

From: Matthew Scott, Kent Police and Crime Commissioner
To: Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel
Subject: Draft April 2017 to March 2021 'Safer in Kent: The Community Safety and Criminal Justice Plan' and Precept Proposal for 2017/18
Date: 2 February 2017



Introduction:

1. The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 (PRSRA 2011) sets the requirement for Police and Crime Commissioners to formulate a Police and Crime Plan which covers their term of Office.
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 Commissioner's vision and objectives.
4. The plan will also impact upon a wide variety of stakeholders and has a number of intended audiences including the public, victims of crime, the Chief Constable, police officers and staff, the Secretary of State, the Police and Crime Panel, the private and voluntary sector and partner agencies.
5. Before publishing a new plan, Commissioners must:
 - prepare a draft of the plan;
 - consult the Chief Constable in preparing the draft plan;
 - send the draft plan to the Police and Crime Panel;
 - have regard to any report or recommendations made by the Panel in relation to the draft plan;
 - give the panel a response to any such report or recommendations; and
 - publish any such response.
6. Commissioners are also required to notify the Police and Crime Panel of the precept which is proposed to be issued for the financial year.
7. This report fulfils the requirements as set out in paragraphs 5 and 6.

The Police and Crime Plan:

8. Please find attached as Appendix A the draft 'Safer in Kent: The Community Safety and Criminal Justice Plan – April 2017 to March 2021'. Whilst the PRSRA 2011 refers to a 'Police and Crime Plan' there is no requirement to title the document as such.
9. In developing their plans, there is a duty on Commissioners to consult with victims and the wider community on the priorities, although the nature and extent of that consultation is at their discretion.
10. For the Commissioner, the process of seeking the views of local people on matters relating to policing and crime commenced in the period preceding the election in May 2016 as part of normal pre-election campaigning activity. Based on this engagement, the Commissioner developed his Six Point Plan.
11. However, the Commissioner has now been in office for over eight months and to support the development of the plan, further significant consultation has been undertaken.
12. From the outset, there was a commitment to positively encourage feedback from individuals, communities and partner agencies. With 1.8 million people living in diverse urban, rural and coastal communities across Kent and Medway, the Commissioner commenced a multi-channel consultation in autumn 2016.

13. Launched on 10 October and ending on 2 December, the chief objective of the consultation was to reach out to and hear from as many of Kent's communities as possible. In total, 1,690 responses were received. A report outlining the full consultation methodology and results is attached as Appendix B.
14. Overall, there was strong support for the priorities in the Commissioner's Six Point Plan, so with only minor amends, they are in principle reflected in the plan. Of the issues that 'mattered most' to respondents, as the number one concern, child sexual exploitation is explicitly referenced in the plan, and the next seven top issues are also captured.
15. Clearly though, the consultation forms only one element of the plan's development. Other inputs taken into account include the Strategic Policing Requirement, emerging local threats and risks, national guidance and the views of other partners and stakeholders.
16. In addition, the Chief Constable has been fully consulted, and of course the Commissioner's own objectives and principles, particularly in relation to mental health, as well as overall vision for policing and community safety in the county are at its core.
17. In accordance with the PRSRA 2011, the Commissioner 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.
18. Further to any recommendations made by the Panel, the plan will be launched on 1 April 2017. Subsequently, the Commissioner will submit updates to the Panel as required.
19. The Commissioner 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 four years.

Policing Precept Proposal for 2017/18:

20. In a written statement on the Police Grant Report (England and Wales) 2017/18, dated 15 December 2016, Brandon Lewis, The Minister of State for Fire and Policing said:

'Following the principles set out on the 4 February 2016 when publishing the final police funding settlement for 2016/17, direct resource funding for each PCC, including precept, will be protected at flat cash levels compared to 2015/16, assuming that precept income is increased to the maximum amount available in both 2016/17 and 2017/18. No PCC who chooses to maximise precept in both years will face a reduction in cash funding next year compared to 2015/16...'

'As in 2016/17, additional flexibility will be given to the 10 PCCs in England with the lowest precept bills (the lower quartile). The PCCs with the ten lowest bills will be able to raise their precept by £5 per Band D household. Other PCCs in England will receive a 2% referendum threshold.'

'The PCCs to receive the £5 flexibility in 2017/18 are Essex, Greater Manchester, Hampshire, Hertfordshire, Kent, Northumbria, South Yorkshire, Sussex, West Midlands and West Yorkshire...'

21. In order to minimise cuts to Kent Police funding in the future, the Commissioner therefore has the ability to increase the council tax precept by up to 3.3% (or £5 on an average Band D property).
22. Between 6 and 23 January 2017, the Commissioner published and widely circulated his proposal to increase the council tax precept by £5 to £157.15 for public comment. In total, the Commissioner received 81 unique responses, with 65.4% (53) being 'for' the proposal.
23. Attached as Appendix C is a summary of how the proposal was promoted, an overview (and full list) of all the responses received, and a copy of the proposal itself.

24. Taking into account the responses, and as one of the 10 Commissioners with the lowest precept bill, the Commissioner confirms his intention to increase the policing precept in 2017/18 to £157.15 for an average Band D property. This represents an increase of £5 or 9.6 pence per week on the current precept.

25. Even with a £5 increase, Kent's policing precept will still remain in the bottom 10 of all forces.

Budget and Medium Term Plan Supporting Information:

26. For information, attached as Appendix D is the Commissioner's 2017/18 Commissioning Strategy that is referenced in the plan.

27. Also attached as Appendix E, is a detailed report dealing with financial matters prepared by the Chief Finance Officer.

List of Appendices:

- Appendix A** Draft 'Safer in Kent: The Community Safety and Criminal Justice Plan - April 2017 to March 2021'
- Appendix B** Police and Crime Plan Consultation - October to December 2016
- Appendix C** PCC's council tax precept proposal - January 2017
- Appendix D** Commissioning Strategy - April 2017 to March 2018
- Appendix E** Chief Finance Officer's Commentary