

**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 2020/21 precept proposal  
**Date:** 6 February 2020



**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 2019.
10. Attached as Appendix A is the 2020 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 2019.
13. The PCC launched his fourth Annual Policing Survey in June 2019 and it remained open for six months, to December 2019. A total of 3,648 responses were received; a significant increase on last year (1,400 responses), and in fact the highest return rate for the survey - 1,661 responses in 2017 and 1,690 in 2016.
14. Against a total Kent and Medway population of around 1.8 million, 3,648 responses is also considered statistically significant at the 95% confidence level (a commonly accepted level of probability).
15. The aim of the survey was to reach out to residents and offer them the opportunity to answer a number of questions. A report outlining the survey methodology, and the full results is attached as Appendix B (and can also be accessed [here](#)).
16. Below is an overview of the questions along with a precis of the results (figures for last year are also included where comparative data available):
- Q1. 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 6.4/10 safe where they live (last year = 6.5/10)*
- Q2. Have you been a victim of crime in Kent in the last year?
- *19.7% of respondents indicated 'Yes' and 80.3% 'No' (last year 23.3% indicated 'Yes')*
- Q3. If so, how satisfied were you with the service you received from Kent Police? (1 = very poor / 10 = excellent)
- *On average victims rated the service received from Kent Police 4.5/10*
- Q4. 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 17; the top five were:*
    1. *Antisocial behaviour*
    2. *Burglary / robbery*
    3. *Serious violence, including gangs / weapon offences*
    4. *Sexual offences, including rape*
    5. *Child sexual exploitation*
- Q5. If additional police officers and staff could be recruited, what would you like them to focus on?
- *Respondents could select up to three areas from a pre-defined list of seven; the top three were:*
    1. *Preventing crime & antisocial behaviour*
    2. *Neighbourhood policing*
    3. *Investigating crime*
- Q6. Would you be willing to pay a little more through council tax to help fund these extra resources?
- *73.8% of respondents indicated 'Yes' and 26.2% 'No'*
- Q7. Tell us one thing you think Kent Police does really well?
- Q8. Tell us one thing you think Kent Police could do better?
- *These were free text fields and example responses can be found in Appendix B.*
17. To ensure the sample was representative of Kent and Medway's population, respondents were also asked to provide demographic information and whether they worked for, or volunteered with Kent Police.
18. Hosted for the first time on a third-party platform, Smart Survey, it was primarily made available online with the webpage link promoted widely through various channels. However, copies of the survey were also printed and handed out to members of the public by the PCC and his staff at pop-up street stalls, community coffee mornings, and at popular events including the Kent Police Open Days and the Kent

County Show. It was also sent out by post to members of the public who contacted the OPCC and requested a copy.

19. It should be noted that the survey formed only one element of the consultation. In addition to feedback received throughout the year from engagement with partners and community organisations, it took account of correspondence received by the OPCC, other inputs such as the SPR, emerging local threats and national guidance.
20. The Chief Constable has also been fully consulted, and of course the PCC's own ambitions and objectives, 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 2020.
22. The PCC would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who completed the survey and provided feedback on policing and crime across the county.
23. With the next PCC election scheduled for 7 May, it should be noted that in accordance with paragraph 1 the plan may be superseded prior to March 2021.

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

24. As previously indicated, being a refresh some of the plan content has been tweaked; it has not had a major re-write.
25. Based on the survey results, it is important to note that the top five issues that respondents felt were most important are already included in the plan:
  - Antisocial behaviour
  - Burglary / robbery
  - Serious violence, including gangs / weapon offences
  - Sexual offences, including rape
  - Child sexual exploitation
26. Acknowledging that there are some minor wording changes, the following is an overview of the most significant amendments:
  - Kent Police's Priorities
    - Fight crime and antisocial behaviour - inclusion of specific reference to combating knife crime and tackling those who choose to carry a weapon.
  - What I will do
    - Invest in schemes that make people safer and reduce re-offending - section on Violence Reduction Challenge updated and addition of Violence Reduction Unit reference.
  - Opportunities for the future
    - Lobbying for a fairer funding settlement for Kent - context around the UK's withdrawal from the European Union updated and commitment changed to reflect future unavoidable and unexpected costs.
    - Oversight of the police complaints process – updated to reflect relevant provisions have been enacted with all PCCs taking on the 'Appellate' function and increasing their oversight.
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.

#### **Policing precept proposal for 2020/21:**

28. Unfortunately, this year PCCs have found themselves in a difficult position as the provisional funding settlement announcement was delayed due to the general election. Although some PCCs consulted on speculative based assumptions, effectively the delay curtailed the opportunity to factually engage with local residents on proposed precept and budget plans.

29. On 22 January, Kit Malthouse MP, Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service announced the provisional police funding settlement for 2020/21. In a written statement to the House of Commons, the Minister said:

*“We also propose enabling PCCs to raise further funding through precept flexibility, subject to confirmation at the final Local Government Finance Settlement. We propose to empower PCCs to increase their Band D precept by up to £10 in 2020/21 without the need to call for a local referendum, the equivalent of less than twenty pence per week. If all PCCs decide to maximise their flexibility, this would result in up to an additional £248 million of funding for local policing next year. It is for locally accountable PCCs to take decisions on local precept and explain to their electorate how this additional investment will help deliver a better police service.”*

30. In light of the Minister’s statement, the PCC announced his [draft funding proposal](#) on Tuesday 28 January - to increase the policing precept by the maximum allowable amount of £10 per year, or 5.2% for an average Band D property (equivalent to 83p per month).

31. Whilst a decision not taken lightly, if agreed the proposal would raise an additional circa £8.4m for policing in Kent. In addition to helping meet inflationary pressures such as increased estate and vehicle running costs, as well as annual pay increases for police officers and staff, it would also fund:

- 36 new PCSOs, including 15 dedicated to crime prevention; and
- 100 civilian staff to train and support frontline officers, including more Community Liaison Officers and Digital Forensics Investigators.

Kent Police would also be required to make more than £9m of efficiency savings.

32. Additionally, Kent will receive 147 officers in 2020/21 – its first-year share of the Government’s planned 20,000 new officers – but the proposal would enable the PCC to underwrite the accelerated recruitment of a further 34 from the following year’s projected allocation of 196. Therefore, Kent Police would not only continue to replace leavers, but the total number of officers would actually increase by 181.

33. Taking account of the 200 officers recruited last year, and the 180 additional officers funded by this year’s precept (achieved as of 27 January), this would result in the total number of officers increasing to 3,813 by 31 March 2021; compared with 3,787 in March 2010 and 3,181 in 2016 when the PCC came into office.

34. In developing the proposal, the PCC took into account a number of factors including:

- Professional guidance and advice from the Chief Constable.
- Kent Police’s Force Management Statement (FMS) - a detailed self-assessment of future demand versus capacity. The 2019 FMS identified the areas of greatest risk as being protecting vulnerable people, serious organised crime, incident response and prevention and deterrence.
- Kent Police’s Force Control Strategy - an annual assessment of long-term key issues; it includes exploitation, serious violence and abuse and sexual offences.
- The National Crime Agency’s Strategic Assessment - an annual assessment of the threat to the UK from serious and organised crime. Identified threats include child sexual abuse and exploitation, immigration crime, drugs and cybercrime.
- Feedback from the Police and Crime Panel last year - Members suggested an increase in PCSOs as part of the ‘mixed resource economy’ of Kent Police may be beneficial and greater consideration should be given to preventing crime and antisocial behaviour within local communities.
- The important and significant contribution police staff make to keeping the county safe and recognition that the uplift in officers requires resources to train and support them. Of the 100 proposed police staff, approximately half would go into roles supporting frontline policing, such as community liaison, disclosure, victim services and digital forensics, recognising the growth in social media now means most investigations have an online element. The other half would go into roles that support the uplift and general welfare of officers and staff, such as recruitment, learning and development, finance, vetting and occupational health.

35. The PCC announced his proposal on the BBC Radio Kent breakfast show on 28 January 2020 and it was covered by various other local media too. The proposal was also uploaded to the OPCC website and promoted via various social media channels. Whilst it was recognised that there was limited time and opportunity, members of the public were invited to have their say by contacting the OPCC.

36. Kent residents currently pay the seventh lowest policing precept in the country. Through the Annual Policing Survey which attracted a record number of responses, and feedback throughout the year, the PCC heard loud and clear that residents are prepared to pay a little more for additional resources focused on neighbourhood policing and preventing crime and antisocial behaviour.
37. Subject to the Police and Crime Panel's approval, the PCC confirms his intention to increase the policing precept in 2020/21 to £203.15 for an average Band D property. This represents an increase of £10 per year (or 5.2%) on the current precept.
38. 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: Summary report – January 2020
- Appendix C** Chief Finance Officer Report