

**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 2019/20 precept proposal  
**Date:** 6 February 2019



**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 and witnesses, 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 accordance with the PRSRA 2011, the PCC is committed to consulting with victims and the wider community and to keeping the plan under review, particularly in light of changes to the Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR) and/or recommendations made by the Police and Crime Panel. More formally, the PCC has determined that the plan will be refreshed annually; the latest version was published in April 2018.
10. Attached as Appendix A is the 2019 refreshed version of '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. 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 PCC (OPCC) until March 2021, as well as setting the strategic direction for policing and community safety in the county.

12. In approaching each refresh, the PCC is committed to positively encouraging 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 formal consultation in the summer of 2018.
13. The PCC's Annual Policing Survey was launched in June 2018 and closed in December 2018. A total of 1,400 residents completed the survey; a slight drop in responses compared with the previous two years, but still statistically significant at the 95% confidence level (a commonly accepted level of probability).
14. The primary aim of the survey was to reach out to residents and offer them the opportunity to answer five key questions. The questions are shown below, along with a precis of the results:
- How safe do you feel where you live, on a scale of 1 to 10? (1 = very unsafe / 10 = very safe)
    - *On average residents across Kent and Medway feel 6.5/10 safe where they live.*
  - The PCC is responsible for the Kent Police budget of £333.3m for 2018/19, or roughly £185 per person in the county. On a scale of 1 to 10, do you think the services you get represent value for that £185? (1 = very poor value for money / 10 = excellent value for money)
    - *On average, residents across Kent and Medway rate the services they receive 5.0/10 for value.*
  - In your view, what one type of crime or anti-social behaviour does your local area have the biggest issue with?
    - *Responses broadly represented 28 different issues, with the top five being:*
      1. *Anti-social behaviour, including vandalism*
      2. *Substance misuse, including alcohol and drugs*
      3. *Burglary or theft*
      4. *Groups of young people congregating (not necessarily committing any offences)*
      5. *Speeding*
  - Tell us one thing you think Kent Police does really well...
    - *Responses broadly covered 10 different elements of policing, with the top three being:*
      1. *Fighting crime generally and keeping people safe*
      2. *Responding to emergency calls*
      3. *Public engagement, including at events and in schools*
  - Tell us one thing you think Kent Police could do better...
    - *53% of responses referred to a desire for more police officers and/or more visible patrols*
15. In a change to previous years, and in a bid to increase the number of responses, the PCC invested a modest amount of money in print and digital advertising. This included placing full page adverts in six local authorities' magazines which were delivered to households free of charge.
16. Also, for the first time respondents were asked to specify where or how they heard about the survey. This data will be used to assess the effectiveness and value for money provided by each advertisement or other publicity method to support future engagement.
17. A report outlining the survey methodology, as well as providing the full survey results is attached as Appendix B.
18. It should be noted that the survey formed only one element of the consultation. It also took account of feedback received throughout the year, including at public 'Street Stalls', visits to community organisations, engagement with partners, correspondence received by the OPCC, and other inputs such as the SPR, emerging local threats and national guidance.
19. In addition, the National Rural Crime Network conducted the Rural Crime Survey 2018 in order to better understand the true picture of crime and anti-social behaviour in rural communities across England and Wales – and the impact it has where people live or work. In total, 756 people participated in the survey from across Kent, and the PCC has carefully considered the findings.

20. The Chief Constable has also 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.
21. Further to any recommendations made by the Panel, the refreshed plan will be published on 1 April 2019. Subsequently, the PCC will submit updates to the Panel as required.
22. The PCC would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who provided feedback on policing and crime across the county, and as a result have helped to develop the refreshed plan.

**Amendments to the Safer in Kent Plan:**

23. As previously indicated, the focus has been on refreshing the contents of the plan rather than undertaking a major re-write.
24. Of the top five issues that Annual Policing Survey respondents felt their local area had the biggest issue with, four already featured within the plan:
- Anti-social behaviour, including vandalism
  - Substance misuse, including alcohol and drugs
  - Burglary or theft
  - Speeding
25. Given that young people, like any other sector of society, have the right to gather in public places, the issue of 'groups of young people congregating (not necessarily committing any offences)' is not something the PCC necessarily wants, or has the right to challenge. However, there needs to be greater partnership between all the relevant agencies to provide re-assurance to all, engage with young people more effectively and to better promote alternative or diversionary activities. Of course, where criminal activity is taking place, the PCC expects Kent Police to take appropriate action.
26. Acknowledging that there are some minor wording changes, the following is an overview of the most significant amendments:
- Joint Vision - updated to reflect the latest version as agreed by the Chief Constable and the PCC.
  - Kent Police's Priorities
    - Put victims first – recognition that some crimes such as stalking and harassment may be under-reported and further work is necessary to improve the confidence of victims to come forward.
    - Deliver an efficient and accessible service - inclusion of reference to the Policing and Crime Act 2017 and the statutory duty on emergency services to explore opportunities for collaboration.
  - What I will do
    - Hold the Chief Constable to account for the delivery of Kent Police's priorities - updated to reflect changes to the Terms of Reference for the Weekly one-to-one briefings and Performance and Delivery Board. Reporting mechanisms added to Independent Custody Visitors text.
    - Invest in schemes that make people safer and reduce re-offending - new section added for the Violence Reduction Challenge; the PCC's response to HM Government's Serious Violence Strategy.
    - Make offenders pay for the harm that they have caused – inclusion of reference to Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 forfeiture fund to help tackle drug trafficking and misuse of illegal substances.
  - Opportunities for the future
    - Calling for more criminal justice powers for PCCs - updated to reflect that the PCC now chairs the Kent Criminal Justice Board.
    - Lobbying for a fairer funding settlement for Kent - inclusion of reference to the UK leaving the European Union (Brexit) and seeking additional funding so Kent taxpayers do not pick up the bill for a national issue.
27. In addition, the section titled 'Resources and Medium Finance Plan' has been extensively re-written to take account of the latest financial information, including HM Government's Police Grant announcement in December 2018 (see paragraph 28).

### Policing precept proposal for 2019/20:

28. On 13 December, Nick Hurd MP, Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service made a statement announcing the provisional police funding settlement for 2019/20. Speaking in the House of Commons, the Minister said:

*“...the Government recognise that two things have changed since I stood at the Dispatch Box one year ago. First, cost pressures have risen, public sector inflation has increased and the police are facing challenges in meeting new costs such as in forensics and increased employer contributions to safeguard public pensions. More significantly, demand pressures have risen. There has been a major increase in the reporting of high-harm, previously hidden crimes such as child sexual exploitation. The challenge from serious and organised crime networks is growing... Digitally enabled and online crime remains a major challenge for our police, and meanwhile, as we are all aware, the threat from terrorism has escalated and evolved.*

*The first role of Government is to protect the public, and as crime changes, so must the police. We are determined to ensure that the police have the powers and resources they need to respond to changing demand...*

*We have also listened to requests from police and crime commissioners for more flexibility around levels of police precept. This settlement empowers police and crime commissioners to raise council tax contributions for local policing by £2 a month for a typical household, which is £24 a year... The decision to raise local tax will be up to locally elected police and crime commissioners, and they will have to make a case to their electorate and be accountable for delivery of a return on that public investment.”*

29. In light of the Minister’s statement, the PCC announced his [draft funding proposal](#) - to increase the policing precept by the maximum allowable amount of £24 per year, or 14.2% for an average Band D property (equivalent to £2 per month). Whilst a decision not taken lightly, the proposal would raise an additional circa £16.6m for policing in Kent. In addition to helping pay for things like the rising costs of pay and national insurance, pensions and vehicle insurance, crucially, it would also enable the Chief Constable to recruit another 180 additional police officers. So, not just replacing those who leave, but increasing officer numbers further and continuing the biggest recruitment drive in Kent Police’s history. As well as increasing the precept, the PCC would also require Kent Police to make a further £10m of efficiency savings in 2019/20.

30. The PCC initially announced his proposal on the BBC Radio Kent breakfast show on 9 January 2019, and it was covered by various other local media too. The PCC also took part in a pre-arranged hour-long live radio phone-in to further explain his decision and answer questions from members of the public. The proposal, along with Frequently Asked Questions was uploaded to the OPCC website and members of the public were invited to have their say by emailing the OPCC before 29 January. Links to the proposal were posted on the OPCC’s Twitter and Facebook pages, along with a short video which attracted more than 3,400 views.

31. The PCC also discussed the proposal face-to-face with residents at various public engagements throughout January - including in Deal, Canterbury, Meopham, Medway and Swanley; with Kent MPs in London; and with representatives of the Kent Association of Local Councils in Ditton.

32. Analysis has been undertaken to collate positive and negative sentiment towards the proposal, in addition to local media output. This has included tracking social media reactions and re-enforcement of positive/negative comments through up or down voting. This showed that overall positive sentiment towards the proposal, based on 5200 pieces of feedback was 59%, but looking exclusively at binary polling outcomes, in which a total of 3300 votes were cast, the proposal received 68% support. It should be noted that this was not a scientific method of tracking feedback, as there was no way to prevent the counting of repeat voting in some circumstances (e.g. votes on newspaper comment sections).

33. As of 28 January 2019, the uplift of 200 additional police officers funded by this year’s precept was achieved. Nationally, police forces have also published their first iteration of the Force Management Statement, a detailed self-assessment of future demand versus capacity. A significant challenge identified by Kent Police is having the resources to effectively respond to both the predicted growth in demand, and the complexity of that demand.

34. If the proposal is agreed, the Chief Constable would be able to recruit 180 more officers, increasing the total number to 3,632 by March 2020 compared with 3,182 officers in March 2016. In addition to reflecting residents' feedback to the PCC throughout the year, and the Annual Policing Survey which found 53% of responses referred to a desire for more police officers and/or more visible patrols, it would of course also help continue building Kent Police's capacity for the future.
35. Taking into account the Annual Policing Survey results, residents' feedback to the PCC and his office throughout the year, and analysis of sentiments and binary polling outcomes, the PCC confirms his intention to increase the policing precept in 2019/20 to £193.15 for an average Band D property. This represents an increase of £2 per month (or £24 per year) on the current precept.
36. Even with a £24 increase, Kent's policing precept will still remain in the bottom 10 of all forces.
37. Attached as Appendix C 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 2018 Report
- Appendix C** Chief Finance Officer Report