

From: Matthew Scott, Kent Police and Crime Commissioner
To: Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel
Subject: Draft April 2022 to March 2025 Police and Crime Plan 'Making Kent Safer' and Precept Proposal for 2022/23
Date: 2 February 2022



Introduction:

1. The [Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011](#) (PRSRA 2011) sets the requirement for Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) to issue a police and crime plan that covers their term of Office within the financial year they are elected.
2. A Police and Crime Plan must include the following information:
 - the police and crime objectives to be delivered;
 - the policing that the Chief Constable should provide;
 - the financial and other resources to be provided to the Chief Constable to exercise their functions;
 - the means by which the Chief Constable will be held to account for the provision of policing; and
 - the crime and disorder reduction grants that will be made and any conditions associated with them.
3. Whilst every plan will be localised in nature, they all share a common aim in communicating a PCC's vision and objectives.
4. PCC's are required to keep the plan under review and at any time, may issue or vary a police and crime plan; in doing so, they must have regard to the Strategic Policing Requirement issued by the Secretary of State.
5. Before issuing or varying a police and crime plan, PCCs must:
 - prepare a draft of the plan or variation;
 - consult the Chief Constable in preparing the draft plan or variation;
 - send the draft plan or variation to the Police and Crime Panel;
 - have regard to any report or recommendations made by the Panel in relation to the draft plan or variation;
 - give the panel a response to any such report or recommendations; and
 - publish any such response.
6. In exercising their discrete functions, PCCs and Chief Constables must have regard to the issued police and crime plan.
7. However, the police and crime plan also impacts upon a wide variety of stakeholders and has a number of intended audiences including the public, victims of crime and witnesses, police officers and staff, the Secretary of State, Police and Crime Panels, community safety partners, criminal justice agencies and the private and voluntary sector.
8. The PRSRA 2011 also requires PCCs to notify the Police and Crime Panel of the precept which is proposed to be issued for the financial year.
9. The Police and Crime Panel must review the proposed precept and make a report to the PCC, which may include recommendations, including as to the precept that should be issued for the financial year.
10. This report fulfils the requirements set out in paragraphs 5 and 8 with regards to the Police and Crime Panel.

Development of the Police and Crime Plan:

11. Under the PRSRA 2011 there is a duty on PCCs to consult with victims and the wider community in the development of their plans and on the priorities, although the nature and extent of that consultation is at their discretion.

12. Mr Scott's consultation with residents and local communities began in the lead up to the May 2021 PCC election as part of his campaign activity. As a result of this engagement, Mr Scott developed and was re-elected on the basis of the following Manifesto commitments:
- Recruit another 300 police officers and ensure they are active in our urban and rural areas
 - Work with residents, businesses and communities to prevent and reduce crime and antisocial behaviour
 - Expand the popular Police Cadets scheme for young people and bring back teams of Schools Officers
 - Make our streets safer for all road users
 - Boost the support available for all victims of crime and abuse
 - Tackle gangs and county lines and get drugs and weapons off our streets
13. Whilst Mr Scott's Manifesto commitments were integral to the new plan, with circa 1.9 million people living in diverse urban, rural and coastal communities across Kent and Medway, the PCC was keen to positively encourage further feedback from victims, communities and partner agencies.
14. The PCC's second Police and Crime Plan Survey was launched on 4 September and ran for 10 weeks, closing on 12 November 2021. As with the first survey in 2016 which informed the PCC's Safer in Kent Plan, the aim was to reach out to and hear from as many of Kent's communities as possible.
15. In total, 2,848 responses were received, which against Kent and Medway's population of circa 1.9 million is considered statistically significant at the 95% confidence level (a commonly accepted level of probability). It was also a significant increase on the 1,690 responses received in the first survey ran in 2016.
16. A report outlining the survey methodology and the full results is attached as Appendix A (and can also be viewed online [here](#)).
17. Below is an overview of some of the key questions and a precis of the results (previous year's figures are included where comparative data are available):

Q1. Overall, do you believe the current priorities I have set for Kent Police are the correct ones?
(Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree or disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree)

	% strongly agreed or agreed	
	2021	2020
<i>Put victims first</i>	79.4	79.9
<i>Fight crime and antisocial behaviour</i>	84.7	84.5
<i>Tackle abuse, exploitation and violence</i>	84.3	83.5
<i>Combat organised crime and gangs</i>	84.9	84.5
<i>Provide visible neighbourhood policing and effective roads policing</i>	78.6	76.1
<i>Deliver an efficient and effective service</i>	81.3	79.6

Q2. How safe do you feel where you live, on a scale of 1 to 10? (1 = very unsafe / 10 = very safe)

- Respondents across Kent and Medway felt 7.0/10 safe where they live
[2020 = 7.0 / 2019 = 6.4 / 2018 = 6.5]

Q3. Have you been a victim of crime in Kent in the last year?

- 16.8% of respondents indicated 'Yes'
[2020 = 15.9% / 2019 = 19.7% / 2018 = 23.3%]

Q4. If so, how satisfied were you with the service Kent Police gave you? (1 = very unsatisfied / 10 = very satisfied)

- On average victims rated the service received from Kent Police 4.3/10
[2020 = 4.3 / 2019 = 4.5]

Q7. Which of the following issues do you feel are the most important?

- Respondents could select up to six issues from a pre-defined list of 22; the top five were:
 1. Sexual offences, including rape
 2. Serious violence, including gangs/weapons offences
 3. Child sexual exploitation
 4. Burglary / Robbery
 5. Antisocial behaviour

Q9. To what extent do you feel safe on the roads where you live?

(Very safe / Safe / Neither safe nor unsafe / Unsafe / Very unsafe)

- 21.2% of respondents indicated they felt either 'unsafe' or 'very unsafe' on the roads

Q11. To what extent do you agree that offences which occur on the roads where you live require more enforcement?

(Strongly agree / Agree / Neither agree or disagree / Disagree / Strongly disagree)

- 76.5% respondents 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that more enforcement was required

18. Whilst not mandatory, to monitor how representative the sample was of Kent and Medway's population, respondents were also asked to select the district they live in, provide demographic information and indicate whether they worked for, or volunteered with Kent Police.

19. As well as the results of the Police and Crime Plan Survey, findings from other consultations were also taken into account, namely:

- The PCC's [Business Crime Survey](#) which ran from 21 September 2020 to 3 January 2021 with the aim of better understanding how much crime was being committed against businesses in the county, and why some of it was not reported to the police.
- The PCC's [Violence against Women and Girls Survey](#) which opened in August 2021 and ran for 3 months, with the aim of understanding the extent of violence and abuse being perpetrated against women and girls in Kent and how safe women and girls feel in the county. An unprecedented 8,263 people responded.
- The Association of PCCs [Road Safety & Enforcement Survey](#) which was used to influence a Department for Transport consultation on roads policing.

20. In addition, a number of other documents and factors were considered by the PCC, including:

- The requirements of the PRSRA 2011, in particular those relating to securing an efficient and effective police force and holding the Chief Constable to account.
- The [Strategic Policing Requirement](#)¹ which sets out the national threats and the appropriate national policing capabilities required to counter them.
- The wider public conversation around women and girls safety, including the Governments [Tackling violence against women and girls strategy](#).
- The Government's '[Beating crime plan](#)' and other documents, such as the [Tackling Child Sexual Abuse strategy](#) and [Net Zero strategy](#).
- The [Policing Vision 2025](#) which sets out the future for policing.
- Feedback and observations from the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel.
- Emerging local threats and risks.
- The priorities of local criminal justice bodies (as Chair of the Kent Criminal Justice Board).
- The priorities and views of community safety partners, as well as wider stakeholders.
- The [Domestic Abuse strategy](#) for Kent and Medway and Kent County Council's [Vision Zero Road Safety strategy](#).
- The recommendations of [Part One of the Government's PCC Review](#) and potential opportunities associated with [Part Two](#) which is underway.
- Legislation such as the [Domestic Abuse Act 2021](#) and the [Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill](#).
- The National Crime Agency's [Strategic Assessment of Serious and Organised Crime](#).

21. Inevitably, the plan also takes account of feedback from the hundreds of engagements undertaken by the PCC since being elected in 2016, as well as the thousands of pieces of correspondence received by his Office.

22. The Chief Constable has been fully consulted, and of course the PCC's own objectives and principles, as well as overall vision for policing and community safety have been crucial to its development.

¹ Currently being reviewed by the Home Office

The 'Making Kent Safer' Plan:

23. Attached as Appendix B is a draft of the PCC's new plan titled 'Making Kent Safer – April 2022 to March 2025' in text only format. Once it has been finalised, photographs and graphics will be added and it will be presented in a similar format to the current plan.

24. In summary, the structure of the plan is as follows:

- **Foreword**
- **Integrity and transparency**
- **Guiding principles**
 - Crime is important no matter where it takes place – urban, rural or coastal communities
 - Victims and witnesses at the heart of everything we do
 - Ensure that vulnerable people and those suffering mental ill health get support from the right agency
- **Joint Vision**
- **Kent Police's Priorities – 2022 to 2025**
 - Work with residents, communities and businesses to fight crime and antisocial behaviour
 - Tackle violence against women and girls
 - Protect people from exploitation and abuse
 - Combat organised crime and county lines
 - Be visible and responsive to the needs of communities
 - Prevent road danger and support Vision Zero
 - Protect young people and provide opportunities
- **What I will do**
 - Hold all agencies to account for the delivery of an effective and efficient criminal justice system
 - Work in partnership with the police and others to prevent crime and antisocial behaviour
 - Be responsive to emerging issues and trends through innovation
 - Secure the funding that Kent needs through specific grants and the funding formula review
 - Support volunteering
 - Commission services for victims that are needs-led
- **National expectations**
 - The Strategic Policing Requirement
 - National Crime and Policing Measures
 - Policing Vision 2025
 - Legislation
- **Resources and Medium Term Financial Plan**
 - Funding
 - Council tax
 - Budget and medium-term financial challenges
 - Commissioning and working with partners

25. In accordance with the PRSRA 2011, the PCC will keep the plan under constant review, particularly in light of changes to the Strategic Policing Requirement or recommendations made by the Police and Crime Panel.

26. Further to any recommendations made by the Panel, the plan will be published on 1 April 2022. Subsequently, the PCC will submit updates to the Panel as required.

27. The PCC would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who took the time to have their say on policing and crime in the county and have helped to shape the way forward over the next three years.

Policing Precept Proposal for 2022/23:

28. In the Autumn Budget and Spending Review (SR) presented to Parliament on 27 October 2021, Chancellor Rishi Sunak announced *'The settlement also provides Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) in England with the flexibility to increase funding in each year of the SR21 period with a £10 council tax referendum limit. If all PCCs in England and Wales were to take full advantage of this flexibility, this would raise up to an additional £774 million by 2024-25 based on current forecasts.'*

29. Subsequently, in a written statement on the Provisional Police Grant Report (England and Wales) 2022/23, dated 16 December 2021, Kit Malthouse, The Minister of State for Fire and Policing said the *‘Spending Review 2021 confirmed that PCCs will be empowered to raise additional funding through precept flexibility. We propose to enable PCCs to increase their Band D precept by up to £10 in each of the next three years without the need to call for a local referendum, the equivalent of less than £1 per month. If all PCCs decide to maximise their flexibility, this would result in up to £246 million additional funding for local policing next year. It is for locally accountable PCCs to take decisions on local precept.’*
30. Whilst a difficult decision, in light of the Minister’s statement the PCC is proposing to increase the police precept in 2022/23 by the maximum allowable amount of £10 per year, or 84 pence per month for an average Band D property. In addition, Kent Police will be required to make a further £6.8m of savings in 2022/23.
31. As a result of previous increases in the precept that were supported by the Police and Crime Panel, and extra funding from the Government’s Uplift Programme, police officer numbers have risen by 788 since 2016. Kent will soon have 3,970 officers - the highest number in its history - with a further 195 to be recruited by March 2023 (although the Government has mandated that 10 will go to the Regional Organised Crime Unit).
32. The increase in officer numbers has allowed Kent Police to expand the policing model to provide more visible neighbourhood policing, rural and roads policing, greater public protection and to deal with high harm issues. It has also enabled the Chief Constable to set up specialist teams to tackle crime and make communities safer including the Crime Squad, Medway Task Force, Maidstone Task Force and Schools Team to name but a few.
33. However, whilst previous years precept proposals have, by and large been relatively positive in terms of helping to fund additional officers and PCSOs and the appropriate equipment, 2022/23 sees Kent Police face significant financial challenges that will require the delivery of a number of savings proposals.
34. The disappointing financial settlement from the Government and their expectation that PCC’s use the allowed precept increase to meet other cost pressures, means the PCC needs to increase the precept to the maximum to help mitigate the savings that have to be made, to maintain operational policing and to limit the impact on frontline services. Even with the increase, £37m of savings are required over the medium-term, £6.8m of which are required in 2022/23 to balance the budget and maintain Kent Police’s class leading position across the country.
35. Despite the savings, the PCC is determined to ensure that Kent Police can build on the successes of previous years and will therefore make prudent investments in:
- Police buildings, namely Coldharbour and Maidstone, Sittingbourne, Folkestone, Tonbridge and Ashford police stations.
 - A new digital evidence system that will allow dash cam uploads.
 - Expanding the Volunteer Police Cadet programme.
36. In developing this proposal, the PCC has sought the Chief Constable’s professional guidance and advice.
37. On 6 January, the PCC announced his proposal to increase the council tax precept by 84 pence per month, or £10 a year. Comments and views were invited up to 23 January via a dedicated email account. Attached as Appendix C is a copy of the PCC’s proposal.
38. The proposal was published on the OPCC website and circulated to over 4,000 e-newsletter subscribers, with Kent Online, Heart, BBC Radio Kent, KMFM and KMTV all reporting on it. It was also heavily promoted via the Office’s social media platforms and the PCC’s own personal accounts, through which it reached more than 20,000 residents.
39. In total, the PCC received 222 interactions about the proposal:
- 135 were positive (60.8%)
 - 44 were negative (19.8%)
 - 43 were questions or comments with no indication either way (19.4%)

40. Subject to the Police and Crime Panel's approval, the PCC confirms his intention to increase the policing precept in 2022/23 to £228.15 for an average Band D property. This represents an increase of £10 per year (or 4.58%) on the current precept.
41. Attached as Appendix D is a detailed report dealing with financial matters prepared by the Chief Finance Officer.

List of Appendices:

- Appendix A** Police and Crime Plan Survey: Summary Report – December 2021
- Appendix B** Draft Police and Crime Plan 'Making Kent Safer – April 2022 to March 2025'
- Appendix C** Copy of the PCC's council tax precept proposal
- Appendix D** Chief Finance Officer's Report