs MTFS 2025/26</b>	8,647	11,047	12,240	13,342
<b>Capital Financing Costs MTFS 2024/25</b>	10,939	12,503	14,137	N/A
<b>(Reduction)/Increase</b>	(2,292)	(1,456)	(1,897)	N/A

- 8.5 In the short term the reduction in capital financing costs has been driven in part by a number of planned interventions including reducing the in year (2024/25) programme, reduction in revenue contribution to capital, and a review of borrowing requirements.
- 8.6 The table below details the Capital Programme projects and spend over the MTFS period with the expected funding of the programme. The detailed programme for 2025/26 is shown within Appendix 7 – Capital Programme.

Table 6: Capital Programme Spending

Department	2025/26 Budget £'000	2026/27 Estimate £'000	2027/28 Estimate £'000	2028/29 Estimate £'000
Digital, Data and Technology	12,465	4,316	3,550	4,150
Estates and Facilities	12,869	23,415	11,545	7,840
Transport	2,000	2,150	2,200	2,250
Operational Equipment	340	100	100	1,279
<b>Capital Programme</b>	<b>27,674</b>	<b>29,981</b>	<b>17,395</b>	<b>15,519</b>

<b>Funding</b>				
Capital Receipts	0	(380)	0	0
Capital Grants	0	0	(331)	0
Revenue Contribution to Capital	(2,157)	(2,257)	(2,257)	(2,257)
Earmarked Reserves	0	0	(469)	(2,322)
Borrowing Requirement	(25,517)	(27,344)	(14,338)	(10,940)
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>(27,674)</b>	<b>(29,981)</b>	<b>(17,395)</b>	<b>(15,519)</b>

8.7 Whilst the capital programme has been constrained by affordability the Commissioner will continue to seek opportunity to reduce cost and seek alternative funding as well as making additional revenue contributions should the opportunity arise in year to keep down long-term debt

8.8 There remains a desire to address backlog maintenance. Over the coming year the Head of Estates will develop with the Commissioner and the Chief Constable a plan that seeks to address some of the strategic backlog issues ahead of consideration for the expected multi-year spending review in June 2025. This will address areas such as custody, local policing bases as well as specialist headquarters functions.

8.9 The Commissioner will continue to support the Chief Constable's transformation programme and has committed to providing a capital funding envelope which includes a £20.4m operational investment programme for estates.

8.10 This paper is accompanied by a Capital Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy which explain how this investment will be afforded

## 9. Statement of the Commissioner CFO on the robustness of the Budget and adequacy of the proposed financial reserves

9.1 The Local Government Act 2003, Part 2, Section 25, as amended by the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2013, requires the Commissioner's CFO to report on the robustness of the estimates used for the budget and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves. The Commissioner is required to have regard to the report of the CFO and the report must be given to the Police and Crime Panel.

9.2 It is noted that the budget years 2025/26 onwards are planned with more uncertainty than has been the case in recent years. The external environment continues to be volatile, with significant inflationary pressures and significant uncertainties, including an upcoming spending review. Whilst there remains some uncertainty with regard to future settlement funding, increased pay awards and inflation, estimates have been included within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and appropriate provision within Earmarked Reserves.

I conclude, therefore, that the budget for 2025/26:

- Is balanced and has been prepared on a robust basis,
- Is accompanied by a Capital, Treasury Management and Reserves Strategy

**Heather Lees**

**Director of Finance / S151 Officer for the Staffordshire Commissioner's Office**



## Appendix 1

### Revenue Budget 2025/26

	Original Budget 2024/25 £'000	Restated Budget 2024/25 £'000	Budget 2025/26 £'000	Year on Year Change £'000
<b>Pay</b>				
Police Officer Pay Costs	131,168	131,748	141,813	10,065
PCSO Pay Costs	9,490	8,662	8,073	(589)
Police Staff Pay Costs	74,402	74,579	80,575	5,996
Other Employee Costs	3,700	3,938	4,058	120
Police Officer Pensions	4,253	4,253	4,403	150
<b>Total Pay</b>	<b>223,013</b>	<b>223,181</b>	<b>238,922</b>	<b>15,740</b>
<b>Non Pay</b>				
Repairs & Maintenance	32	33	32	(1)
Other Premises Costs	6,892	6,594	6,771	176
Vehicle Costs	4,042	3,993	3,988	(5)
Other Travel Costs	583	745	802	57
Operational Supplies & Service	6,725	7,308	7,619	311
Communications & Computers	13,175	13,118	13,138	20
Administration	2,578	1,628	1,630	2
Other Supplies & Services	857	898	988	90
<b>Total Non Pay</b>	<b>34,884</b>	<b>34,318</b>	<b>34,968</b>	<b>650</b>
<b>Contracted</b>				
Third Party Payments	18,941	18,897	18,127	(769)
<b>Total Contracted</b>	<b>18,941</b>	<b>18,897</b>	<b>18,127</b>	<b>(769)</b>
<b>Capital Financing Cost</b>				
Capital Financing Costs	6,339	6,091	6,490	399
Revenue Contribution to Capital	2,257	2,257	2,157	(100)
<b>Total Capital Financing Cost</b>	<b>8,596</b>	<b>8,348</b>	<b>8,647</b>	<b>299</b>
<b>Income</b>				
Grants & Contributions	(8,644)	(8,654)	(8,789)	(135)
Reimbursements	(5,836)	(5,768)	(5,943)	(175)
Sales, Fees & Charges	(1,171)	(1,171)	(1,527)	(356)
Other Income	(1,259)	(1,259)	(750)	509
<b>Total Other Income</b>	<b>(16,910)</b>	<b>(16,852)</b>	<b>(17,009)</b>	<b>(158)</b>
<b>Unallocated Savings</b>				
Unallocated Savings	(133)	292	(873)	(1,166)
<b>Total Unallocated Savings</b>	<b>(133)</b>	<b>292</b>	<b>(873)</b>	<b>(1,166)</b>
<b>Total Revenue Budget before Reserves</b>	<b>268,392</b>	<b>268,184</b>	<b>282,781</b>	<b>14,596</b>
Transfers to/(from) Reserves	(3,569)	(3,361)	(5,141)	(1,779)
<b>Total Revenue Budget</b>	<b>264,824</b>	<b>264,824</b>	<b>277,640</b>	<b>12,816</b>
<b>Financed By:</b>				
Home Office Funding	163,494	163,494	171,625	8,132
Council Tax Funding	101,330	101,330	106,014	4,684
<b>Total Financing</b>	<b>264,824</b>	<b>264,824</b>	<b>277,640</b>	<b>12,816</b>

## Appendix 2

### Useable Reserves Forecast

	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	2028/29 £000
<b>General Fund</b>	<b>9,669</b>	<b>9,669</b>	<b>9,669</b>	<b>9,669</b>
<b>Capital Receipts Reserve</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Capital Grants Unapplied</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Budget Support Reserve	623	0	0	0
Capital Reserve	942	1,190	1,439	615
Collaboration Reserve	618	618	618	618
ESN Reserve	3,423	3,423	2,954	1,704
Insurance Reserve	314	314	314	314
IT Transformation Reserve	1,644	1,244	844	844
Major Events Policing Reserve	291	291	291	291
Operational Reserves	10,191	9,325	9,162	8,999
Pay and Pension Reserve	4,486	4,486	4,486	4,486
Reshaping the Future Reserve	1,344	1,344	1,344	1,344
Uplift Reserve	1,867	1,867	1,867	1,867
<b>Total Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>25,745</b>	<b>24,105</b>	<b>23,321</b>	<b>21,084</b>
<b>Total Usable Reserves</b>	<b>35,745</b>	<b>34,105</b>	<b>32,990</b>	<b>30,753</b>

## Appendix 3

### Council Tax Report 2025/26

#### Council Tax Surplus / (Deficit) by Billing Authority

	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	Change £000
Cannock Chase	(37)	(152)	(114)
East Staffordshire	65	99	34
Lichfield	107	2	(106)
Newcastle	7	0	(7)
South Staffordshire	172	142	(29)
Stafford	(20)	(138)	(118)
Staffordshire Moorlands	(12)	116	128
Tamworth	36	45	9
Stoke City Council	922	(374)	(1,296)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,239</b>	<b>(259)</b>	<b>(1,499)</b>

## Appendix 4

### Council Tax Base by Billing Authority

	2024/25 (Band D Equivalent)	2025/26 (Band D Equivalent)	Change (Band D Equivalent)
Cannock Chase	30,015	29,999	(16)
East Staffordshire	40,935	41,575	640
Lichfield	41,116	41,523	407
Newcastle	38,738	39,807	1,069
South Staffordshire	39,914	40,191	277
Stafford	49,303	49,634	331
Staffordshire Moorlands	33,737	34,382	645
Tamworth	23,479	23,596	117
Stoke City Council	68,632	68,851	219
<b>Total</b>	<b>365,868</b>	<b>369,558</b>	<b>3,690</b>

*\*n.b. figures are rounded to the nearest whole Band D equivalent*

## Appendix 5

### Council Tax Report 2025/26

#### Council Bands for Each Band and Billing Authority Precepts

#### Based upon a Band D increase of 5.12%

Band	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	Annual Increase £	Increase per week £
A	182.38	191.71	9.33	0.18
B	212.77	223.67	10.90	0.21
C	243.18	255.62	12.44	0.24
D	273.57	287.57	14.00	0.27
E	334.37	351.47	17.10	0.33
F	395.16	415.38	20.22	0.39
G	455.95	479.28	23.33	0.45
H	547.14	575.14	28.00	0.54

	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	Change £
Cannock Chase	8,211,138	8,626,833	415,695
East Staffordshire	11,198,588	11,955,780	757,192
Lichfield	11,248,049	11,940,683	692,633
Newcastle	10,597,555	11,447,299	849,744
South Staffordshire	10,919,284	11,557,726	638,442
Stafford	13,487,748	14,273,293	785,545
Staffordshire Moorlands	9,229,431	9,887,232	657,801
Tamworth	6,423,150	6,785,502	362,352
Stoke City Council	18,775,602	19,799,425	1,023,823
<b>Total</b>	<b>100,090,544</b>	<b>106,273,771</b>	<b>6,183,227</b>

## Appendix 6

### MTFS Summary Financials 2025/26 to 2028/29

	Budget 2025/26 £'000	Budget 2026/27 £'000	Budget 2027/28 £'000	Budget 2028/29 £'000
<b>Pay</b>				
Police Officer Pay Costs	141,813	147,831	153,632	159,665
PCSO Pay Costs	8,073	7,987	8,391	8,811
Police Staff Pay Costs	80,575	84,093	87,522	91,088
Other Employee Costs	4,058	4,156	4,213	4,291
Police Officer Pensions	4,403	4,477	4,552	4,629
<b>Total Pay</b>	<b>238,922</b>	<b>248,544</b>	<b>258,310</b>	<b>268,486</b>
<b>Non Pay</b>				
Repairs & Maintenance	32	32	33	34
Other Premises Costs	6,771	7,278	7,412	7,549
Vehicle Costs	3,988	4,045	4,103	4,162
Other Travel Costs	802	765	780	796
Operational Supplies & Service	7,619	7,775	8,067	8,224
Communications & Computers	13,138	13,314	13,591	13,870
Administration	1,630	1,682	1,711	1,750
Other Supplies & Services	988	966	975	983
<b>Total Non Pay</b>	<b>34,968</b>	<b>35,856</b>	<b>36,672</b>	<b>37,368</b>
<b>Contracted</b>				
Third Party Payments	18,127	19,122	19,129	19,263
<b>Total Contracted</b>	<b>18,127</b>	<b>19,122</b>	<b>19,129</b>	<b>19,263</b>
<b>Capital Financing Cost</b>				
Capital Financing Costs	6,490	8,790	9,983	11,085
Revenue Contribution to Capital	2,157	2,257	2,257	2,257
<b>Total Capital Financing Cost</b>	<b>8,647</b>	<b>11,047</b>	<b>12,240</b>	<b>13,342</b>
<b>Income</b>				
Grants & Contributions	(8,789)	(8,759)	(8,759)	(8,759)
Reimbursements	(5,943)	(5,804)	(5,809)	(5,814)
Sales, Fees & Charges	(1,527)	(1,590)	(1,590)	(1,590)
Other Income	(750)	(458)	(378)	(318)
<b>Total Other Income</b>	<b>(17,009)</b>	<b>(16,611)</b>	<b>(16,536)</b>	<b>(16,481)</b>
<b>Unallocated Savings</b>				
Unallocated Savings	(873)	(158)	(158)	(158)
<b>Total Unallocated Savings</b>	<b>(873)</b>	<b>(158)</b>	<b>(158)</b>	<b>(158)</b>
<b>Total Revenue before Reserves</b>	<b>282,781</b>	<b>297,801</b>	<b>309,657</b>	<b>321,819</b>
Net use of Reserves	(5,141)	(1,641)	(315)	85
Transformation Requirement		(10,901)	(16,488)	(21,215)
<b>Total Revenue Budget</b>	<b>277,640</b>	<b>285,259</b>	<b>292,854</b>	<b>300,689</b>
<b>Financed By:</b>				
<b>Settlement Funding</b>				
Home Office Police Grant	142,718	145,572	148,483	151,453
Revenue Support Grant	8,423	8,423	8,423	8,423
Council Tax Freeze Grant	3,541	3,541	3,541	3,541
Police Pension Grant	5,291	5,291	5,291	5,291
Officer Maintenance Ringfenced Grant	5,275	5,381	5,488	5,598
Additional Recruitment Top-Up	2,845	2,902	2,960	3,019
National Insurance Contribution	3,532	3,602	3,675	3,748
<b>Total Settlement Funding</b>	<b>171,625</b>	<b>174,713</b>	<b>177,862</b>	<b>181,074</b>
Council Tax	106,014	110,546	114,992	119,614
<b>Total Financing</b>	<b>277,640</b>	<b>285,259</b>	<b>292,854</b>	<b>300,689</b>

## Appendix 7 – Capital Programme

### Estates Capital Programme

Package	Description	Budget 2025/26 £'000	Forecast 2026/27 £'000	Forecast 2027/28 £'000	Forecast 2028/29 £'000	Total £'000
<b>Investment Programme</b>						
<b>Weston Road Headquarters</b>						
Armed Police Training Facility	The construction of the armed policing training facility, including professional fees. Whilst the scheme has yet to be approved this forecast represents the latest estimated cost.	6,290	9,826	0	0	16,116
HQ Block 1	A minor improvement scheme to include roof repairs and automated door replacement.	0	45	0	400	445
HQ Block 7	An upgrade to the Heating, Ventilation and Cooling system within the main conference and visitor block at HQ is required to replace a failing end of life system. As part of these works the reception area will need reconfiguration	0	595	0	0	595
HQ Block 9	Minor improvement scheme to address elements of backlog maintenance.	250	0	45	50	345
HQ External and M&E Works	Mechanical and Engineering works to improve/replace gates, generators, lifts and Dog Training Facilities.	349	0	160	0	509
<b>Custody Facilities</b>						
Northern Area Custody	Investment required to maintain the facility, and to deliver safer detention standards. This site has seen minimal investment since it was built in the late 1990's.	659	3,035	0	0	3,694
Watling Custody	Investment required to maintain the facility, and to provide safer detention standards. Phasing wise this will follow the refurbishment of the larger facility in the North of the County to be completed.	265	0	1,800	0	2,065
Professional Fees	A review of custody facilities to ensure they meet the longer-term requirements of modern policing.	200	200	200	0	600
<b>Driver Training</b>						
Driver Training Site	As a result of changes to College of Policing licensing requirements, there is a requirement to relocate the driver training team.	850	0	0	0	850

Package	Description	Budget 2025/26	Forecast 2026/27	Forecast 2027/28	Forecast 2028/29	Total
<b>Operational Sites</b>						
Operational Investment Programme	Investment required to maintain and refurbishment of operational policing estates, the estates has had minimal investment since it was built and investment is required to meet the needs of modern policing.	430	6,325	8,075	5,575	20,405
Burton BCM	Solution identified is to implement a DR control room on the second floor in Burton Police Station coupled with a BCM using IT classrooms in Beaconside during peak operation.	490	0	0	0	490
Stafford Police Station	Professional fees to scope the refurbishment of Stafford Police Station to provide modern fit for purpose accommodation.	0	40	0	50	90
Cheadle Police Station	A minor improvement scheme to include roof repairs, small refurbishment, M&E works and replacement of windows.	0	40	0	625	665
Barton Police Station	A minor improvement scheme to include roof repairs, small refurbishment, M&E works and replacement of windows.	0	180	0	0	180
Leek Police Station	Replacement of CCTV	0	0	40	0	40
Cheslyn Hay Police Station	A minor improvement scheme to include small refurbishment, M&E works and replacement of windows.	0	225	0	0	225
Bucknall Police Station	A minor improvement scheme to include small refurbishment, M&E works and replacement of windows.	0	0	135	0	135
<b>Collaboration Projects</b>						
Public Order Training Facility	Develop a new public order training facility with West Mercia Police, that meets College of Policing licensing standards	150	1,814	0	0	1,964
Joint Emergency Transport	Redesign of JETS workshop to increase capacity of the workshop floors.	183	0	0	0	183
<b>Other Sites</b>						
Lindum House	Minor improvement scheme to address elements of backlog maintenance.	115	0	0	50	165
Ranleigh Street- Forensics	Investment into Forensic stores	150	0	0	0	150
Meir Police Post	A minor improvement scheme to include small refurbishment, M&E works and replacement of windows and doors.	200	0	0	0	200
Smithfield	Lighting replacement programme	100	0	0	0	100

Package	Description	Budget 2025/26	Forecast 2026/27	Forecast 2027/28	Forecast 2028/29	Total
<b>Other Activities</b>						
Government Environmental Obligations	Investment into decarbonisation, EV points and solar panels. Funded locally due to lack of Central Government funding to support policy decisions.	1,823	750	750	750	4,073
Capitalised Maintenance Programmes	UPS, Fire Safety and Emergency Repairs	365	340	340	340	1,385
<b>Total Estates Capital Programme</b>		<b>12,869</b>	<b>23,415</b>	<b>11,545</b>	<b>7,840</b>	<b>55,669</b>

#### Digital Data and Technology Capital programme

Package	Description	Budget 2025/26 £'000	Forecast 2026/27 £'000	Forecast 2027/28 £'000	Forecast 2028/29 £'000	Total £'000
<b>Investment Programme</b>						
Network Improvement Programme	Improvements to the networks – ISE, Wifi and core network	330	200	150	150	830
<b>Business Systems</b>						
Integra Centros	Consultancy fees to support the delivery of the Finance IT roadmap	70	0	0	0	70
<b>Operational Systems</b>						
Digital Forensics	Significant improvements to our digital forensics infrastructure and systems to improve efficiency and improve the chances of prosecution.	836	0	0	0	836
Technology Development Fund	Technology such as RPA and AI has been identified by the Government as an area for productivity gains in policing and the wider public sector. This will help address the coming MTFS gap and drive efficiencies.	250	250	250	250	1,000



Package	Description	Budget 2025/26	Forecast 2026/27	Forecast 2027/28	Forecast 2028/29	Total
CycComms	Communications authorities management system, this will support and protect the vulnerable by effective communication.	60	0	0	0	60
<b>Force Contact Centre (FCC)</b>						
Burton DR/BCM	BCM recommends the secondary site to be on separate critical infrastructure areas from existing location.	1,422	0	0	0	1,422
Airwave & Secondary ICCS Solution	Address the multiple single points of failure in the ICCS / Airwave solution, which were introduced when the Hanley facility was decommissioned in 2018	1,400	0	0	0	1,400
Smart Storm	Migrate to the new system, SmartSTORM. This is essential as STORM MA is end-of life from December 2026	151	151	0	0	302
FCC Delivery	External resources that have detailed, niche, technical experience to support the specific technical programme deliverables	1,185	935	0	0	2,120
CRM Call Assist	Improvements in customer contact and service including introducing automated updates to individuals around ongoing crime matters	0	390	0	0	390
Gazetteer	System upgrade	20	40	0	0	60
ISDN & SIP Migration Programme	Mandatory change for the ISDN to SIP Migration. This has been brought on by turning off all the analogue/digital circuit provision	300	0	0	0	300
<b>Digital Asset Management</b>						
Digital Evidence Asset Management	Exploring cloud solution technology, integration costs moving to cloud.	23	0	0	0	23
Body Worn Video AB+EW	Requirement to upgrade kit to AB4, as the current device is end of life.	2,013	0	0	0	2,013
Body Worn Video Docks+EW	Requirement to upgrade kit to AB4 docks' as the current device is end of life.	247	0	0	0	247
<b>Device Replacement</b>						
End User Modernisation	To allow users to set up/configure their own devices.	250	0	0	0	250
Mobile device refresh	Rolling replacement programme	1,100	350	350	350	2,150
Laptops & Desktops refresh	Rolling replacement programme	600	1,000	1,000	1,000	3,600

Package	Description	Budget 2025/26	Forecast 2026/27	Forecast 2027/28	Forecast 2028/29	Total
Conference on Wheels/ Audio Visual Conferencing	Rolling replacement programme	0	0	0	150	150
DDaT Infrastructure refresh hardware	To replace end of life IT infrastructure.	1,132	1,000	1,000	1,000	4,132
ANPR Static Cameras	Replacing the existing cameras to new ANPR cameras.	261	0	0	0	261
Green Room and Silver Rooms	The hardware in the existing rooms is outdated and lacks the functionality of a modern Green/ Silver Room which would enable better incident management, based on more complete real time information.	300	0	0	0	300
<b>National Systems</b>						
ESN Programme	Nationally mandated scheme to replace airwave. This is the locally anticipated funding required	15	0	800	1,250	2,065
Digital Case Files	Nationally mandated project to improve file upload to the CPS. Currently only 1mb can be transferred in one go to the CPS resulting in additional workload for investigators.	500	0	0	0	500
<b>Total Digital Data and Technology Capital Programme</b>		<b>12,465</b>	<b>4,316</b>	<b>3,550</b>	<b>4,150</b>	<b>24,481</b>

## Fleet Capital Programme

Package	Description	Budget 2025/26 £'000	Forecast 2026/27 £'000	Forecast 2027/28 £'000	Forecast 2028/29 £'000	Total £'000
<b>Fleet Refresh Programme</b>						
Vehicle Replacement Programme	The replacement of vehicles selected through a process of evaluation, considering the age, mileage and condition of every vehicle. These have been identified as critical for replacement due to either excessive mileage, age or being no longer operationally fit.	2,000	2,150	2,200	2,250	8,600
<b>Total Fleet Programme</b>		<b>2,000</b>	<b>2,150</b>	<b>2,200</b>	<b>2,250</b>	<b>8,600</b>

## Operational Equipment Capital Programme

Package	Description	Budget 2025/26 £'000	Forecast 2026/27 £'000	Forecast 2027/28 £'000	Forecast 2028/29 £'000	Total £'000
<b>Investment Programme</b>						
Replacement Programme	Ensuring that Staffordshire Police has a modern and fit for purpose equipment provision. This provision includes tactical body armour and specialist forensics and investigative equipment	100	100	100	100	400
Tasers	Replacement programme for taser devices	0	0	0	1,179	1,179
Forensic Investigation Point Cloud Laser Scanning	The digital capture of crime scene imagery through laser scanning point cloud technology is a key requirement of modern homicide police investigations	50	0	0	0	50

Package	Description	Budget 2025/26	Forecast 2026/27	Forecast 2027/28	Forecast 2028/29	Total
	and best practice in accordance to National College of Policing.					
ANPR Vehicle Programme	Replace the existing ANPR kit with the new cameras	190	0	0	0	190
<b>Total Operational Equipment Programme</b>		<b>340</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,279</b>	<b>1,819</b>

## Appendix 8 – Savings

Command	Service	Savings description	Theme	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	2028/29 £000	Total £000
Capital Financing	Capital Financing	Capital Financing – PWLB loan costs	Cost reduction	(49)				(49)
Capital Financing	Capital Financing	Capital Financing - Revenue contribution to capital offset by reduction in vehicle replacement programme	Cost reduction	(100)	100			0
Capital Financing	Capital Financing	Additional investment income	Income generation	(162)	96	13	60	7
<b>Capital Financing Total</b>				<b>(311)</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>(42)</b>
Central & Associated	Corporate	Non-pay budget review	Cost reduction	(92)				(92)
Central & Associated	Corporate	Remove project budget	Cost reduction	(174)				(174)
Central & Associated	Corporate	Reduce Targeted Variable Payments	Cost reduction	(200)				(200)
Central & Associated	Corporate	Reduce agency budget	Cost reduction	(25)				(25)
<b>Central &amp; Associated Total</b>				<b>(491)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(491)</b>
DCC	Corporate Communications	Review of non-pay budgets	Cost reduction	(3)				(3)
DCC	Corporate Communications	Review of subscriptions	Cost reduction	(12)				(12)
DCC	Corporate Communications	Increased income generation from 3rd parties towards staffing costs	Income generation	(10)				(10)
DCC	Corporate Planning and Business Change	Variation between budget available and structure approved via governance	Changes to organisational structures & responsibilities	(124)				(124)
DCC	Corporate Planning and Business Change	Staffing Review – change programme required	Changes to organisational structures & responsibilities	(250)				(250)
DCC	Corporate Planning and Business Change	Review of administrative posts – change programme required	Changes to organisational	(250)				(250)

			structures & responsibilities					
DCC	Executive	Evidence Based Practice – psychology	Cost reduction	(11)				(11)
DCC	Executive	Evidence Based Practice - training	Cost reduction	(13)				(13)
DCC	Executive	Non-pay budget review	Cost reduction	(2)				(2)
DCC	Executive	Reduction to contributions	Cost reduction	(4)				(4)
DCC	Executive	Reduce Tasking allocation	Cost reduction	(50)				(50)
DCC	Info Governance & Assurance	Additional income from Road Traffic offences	Income generation	(29)				(29)
DCC	Professional Standards	Travel budget reduction	Cost reduction	(1)				(1)
DCC	Professional Standards	Expert Witnesses & Reports	Cost reduction	(2)				(2)
<b>DCC Total</b>				<b>(761)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(761)</b>
Enabling Services	ALL	Enabling Services one-off savings from driver training income and deferring recruitment.	Cost reduction	(750)	750			0
Enabling Services	ALL	Targeted reduction in posts across the command area including deletion of vacant posts	Cost reduction	(500)				(500)
Enabling Services	ALL except IT	Increased income generation from 3rd parties towards staffing costs	Income generation	(142)				(142)
Enabling Services	Commercial	Commercial Staffing Review	Changes to organisational structures & responsibilities	(21)				(21)
Enabling Services	Commercial	Water Review – savings from a review of surface drainage charges	Contract management	(10)				(10)
Enabling Services	Commercial Services	Insurance Broker: Actuarial Risk Management Fee	Cost reduction	(9)	9			1
Enabling Services	Commercial Services	Procurement savings – to be delivered across the Force	Contractual	(250)				(250)
Enabling Services	Digital, Data & Technology	IT Contract savings	Contractual	(10)				(10)
Enabling Services	Digital, Data & Technology	System recharges	Income generation	(13)				(13)
Enabling Services	Digital, Data & Technology	Decommissioning of systems	Contract management	(86)				(86)

Enabling Services	Digital, Data & Technology	Airwave – following the Home Office high court ruling on airwave charges. Note a risk exists of appeal to that ruling.	Cost reduction	(1,000)				(1,000)
Enabling Services	Estates	Estates - Self generation of energy and energy conservation campaigns	Income generation	(25)	(25)			(50)
Enabling Services	Estates	Income generation from solar power	Income generation	(100)				(100)
Enabling Services	Estates	Review of music licences	Cost reduction	(10)				(10)
Enabling Services	Estates	Review of Estate running costs	Cost reduction	(17)				(17)
Enabling Services	Estates	Capitalisation of posts to support the Firearms range programme	Cost reduction	(126)				(126)
Enabling Services	JETS	Reduction in M6 Toll charges	Cost reduction	(15)				(15)
Enabling Services	JETS	Reduction in fleet Service & repair consumables	Cost reduction	(120)				(120)
Enabling Services	JETS	Review of oils and lubricants spend to reduce cost	Cost reduction	(3)				(3)
Enabling Services	People & OD	Cessation of the HIVE contract	Cost reduction	(25)				(25)
Enabling Services	People & OD	Chaplaincy	Cost reduction	(8)				(8)
Enabling Services	People & OD	Staff Networks	Cost reduction	(1)				(1)
Enabling Services	People & OD	Room hire reduction	Cost reduction	(10)				(10)
Enabling Services	People & OD	Cessation of subscriptions	Cost reduction	(7)				(7)
Enabling Services	People & OD	Rephase efficiency saving in 2024/25 budget to 26/27	Cost reduction	0	(36)			(36)
Enabling Services	Staff Associations	Remove one-off conference budget	Cost reduction	(20)				(20)
<b>Enabling Services Total</b>				<b>(3,278)</b>	<b>698</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(2,580)</b>
Force Contact and Operations	Criminal Justice	Police Led Prosecutions	Income generation	(108)				(108)
Force Contact and Operations	Criminal Justice	Income from Collaboration pay recharges	Income generation	(79)				(79)
Force Contact and Operations	Custody	Expert Witnesses & Reports	Cost reduction	(11)				(11)
Force Contact and Operations	Custody	Contract Savings	Contractual	(3)	2			(2)
Force Contact and Operations	Firearms Licencing	Fees - Licences & Certificates income as a result of government increases in fees and charges	Income generation	(100)				(100)

Force Contact and Operations	Force Contact Centre	Review of Front Office Counter structure	Changes to organisational structures & responsibilities	(48)				(48)
Force Contact and Operations	Force Contact Centre	Staffing Review - Investigative Officers	Cost reduction	(41)				(41)
Force Contact and Operations	Force Ops	Reprofiling of Firearms Licencing income in line with renewals	Income generation	(41)	(41)			(82)
Force Contact and Operations	Force Ops	Reduction in stationery spend	Cost reduction	(2)				(2)
Force Contact and Operations	Force Ops	Ops & Testing Equipment Purchases	Cost reduction	(3)				(3)
Force Contact and Operations	Force Ops	Expert Witnesses & Reports	Cost reduction	(5)				(5)
Force Contact and Operations	Force Ops	General Vehicle Hire	Cost reduction	(9)				(9)
Force Contact and Operations	Force Ops	Employee Casual Mileage	Cost reduction	(2)				(2)
Force Contact and Operations	Force Ops	Refreshments - Operational	Cost reduction	(3)				(3)
Force Contact and Operations	Force Ops	Employee Casual Mileage	Cost reduction	(2)				(2)
Force Contact and Operations	Force Ops	Review of non-pay budgets	Cost reduction	(10)				(10)
Force Contact and Operations	Force Ops	Ops & Testing Consumables	Cost reduction	(2)				(2)
Force Contact and Operations	Force Ops	Abnormal Loads Income	Income generation	(164)				(164)
Force Contact and Operations	Force Ops	Income from funded posts	Income generation	(80)	30			(50)
Force Contact and Operations	Force Ops	Seized Vehicle Income following a change in approach to disposal of vehicles	Income generation	(100)				(100)
Force Contact and Operations	Regional Initiatives	Income from Secondments	Income generation	(143)	143			0
<b>Force Contact and Operations Total</b>				<b>(956)</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(822)</b>
Local Policing Command	County	Bank holiday reduction to resourcing	Service redesign	(116)				(116)
Local Policing Command	City	Bank holiday reduction to resourcing	Service redesign	(42)				(42)



Local Policing Command	All	PCSO recruitment to Neighbourhood Policing baseline	Service redesign	(1,139)				(1,139)
Local Policing Command	All	Review of shift patterns to increase day time visibility – change programme required	Service redesign	(500)	(500)			(1,000)
<b>Local Policing Command Total</b>				<b>(1,797)</b>	<b>(500)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(2,297)</b>
Public Protection Unit	PPU Adult	Staffing review	Changes to organisational structures & responsibilities	(56)				(56)
Public Protection Unit	PPU Adult	DBS additional income	Income generation	(79)				(79)
Public Protection Unit	PPU Child	Review of structure – change programme required	Changes to organisational structures & responsibilities	(246)				(246)
Public Protection Unit	PPU Child	Remove vacant posts	Changes to organisational structures & responsibilities	(76)				(76)
<b>Public Protection Unit Total</b>				<b>(457)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(457)</b>
Specialist Crime Command	Forensics	Reduce IT software purchase spend	Cost reduction	(16)				(16)
Specialist Crime Command	Forensics	Reduce Maintenance Contract	Cost reduction	(2)				(2)
Specialist Crime Command	Forensics	Property Bags	Cost reduction	(6)				(6)
Specialist Crime Command	Forensics	Redeployment expenses	Cost reduction	(2)				(2)
Specialist Crime Command	Forensics	Forensics outsourcing – right sizing of budget following submission triaging introduced in 2024/25	Cost reduction	(200)	(100)			(300)
Specialist Crime Command	Knowledge Hub	Remove vacant posts	Changes to organisational structures & responsibilities	(48)				(48)
Specialist Crime Command	Knowledge Hub	Review of non-pay budgets	Cost reduction	(12)				(12)

Specialist Crime Command	Knowledge Hub	System savings	Contract management	(74)	6			(67)
Specialist Crime Command	Knowledge Hub	Review of vacant posts	Changes to organisational structures & responsibilities	(55)				(55)
Specialist Crime Command	Knowledge Hub	Review of service delivery	Service redesign	(100)				(100)
Specialist Crime Command	Knowledge Hub	Review of vacant posts	Changes to organisational structures & responsibilities	(55)				(55)
Specialist Crime Command	Major and Organised Crime	Protective Clothing	Cost reduction	(4)				(4)
Specialist Crime Command	Major and Organised Crime	Remove vacant posts	Changes to organisational structures & responsibilities	(56)				(56)
Specialist Crime Command	ROCU	ROCU Savings	Cost reduction	(263)				(263)
Specialist Crime Command	Specialist Crime	Review of Operating Model	Changes to organisational structures & responsibilities	(75)				(75)
Specialist Crime Command	Various	Investigative Officers - recruit to timeline	Changes to organisational structures & responsibilities	(241)				(241)
Specialist Crime Command	Forensics	Digital Forensics Programme	Cost reduction	(25)	(170)			(195)
<b>Specialist Crime Command Total</b>				<b>(1,235)</b>	<b>(263)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(1,498)</b>
<b>Total Force Savings</b>				<b>(9,286)</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>(8,947)</b>
Staffordshire Commissioner's Office	Office	Removal of vacant post	Changes to organisational structures & responsibilities	(40)				(40)
Staffordshire Commissioner's Office	Office	Reinstating Business Rates income budget	Income generation	(100)				(100)

Staffordshire Commissioner's Office	Office	Increasing OPFCC staffing recharge	Income generation	(15)				<b>(15)</b>
Staffordshire Commissioner's Office	Commissioning	Child Criminal Exploitation	Service redesign	(99)				<b>(99)</b>
Staffordshire Commissioner's Office	Commissioning	Drugs and Alcohol	Service redesign	(94)				<b>(94)</b>
Staffordshire Commissioner's Office	Commissioning	Harmful Sexual Behaviour	Service redesign	(68)				<b>(68)</b>
Staffordshire Commissioner's Office	Commissioning	Triage	Service redesign	0	(43)			<b>(43)</b>
Staffordshire Commissioner's Office	Commissioning	Navigators	Service redesign	0	(40)			<b>(40)</b>
Staffordshire Commissioner's Office	Commissioning	Domestic Abuse Champions	Service redesign	(3)				<b>(3)</b>
Staffordshire Commissioner's Office	Commissioning	Peer Mentoring / Personal Development	Service redesign	(80)				<b>(80)</b>
Staffordshire Commissioner's Office	Commissioning	Diversionary Activities / Personal Development	Service redesign	(156)				<b>(156)</b>
Staffordshire Commissioner's Office	Commissioning	Stalking and Harassment	Service redesign	0	(150)			<b>(150)</b>
Staffordshire Commissioner's Office	Commissioning	Ugly Mugs	Service redesign	(3)				<b>(3)</b>
Staffordshire Commissioner's Office	Commissioning	Buddi Tags	Service redesign	0	(16)			<b>(16)</b>
Staffordshire Commissioner's Office	Commissioning	Reduce the number of Strategic Needs Assessments	Service redesign	(20)				<b>(20)</b>



**STAFFORDSHIRE COMMISSIONER**

Police | Fire and Rescue | Crime

Staffordshire Commissioner's Office	Commissioning	Cadets scheme contribution reduced	Service redesign	(15)				(15)
<b>Staffordshire Commissioner's Office Total</b>				(692)	(249)	0	0	(941)
<b>Total Group Savings</b>				(9,977)	16	13	60	(9,888)

## Appendix 9

### Precept consultation outcomes

#### Purpose of report

This report is a summary of the results obtained from the public and stakeholder consultation undertaken to seek views on the amount of council tax the people of Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent are willing to pay towards their Police and Fire & Rescue services.

#### Background

Funding for Police and Fire & Rescue services is made up of a mix of central government grants, combined with the 'precept' – the contribution residents make as part of their annual council tax.

The Staffordshire Commissioner is responsible for setting the budget for Staffordshire Police and Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service, including the amount of council tax used for both services.

It is the Commissioner's responsibility to ensure Policing, Fire & Rescue and community safety is properly funded in 2025/26 to provide the services expected by those who live, work and visit Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.

A formal consultation took place between 10 December and 12 January. A range of methods were used to encourage participation, resulting in responses from **2,345** people from Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.

The views from this consultation will help the Commissioner arrive at his proposals for the setting of the 2025/26 budgets.

#### How we did it

We used a range of methods to promote the consultation including:

- **Social media** – Multiple social media posts were issued from the Staffordshire Commissioner's Office (SCO), Staffordshire Police, Staffordshire Fire & Rescue and partners. Paid adverts also ran on Facebook targeting residents of Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent
- **Media** – A press release issued to inform local media of the importance of the consultation
- **Stakeholders** – Emails sent from the Commissioner requesting key partners' involvement including local MPs, Councillors, volunteers, community groups and business owners
- **Smart Alert** – Multiple messages issued to over 20,000 residents via Staffordshire Smart Alert
- **Internal** – Internal message sent to Police and Fire & Rescue staff to encourage participation

## Commissioner's Consultation foreword

As Commissioner, I am asking you to have your say on how much you would be prepared to pay for Policing and Fire & Rescue services in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.

I am responsible for setting the services' budgets, and determining the contribution you make as part of your annual council tax precept. I also set out a strategic direction in Local Plans for Staffordshire Police and Staffordshire Fire & Rescue, and appoint their Chief Constable and Chief Fire Officer, who make the operational decisions and run the organisations.

I am elected to oversee the work of our local Police and Fire & Rescue services, and commission services to support victims and prevent crime and anti-social behaviour.

Since 2021 I have always tried to keep your council tax precept low, and I will only ask for more if I believe it is necessary to maintain or improve the services.

I want to continue to invest in people and technology to further improve our services, to protect our communities and keep bringing crime and ASB down, but government grants, this coming year, will not fully cover increases in pay, national insurance and inflation.

Even with the maximum precept increases of £14 for Police and £5 for Fire & Rescue per year for a Band D property, maintaining the staff and service levels required to address national, regional and community priorities will be extremely challenging.

Here is a snapshot of what your council tax is already helping to deliver...

- HMICFRS discharged our Police service from 'special measures', and their full inspection highlighted improvements across the board, establishing a foundation to build an outstanding force again.
- In March 2024, there were **2,020** Police officers in Staffordshire – 428 more than in 2020 but still 161 fewer than in 2010.
- In the past 12 months these officers have made **14%** more arrests and **19%** more stop & searches, helping to bring crime down by **3.8%** and ASB by **6%**.
- Investment in pro-active policing is helping to tackle the organised gangs targeting properties, businesses and farms to steal vehicles and plant – addressing the community priorities of rural, retail and vehicle crime set out in my Local Plan.
- Staffordshire Fire & Rescue's latest HMICFRS report confirmed the service as one of the top achieving in England & Wales, including an 'Outstanding' grading for responding to major incidents.
- Our Fire & Rescue emergency response is rapid and effective, with teams attending **8,203** incidents (April 2023-March 2024), **80.9%** within the target time.
- Prevention and protection teams are increasingly successful at identifying those most at risk and using their powers to ensure buildings are safe, completing **280** fire safety audits between April 2023 and March 2024.
- Our Fire & Rescue service continue to prove the value of close working with NHS partners, responding to almost **940** incidents (April 2023-March 2024) of vulnerable people falling in their homes. A scheme helping discharged patients return home from hospital supported **1,381** people between its launch last December and the end of September 2024.

So, I would welcome your thoughts to help inform my decisions. How much would you be willing to contribute to protect our local services? Every penny will help our officers, fire-fighters and staff to keep Staffordshire safe.

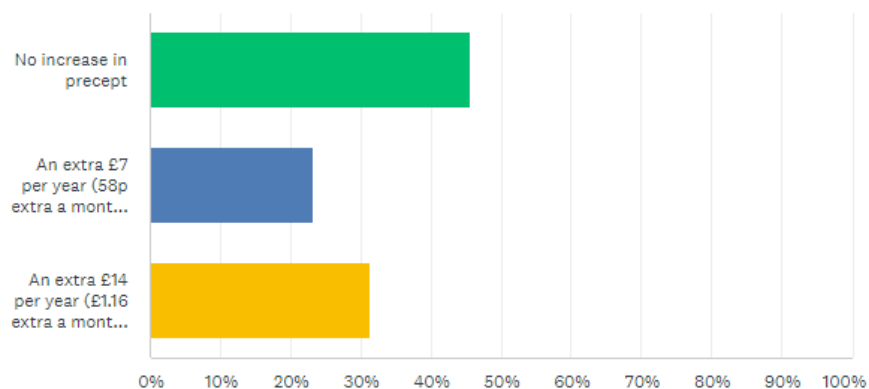
**Ben Adams**

**Staffordshire Commissioner for Police, Fire & Rescue and Crime**

## The results

The following options are based on a Band D property currently paying £273.57 each year for Police services. How much more would you be prepared to pay per year for your Police services?

Answered: 2,329 Skipped: 16

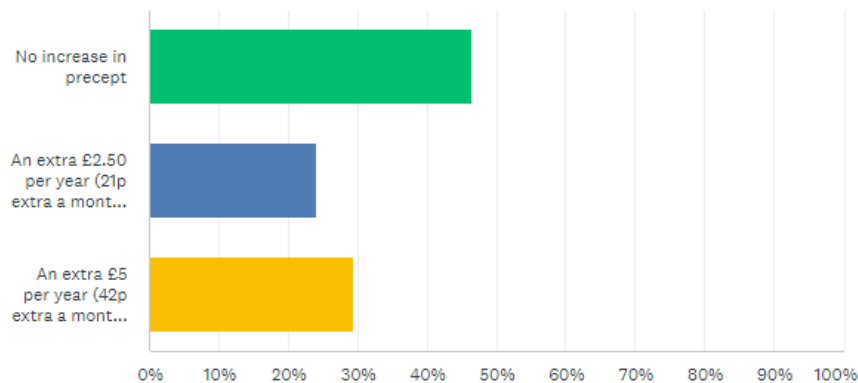


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ No increase in precept	45.56%	1,061
▼ An extra £7 per year (58p extra a month) This is a 2.56% increase	23.14%	539
▼ An extra £14 per year (£1.16 extra a month) This is a 5.12% increase	31.30%	729
TOTAL		2,329



The following options are based on a Band D property currently paying £86.77 each year for Fire services. How much more would you be prepared to pay per year for your Fire & Rescue services?

Answered: 2,327 Skipped: 18



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ No increase in precept	46.50%	1,082
▼ An extra £2.50 per year (21p extra a month) This is a 2.9% increase	24.11%	561
▼ An extra £5 per year (42p extra a month) This is a 5.8% increase	29.39%	684
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2,327</b>

## Common themes from the precept consultation

**1,113** respondents provided comments in the question 4 free text box which asked 'If you have any additional comments, please include these in the box below'. The following sections include key themes from the responses.

### Police & Crime

**A number of comments were locally focused and expressed concerns about the lack of visible policing in their communities. A number of respondents also expressed concerns over efficiency, issues with contact and distractions from national issues.**

"I'd be keen for any extra police resources to be invested in solving crimes like shoplifting, burglaries, car thefts and disrupting drug dealing and organised crime."

"If I could see evidence of extra police walking the streets I'd be willing to pay extra. Don't people already pay for the fire service if they call them out."

"An increase in Police funding is only acceptable if the Police are focused on "real" crime, burglary, theft, assault, drugs etc etc and not social media."

“If the £7 per month for the Police means there would be more of a presence in Rugeley after the horrendous amount of vehicle crime we have suffered since October last year I would be happy to pay it. This crime curve has affected myself as my husband’s van was stolen from our drive on the 30th December plus all of his tools.”

“I wouldn't mind an increase if I thought it was well spent or of any real use. I have not seen any police presence in the area all year, despite social behaviour problems and a clear increase in crime.”

“I would willingly pay a bit more a month if I thought it would make a difference, I live in Kinver and it very rare to see a Police officer and when you try and call for an emergency they have to come all the way from Cannock, so if I thought it would make a difference to seeing an officer at Kinver yes I would pay a bit more.”

“I would be prepared to pay more if I felt that funding was being directed towards front line services and not wasted on bureaucracy and woke initiatives.”

“I would like the police to use the money wisely and not just for operations, problem solving on the area would be better to help solve the issues of drugs, which causes ASB, domestics, violence, target policing and the incidents would reduce.”

“Focusing on the wrong crimes as an institution, spending on diversity, LGBTQ and other none fundamental aspects to the service does not encourage support. They divide and lead many to not want to pay for a service which is so broken. As a government sends billions to support Africa and foreign wars while taking from pensioners and the poor is something furthering all of this need for increasing our taxes without need.”

“Rural crime is a major problem that needs more policing.”

“We need to understand where this extra money will go. I am very dissatisfied with the police force, no proactive policing, car crime is a huge increase, and new homes being built, and we feel that we are not being covered due to large scale of properties in north Tamworth. Need police back in neighbourhoods as a deterrent and be proactive with information provided to you.”

“Policing should be a real priority and the way in which forces are funded seriously need to be looked at. Funds should be shared nationally across all areas to avoid poorer areas suffering higher levels of crime. #levellingup!”

“The police need to ensure more officers in percentage terms get an equal or better still an increased number of interventions in percentage terms. The current figures show police numbers went up significantly but the number of actions/interventions did not go up by anything like an equal or increased amount.”

“We need more police on the streets and in the community but actual police get to know the people and visiting schools etc not PCSOs.”

“It would help to reduce crime by using increased funds in order to help impoverished people to feed and house themselves better.”

“I feel that we should stop sending money abroad and funding illegal immigration and start focusing on the needs of British people who pay into the system.”

“My understanding is that social services/care are the main recipients of budgets and these areas should be reduced so that much greater funding is available for the police service.”

“I have had personal experience of the local police over the last year. I am classed as vulnerable due to DV from an ex-partner and when I have needed them they have responded immediately and always attended swiftly and professionally. This service must continue to support those that need it the most.”

## **Fire & Rescue**

**Fewer responses were received about Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service, but those that did included comments around demand, the role Fire & Rescue could play in supporting other emergency services and the importance of engagement with communities.**

“I feel that FARS are over resourced for the work they do, they could work as effectively on more of a retained basis or take on work that is currently resourced by police, such as welfare checks or assisting Ambulance.”

“Fire needs to be amalgamated with the ambulance service and help out there as they do in the USA.”

“FARS need to have a bigger role in the community to warrant more money.”

“Why don't the Fire service respond more to medical emergencies within their communities, if they have the skills & equipment to do so.”

“As Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service is now under the control of Staffordshire police and crime commissioner, I believe that the precept should be equal for fire and police. With the same amount of funding that the police have, the fire service could easily be the service it was and should still be. Whenever the public speak to us as firefighters on the issue, they always comment that they pay significantly more for the police than for us and don't understand why. Obviously it is a larger organisation with more staff, but the fire service are facing a constant battle with dangerous cuts to crewing and this needs to stop.”

“Why is the Fire & Rescue service increase always so much lower – surely they need more funding at present due to the previous austerity measure imposed?”

“I pay more to my parish council than I do towards fire services. I would rather the increases in council tax were towards emergency services.”

“The fire and rescue seem to be doing a good thing with their current allocation, the Police not so much.”

“I am yet to see how the Fire Service has changed its role to better support communities in these times of public sector crisis. They are very good at emergencies but the Police and Ambulance are doing a lot as well as emergencies so what are the Fire Brigade doing the rest of the time?”

“Tamworth has 2 fire station, one being a part time, which is a show station even spoken to fire officers and they say it’s a waste of money, heating on, cleaners for what?”

“In Wildwood we have little or no interaction with the Police, can’t even tell you when we last saw a PCSO!! Fire and rescue do tend to be more prominent.”

“Relying on on-call firefighters only works if they are paid well. Also allow on-call to more easily transfer to full time if they prove their worth as on-call.”

“I think that Fire and Rescue should get the same amount as the Police as their jobs have increase in different areas such as fall teams to help residents from hospital to homes because the ambulance do not have the capacity to do that.”

“Make full time Firefighters to work through their night shift instead of sleeping. You could use the American model and they could also be paramedics.”

“Don't believe it will go on higher number of firefighters and appliances. You have only just agreed for fire appliances to respond with only 3 personnel, putting those at risk so your mindset is cuts not increase firefighter numbers. If you were serious about increasing numbers why recently pass for fire appliances to respond with 3 instead of 4?”

“Now that the police and fire are in the same building in Stone at the expense of others and against the planning when the fire station was built, I would expect the savings to be passed on to the advantage of tax payers.”

“Although I am quite aware that if my house was ablaze I would welcome the fire service with open arms. However, with modern day warning systems and most commercial property protected with sprinkler systems I really can’t be convinced that a now mainly part time service should need more money at this moment in time.”

### **Supporting an increase**

**A number of comments explained the reasons why they would support an increase in council tax as long as the money went to frontline services and more visible policing to keep communities safe.**

“With government cuts it's important to protect emergency services as much as possible. Although it pains me, if we need to pay more to keep/improve the service then that's what we should do.”

“We all care that the police and fire are there to help us when needed, they are overworked and underpaid as it is, they are always do kind and helpful and should be paid more.”

“We need to attract high quality people to our police and fire service. We can only do this if we pay them a decent wage.”

“Our police need our support, they risk everything to keep our communities safe. We need to fund accordingly.”

“Our emergency services are stretched to the limit on current funding. I’m happy to contribute more to help support the services.”

“These services are vital, and even the higher increase (provided the money is allocated and spent well) is not a huge increase in the scheme of things.”

“Of course we need to pay more, but we don't want what we pay to go to CEOs or top brass as they already earn enough. Just to the guys who fight the criminals & the fires.”

“Any plans to protect local services are welcomed but you need to make sure there are clear controls in place to ring fence the funds and ensure they are used towards tangible projects and initiatives that return benefit to the community.”

“We must keep the service from these two services at a premium. They are both below the 2020 levels and need to be expanded back as soon as possible.”

“I am willing to pay more for public services after national budget incompetence during last decade+. However would welcome improvements in the CT banding which needs complete update.”

“Happy to fund additional staff but not pay rises for higher management.”

“Staffordshire has always had a tax limit that is too low. We should aim for more tax and better service in all sectors.”

“Living in a village with a retained fire crew that are out almost daily on A38 and support incidents we can see why the fire service need and deserve the additional money.”

“If you want good services you have to pay for them! It's simple as that!”

“We have massively under-resourced both the fire service and the Police yet expect the same level of service and indeed more from them, look at shoplifting the Police can't cope with the amount that is going on so people just do it more and more knowing they are going to let off or not even be looked at and we all end up paying more. My only worry is that you have to drop standards to recruit the amount of people that you need which could lead to other issues like we see in the Met Police.”

“As long as the money is not to be spent on vanity projects or ludicrous DEI initiatives and salaries, and as long as the police do not spend time investigating non-crime incidents.

We already pay a lot in council tax. The police are doing a fantastic job, unlike the council trying to find more ways for us to pay. They took our brown bin collecting off us but charged us more council tax.”

“I feel the police are under resourced and underfunded. How can a police force provide a good public service with limited funding and instil confidence in public perception. I would happily pay more money for more police to be on our streets and deal with crime and anti-social behaviour.”

“Council tax is crippling us financially it never stops rising. but a small increase is worth it for fire and police.”

“I would gladly provide this amount on the understanding that expenses and purchases are under scrutiny and close watch, unlike the recent findings in government where £1200 is spent on two folders. Could public spending be easily made available for transparency in our region?”

“At the moment the policing (and everything else) of south staffs is very Codsall centric. I would only support an increase in precept if there was a guarantee Wombourne and Kinver would receive equal policing patrols and fire services as Codsall. We pay the same council tax we should receive the same service and coverage.”

### **Not supporting an increase**

**The majority of additional comments were against an increase in council tax, with rising household bills and national issues outside Policing and Fire & Rescue’s remit being a factor. There were also concerns about Police performance in particular, and a number of responses calling for greater efficiencies rather than increased taxation.**

“Families are at breaking point, cost of living rises are astronomical, fuel costs are rising and really are people seeing any improvements for these constant price rises!”

“Police rarely visible in village and responses to crime not good. I been a pensioner can’t afford extra on top of cost of living increases.”

“As a pensioner and a Waspi women I have already contributed over £40,000 to the government for lost pension and had the £200 heating allowance stopped. When I did require the help of the police I was given a crime number and a visit 4 weeks later from a community officer telling me about crime prevention. All too late and no positive outcome. Therefore I already feel I am paying for a service I'm not getting. This isn't just about police or fire service but local services generally. Unfortunately, my budget, like yours will only go so far.”

“Staffordshire police has more police officers since 2020 and still struggles to cope with demand, sitting within a resource function I believe that before any more taxes are risen and increasing everyone cost of living. All departments should be looked at thoroughly this includes every department running of an SLA, restricted officers to be utilised more effectively to release fully fit officers to support demand and in addition to this reviewing shift patterns. Until the basic foundations are met and a structure is put in place I would not be supporting any additional increases.”

“The public should not pick up our own NI increases and then we pick up the public service NI costs this feels like a rolling tax that I am paying many times.”

“Now paying extra for bins, now paying extra bedroom tax now paying to have community grass cut and litter collected. Use your resources better. Ask the council to stop wasting money on carparks that remain empty and use that money.”

“I already pay almost £3500 annually for my council tax and I have recently been told I will now have to pay extra for my bin collection. We have trouble with speeding on our main road and we get nowhere with complaints to the police. We have no public transport and I often wonder what we are getting for our £3500 bill and you now want to put it up again!!!”

“The hard-working public of the UK already pay a very high amount of tax. Why we need to be even asked to pay any more is beyond me. Stop the lousy governments giving our money away to other countries instead.”

“People cannot afford to live and increasing council tax will put more pressure on those who are struggling. For some these increases may be small but to others it is a lot. Income and benefits do not rise at 5.8% per year.”

“I am an OAP and having lost Fuel allowance and now having to pay for brown bins – TV goes up next year – cannot keep affording anymore.”

“We already pay a high amount of Council tax for little to show in return in the community – I think additional Council funding should come from Central Government at this point as they are clearly underfunding Councils.”

“I feel that an increase over 3% cannot be justified as people are struggling to pay bills.”

### **Commissioner's Office**

**A number of responses specifically mentioned the role and cost of the Commissioner and his office, feeling the money would be better spent on frontline services.**

“Disband the office of police and Fire commissioners and return the job to those who know what they are doing!!!”

“Abolish your post and go back to a police/fire authority, which was cheaper. Your budget could then be split between both.”

“Instead of increasing what people pay, how about we get rid of extra management levels, like the recent commissioner role! And focus on front line services!”

“You need to cut operating costs before increasing costs. Your office is one area that should take a significant hit in that context. There's a simple, common theme that is consistently ignored; more visible police on the street.”

“Please could the amount that the Commissioner's office please be reviewed and reduced.”

“The police and fire commissioner should be scrapped immediately as it is a complete waste of public money. The funds should be put into front line policing as in Uttoxeter we have none to speak of. If I thought for one minute we would get better policing in Uttoxeter I would be happy to pay more but we won't. Too many officers are squirrelled away into CID departments instead of giving a frontline presence which is what the public want.”

“Dissolve the post of Police and Crime Commissioner, return control to the Chief Constable. The police in particular are neither transparent nor responsive – I see no reason to support that on any level.”

“I do not see the necessity for a commissioner maybe the cost of that and the ancillary roles associated with it could go towards frontline services which worked as effectively without a commissioner.”

“The money used to pay for the Police Fire and Rescue and Crime Commissioner should be used to create more Police Officers on the beat to be seen as a preventative measure and they would know the area as in the past...”

“The Police crime commissioner should be abolished. Why are we paying for a political post having precedence over the police which should be completely independent of politics? The commissioner is paid a huge amount of money along with his staff wages. This money could and should be used for the police and fire service.”

### **Additional comments**

“Really think the local government should sort out things like access, roads mainly potholes and water drainage as all of these are terribly inadequate before asking for more money for anything else.”

“Now paying extra for bins, now paying extra bedroom tax now paying to have community grass cut and litter collected. Use your resources better. Ask the council to stop wasting money on carparks that remain empty and use that money.”

“I already pay almost £3500 annually for my council tax and I have recently been told I will now have to pay extra for my bin collection. We have trouble with speeding on our main road and we get nowhere with complaints to the police. We have no public transport and I often wonder what we are getting for our £3500 bill and you now want to put it up again!!!”

“My understanding is that social services/care are the main recipients of budgets and these areas should be reduced so that much greater funding is available for the police service.”

“I feel that we should be moving towards council tax charges as per over 18yearold in each home. Eg some households locally have up to 10 plus over 18yearolds so this means they are paying a similar council tax as we are as 2 pensioners this can't be a fair system. This needs to be taken up with the government.”

“It is not just your services that need extra resources. Will the budget-holders for all the other services funded from the Council Tax pot also be requesting similar increases?”

“The council waste so much and can operate much more efficiently these increases I have agreed to can be absorbed into more efficient practises. During WW2 when the services were limited through limited personal and costs small localised groups in each neighbourhood operated like a group of streets organised in small work parties say one afternoon per month to do small gutter clearing, cutting overhanging trees etc taking the responsibility and costs from the council, rather like neighbourhood watch but neighbourhood work. Just an idea. The council tax is a burden on many people like me being living on a pension.”

“The town of Stone requires more additional services/infrastructure for the growing needs and additional houses. I don't understand what extra I would receive for an increase.”

“Additional funding will not solve the issue. Until the public sector start changing the way funds are distributed and managed, the increase will just go to waste on services and products that will not benefit the residents of Staffordshire.”



"We now pay for brown bin collections but no reductions in current tax paid. Could this not be used instead of raising tax yet again?! People are so tired on constant increases for systems that are run badly."

"This is an utter disgrace asking for us to pay more especially as this Labour government has now taken away our winter fuel. I have to only have my heating on for 2 hours a day!!! We cannot afford any more!!! Pay it yourself out of your own pocket."

"I think we already pay too much. We have hardly any police and we are one of the few places where we are also expected to pay for a brown bin???? Also the roads around Staffordshire are some of the worst I have driven on. Maltevo manage to resurface them worse than they were before they did the job. They are charging councils big money to do a really bad job. It's a joke as they have to do many things again."

"We already have to pay for the brown bin to be emptied I would begrudge paying for more services or an increase in services."

"Take it out of the 40 pound the council charge for garden waste bins per year."

"I am all for fairness. My road is new, no street lights, no pavements... so maybe my rates should be reduced and the extra could be put towards the above. Please understand as a pensioner I am already on a losing streak."

"At the moment we pay £256 per month and this is quite a chunk of our limited income. Living in a fairly rural area we think what we now pay is eminently fair. The Council Tax bands are based on a historic flawed and outmoded precept of what the property was deemed to be worth in 1991."

"Living in Stoke-on-Trent can be depressing as the environment is unkempt and dirty with litter and debris everywhere. It often feels like we are paying for inferior services across the board."

"I pay £128 a month and the roads, schools and services are awful so where does it go?"

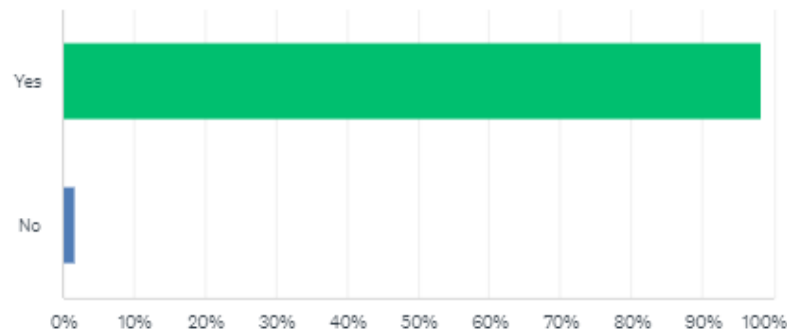
"Why do the Tax payers have to suffer more? Central government should take a REAL look at home and reevaluate the millions they are spending needlessly both inside and outside the UK. They should be increasing covering local government funding, not kicking the tax payers any further in their wallet!!!!!!"

"Before tax rises I feel gross inefficiency needs to be ruled out ...from police/ fire or other areas ...such as road maintenance where it is done piecemeal in an inefficient and more expensive way where the only winner is the company providing service."

**Additional Questions**

Are you responsible for paying council tax?

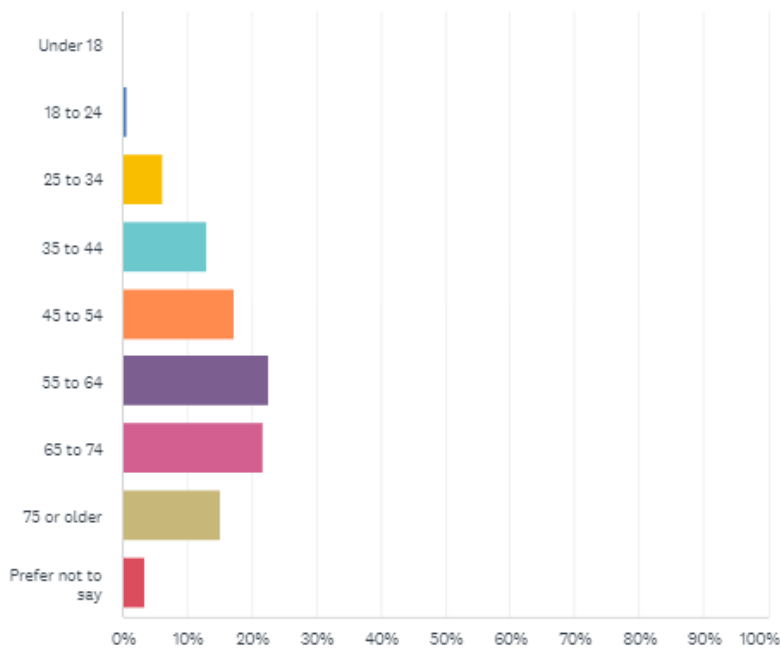
Answered: 2,278    Skipped: 67



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	98.33%	2,240
No	1.67%	38
TOTAL		2,278

# What is your age?

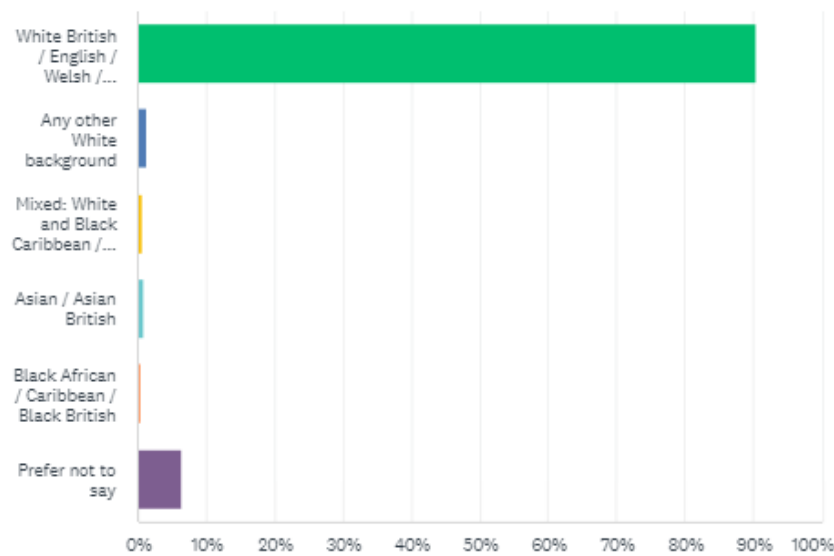
Answered: 2,167    Skipped: 178



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Under 18	0.05%1
18 to 24	0.65%14
25 to 34	6.23%136
35 to 44	13.11%284
45 to 54	17.26%374
55 to 64	22.57%489
65 to 74	21.64%469
75 or older	15.18%329
Prefer not to say	3.32%72
TOTAL	2,167

# What is your ethnic origin?

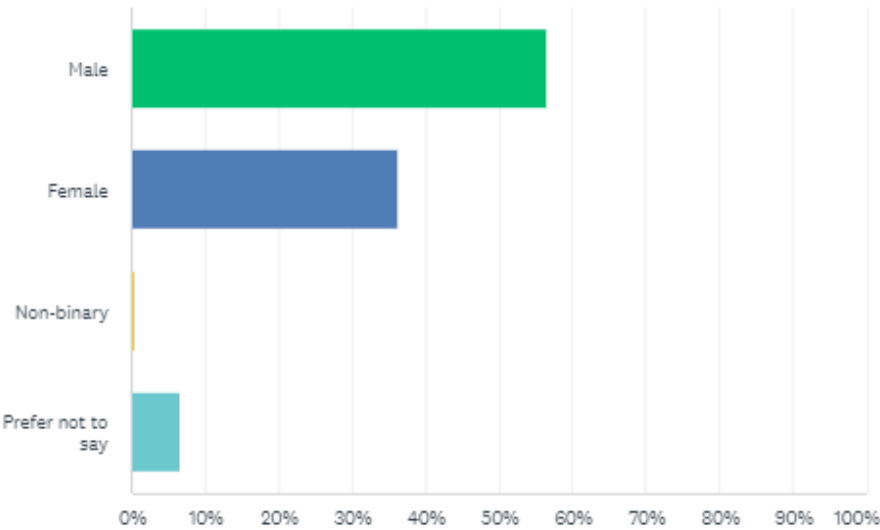
Answered: 2,146    Skipped: 199



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ White British / English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / Irish	90.49%	1,942
▼ Any other White background	1.21%	26
▼ Mixed: White and Black Caribbean / African / Asian	0.61%	13
▼ Asian / Asian British	0.93%	20
▼ Black African / Caribbean / Black British	0.33%	7
▼ Prefer not to say	6.43%	138
TOTAL	2,146	

# Are you?

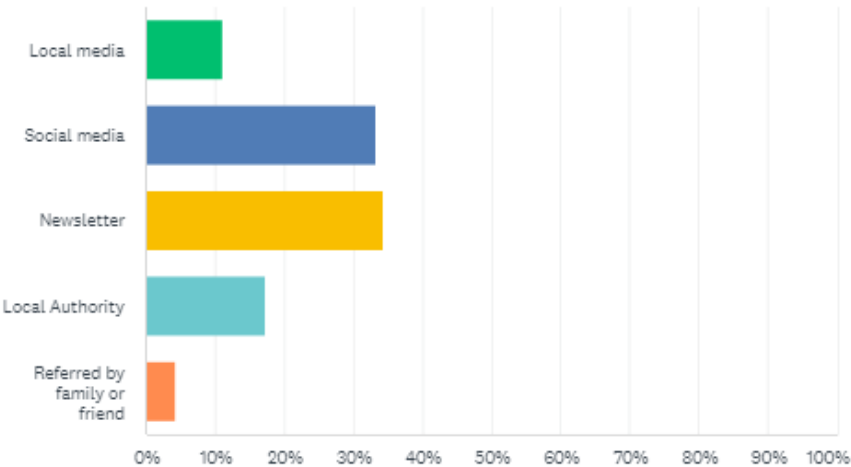
Answered: 2,159    Skipped: 186



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Male	56.55%	1,221
Female	36.31%	784
Non-binary	0.46%	10
Prefer not to say	6.67%	144
TOTAL		2,159

# Where did you hear about this consultation?

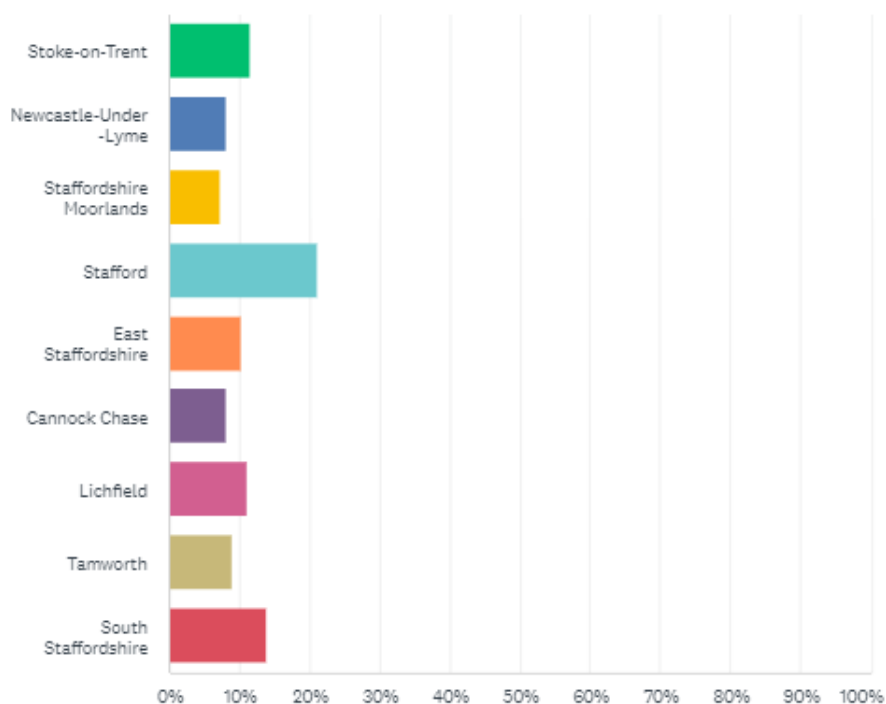
Answered: 1,785    Skipped: 560



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Local media	11.04%	197
Social media	33.17%	592
Newsletter	34.40%	614
Local Authority	17.20%	307
Referred by family or friend	4.20%	75
TOTAL		1,785

## Which area of Staffordshire or Stoke-on-Trent do you live in?

Answered: 2,167 Skipped: 178



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Stoke-on-Trent	11.54%	250
▼ Newcastle-Under-Lyme	8.08%	175
▼ Staffordshire Moorlands	7.15%	155
▼ Stafford	21.04%	456
▼ East Staffordshire	10.20%	221
▼ Cannock Chase	8.08%	175
▼ Lichfield	11.12%	241
▼ Tamworth	8.91%	193
▼ South Staffordshire	13.89%	301
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2,167</b>

If you would like to receive updates about the work of the Commissioner, please enter your name and email address below:

Answered: 443    Skipped: 1,902

ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Name	Responses	99.10%	439
Email address	Responses	97.74%	433