

From: Matthew Scott, Kent Police and Crime Commissioner
To: Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel
Subject: Draft refreshed 'Safer in Kent: The Community Safety and Criminal Justice Plan' and precept proposal for 2018/19
Date: 8 February 2018



Introduction:

1. The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 (PRSRA 2011) sets the requirement for Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) 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 PCC'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. PCCs are required to keep their plan under review, and before issuing or varying their plan 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. PCCs 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 refreshed Safer in Kent Plan:

8. On 1 April 2017, the PCC published his Police and Crime Plan, titled 'Safer in Kent: the Community Safety and Criminal Justice Plan – April 2017 to March 2021'.
9. In addition to recognising his duty to consult with victims and the wider community on the priorities, the PCC committed to keeping the plan under continuous review; updating it in line with what local communities want and taking account of recommendations made by the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel and guidance issued by Government.
10. Please find attached as Appendix A the refreshed 'Safer in Kent: The Community Safety and Criminal Justice Plan' in text only format. Once the text has been finalised, photographs and graphics will be added prior to publishing. It will be presented in a similar format to the current plan.
11. As a refresh, the plan has been tweaked but not fundamentally altered as it reflects the PCC's ambitions, with the priorities designed to drive the work of Kent Police, partners and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) until March 2021, as well as setting the strategic direction for policing and community safety in the county.

12. In approaching the refresh, 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 PCC commenced his consultation in the summer of 2017.
13. Designed to reach out to, and hear from as many of Kent's communities as possible, the PCC's Annual Policing Survey was launched on 23 June 2017 and closed on 10 January 2018. A total of 1,661 individuals and organisations completed the survey. A report summarising the overall consultation methodology, as well as providing the full survey results is attached as Appendix B.
14. In terms of the policing issues that mattered most to those who completed the survey, there was very little difference in the results and priority order compared with last year, suggesting the views of the people of Kent have not changed significantly. Child Sexual Exploitation was rated the number one concern, with the next top seven issues being:
 - Antisocial behaviour
 - Sexual offences (including rape)
 - Terrorism and radicalisation
 - Burglary
 - Knife crime
 - Domestic abuse (including coercion and control)
 - Gang-related crime
15. The survey also found there was overwhelming support for emergency services to work more closely together to improve community safety, and for emergency services to share buildings providing it saved money and made them more responsive.
16. Clearly though, the survey formed only one element of the refresh. It has also taken into account feedback received throughout the year, including from public 'Street Stalls', visits to community organisations, engagement with partners, correspondence received by the OPCC, and other inputs such as the Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR), emerging local threats and national guidance.
17. In addition, the Chief Constable has been fully consulted, and of course the PCC's own ambitions and objectives, particularly in relation to mental health, as well as overall vision for policing and community safety in the county remain at its core.
18. In accordance with the PRSRA 2011, the PCC will continue to keep the plan under review, particularly in light of changes to the SPR or recommendations made by the Police and Crime Panel.
19. Further to any recommendations made by the Panel, the refreshed plan will be launched on 1 April 2018. Subsequently, the PCC will submit updates to the Panel as required.
20. 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 as a result have helped to develop the refreshed plan.

Key amendments in the refreshed Safer in Kent Plan:

21. As previously indicated, the focus has been on refreshing the contents of the plan rather than undertaking a major re-write.
22. In recognition of the challenges faced by officers and staff on a daily basis, the 'Leadership' section now includes a commitment to support the Chief Constable in developing and supporting the workforce in terms of service delivery, but also their own wellbeing. It also includes a commitment to tackling all forms of inequality, encouraging diversity and holding the Chief Constable to account for the equality duties as described in the Equality Act 2010.

23. The only change to the Chief Constable's priorities is that 'Deliver an efficient service' is now 'Deliver an efficient and accessible service' to reflect that Kent Police, whether through technology, investment in its people or otherwise, must provide effective systems for the public to report urgent and non-urgent matters whilst delivering value for money.
24. In terms of what the PCC will do, the only change is 'Support all victims of crime and abuse' is now 'Enhance services for victims of crime and abuse'. This reflects that over the last year progress has been made in the support available to victims, and the focus is now on enhancing victim services through opportunities such as improving reach and scope, and greater utilisation of technology.
25. In relation to opportunities for the future, the only change is 'Ideas tested during the consultation' is now 'Developing new crime prevention and diversion practices'. This priority was linked to a number of ideas that received feedback as part of the consultation to inform development of the original plan (e.g. making the Police Cadet scheme available countywide, introducing Volunteer PCSOs, investing more in tackling fraud and cybercrime). Over the course of the last 12 months, the majority have been explored and a number progressed. The PCC now wishes to explore how technology may better support crime prevention, and is also keen to develop diversion schemes that help support those arrested, or at risk of arrest.
26. The section titled 'Resources and Medium Finance Plan' has been extensively re-written to take account of the latest financial information, including the Government's Police Grant announcement in December 2017 (see paragraph 29).
27. For reference purposes, a summary of amendments can be found at Appendix C.

Policing precept proposal for 2018/19:

28. The Annual Policing Survey also captured views on the amount of council tax residents felt should go towards policing (the policing precept). In 2017/18, the precept was set at £157.15 for an average Band D property, and as outlined in Appendix B, 58% of respondents felt this was about right, 26% it was too low and 14% it was too high. In addition, more than two thirds of respondents (68%) indicated they were content to pay a little more towards policing if necessary.
29. On 19 December, in a written statement on the Police Grant Report (England and Wales) 2018/19, Nick Hurd MP, The Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service said:

'In 2018/19, we will provide each PCC with the same amount of core Government grant funding as in 2017/18. Protecting police grant means PCCs retain the full benefit from any additional local Council Tax income. Alongside this, we are providing further flexibility to PCCs in England to increase their Band D precept by up to £12 in 2018/19 without the need to call a local referendum. This is equivalent to up to £1 per month for a typical Band D household.

These changes to referendum principles give PCCs the flexibility to make the right choices for their local area...'
30. In light of this statement, the PCC announced his draft funding proposal - to increase the policing precept by the maximum allowable amount of £12 per year (7.6%) for an average Band D property. Whilst a decision not taken lightly, it would enable the Chief Constable to recruit up to 200 additional police officers, taking the total number to its highest level since 2012. It would also enable the creation of over 80 new police staff roles to boost the number of call handlers answering 999 and 101 calls. In addition to increasing the precept, the recruitment drive would be funded from £9m of cost savings, cutting the cost of the OPCC and the ability to use a further £5m of reserves over three years, should it be required.
31. The PCC, having announced his draft funding proposal, encouraged the public to e-mail the OPCC with their views. Within Appendix B is a summary of how the proposal was promoted, the key points from each response received by the OPCC, and a copy of the draft funding proposal itself.

32. In addition, and as a consequence of the PCC's announcement, local news website KentOnline ran an independent poll asking readers 'Would you be happy to pay extra to fund more police officers?'. More than 1,300 people took part, with 73% responding 'Yes', 23% 'No' and 5% 'Not sure'.
33. Taking into account the Annual Policing Survey results, public feedback received by the OPCC, and the KentOnline poll results, the PCC confirms his intention to increase the policing precept in 2018/19 to £169.15 for an average Band D property. This represents an increase of £1 per month (or £12 per year) on the current precept.
34. Even with a £12 increase, Kent's policing precept will still remain in the bottom 10 of all forces.
35. Attached as Appendix D is a detailed report dealing with financial matters prepared by the Chief Finance Officer.

List of Appendices:

- Appendix A** Draft refreshed 'Safer in Kent: The Community Safety and Criminal Justice Plan - April 2017 to March 2021'
- Appendix B** Annual Policing Survey and precept proposal feedback – January 2018
- Appendix C** Summary of amendments in the refreshed Safer in Kent Plan
- Appendix D** Chief Finance Officer Report