

Decision Notice

DN 02/2020 Date 31/01/2020

Police precept proposal 2020/21

The Commissioner has decided, after consultation with the public, after taking into account the impact of the financial settlement, the challenge in meeting the costs of delivering a significant increase in Police Officers within North Yorkshire, in line with the Government's policy' and the financial needs of the Force, to propose to the Police, Fire and Crime Panel a police precept for 2020/21 of £265.77 for a Band D property within North Yorkshire. This would be an increase of 3.91% or £10 per annum, from the 2019/20 level.

Background

Legislation requires that the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner agrees their budget and associated precept and basic council tax for the forthcoming year before 1st March each year. However, before doing so the Commissioner must notify the relevant Police, Fire and Crime Panel, by the 31st January, of the precept which they propose to issue for the following financial year.

The Police Settlement for 2020/21 has provided the Commissioner with:

- An increase in Police Grant of £5.2m or 7.5%
- A new Ring-fenced Grant for Police Officer increases of £1.6m

HOWEVER

This money needs to deliver 58 additional police officers during 2020/21, all of the additional support costs required to enable this to happen and all of the costs to enable these officers to undertake their role.

- The National costing modelling for this work indicated the costs for North Yorkshire would be around £4.9m
- In addition to this the organisation is subject to nationally agreed pay awards of 2.5% for last year, and a projected 2.5% for 2020/21. The costs of these awards will add £3.7m to the base budget.
- General levels of non-pay inflation at £1.0m, combined with specific areas of market cost pressures, such as vehicle insurance and contributions to national IT programmes add further costs of £0.3m.
- Finally the reduction of Capital Grants by £0.3m and the ending of specific grants around areas such as Domestic Violence services, create pressures of £0.7m in total.




With the total increase in funding from the Government totalling £6.8m, compared against the unavoidable cost increases of £10.6m, then the PFCC needs £3.8m more in precept funding, in comparison to 2019/20, to deliver the required services in 2020/21.

Precept flexibility of up to £10 has been provided for all Commissioners (or equivalents) in 2020-21, which means that the Band D level of the Police Precept can be increased by up to, and including, £10 before a referendum is required.

Each £1 increase in North Yorkshire provides just over £300k of additional precept income on a recurring basis – so just over £3m for a £10 increase. When this is combined with an increase in the council tax base within North Yorkshire for 2020/21 of 0.93% - which generates an extra £0.8m more than the 2019/20 position – then a £10 increase in precept would provide £3.8m of more precept funding in 2020/21, in comparison to 2019/20.

Consultation

The results of consultation with the public of North Yorkshire in relation to the level of precept for 2020/21, which had 2,213 responses, has resulted in 69% supporting an increase although only 34% supported the level of the proposed increase. The summary of the responses is provided below:

How much more would you be prepared to pay per year, through your council tax for policing?				
			%	No.
1	No more than I pay now – a precept freeze. <i>This would mean a cut to the police budget due to inflation</i>		31%	686
2	An increase of up to 2.5% (equivalent to a £6.39 increase for a Band D property). <i>This would raise £1.9 million and would enable North Yorkshire Police to keep up with inflation and at least maintain the current service</i>		35%	779
3	An increase of up to £10 (equivalent to a 3.9% increase for a Band D property). <i>This would raise £3 million and would mean an investment in policing services</i>		34%	748

Plans beyond increasing Police Officers to over 1,500 in 2020/21

The Force will continue to invest and develop many areas during 2020/21, many of which will be in line with the Policing Minister’s priorities around digital, data and technology.

Beyond the development and investment in IT there will also be continued work to transform the service within the Force to deliver the £10m of efficiency savings that I have challenged the Force to deliver. Work will continue to deliver closer working and collaboration between Police and Fire as part of the Enable collaboration and work will continue around the Public Safety Service pilot.

The final areas for development and investment in 2020/21 include the following areas:

- Mental Health support to frontline policing
- Offender Management: Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Coercive Control
- Offender management: Development of integrated criminal justice pathways
- Serving the public: NYP Service Desk development

Delivery Against last years' Plans

In 2019 the Commissioner undertook a Neighbourhood Policing Survey which provided a timely reminder of the concerns that the public have about the erosion of local policing services in North Yorkshire. In response to these concerns, and the strategic direction of the Commissioner to deliver the 'Reinforcing the Front Line' goal set out in the Police and Crime Plan, NYP developed plans to address the areas that were raised within this survey and proposed the following:

- Community Resilience Teams with a visible presence dedicated to prevention and facilitating multi agency working.
- Mental Health Coordinators to support our most vulnerable residents and reduce the need for emergency secondary interventions
- Increased and structured engagement with communities to understand what matters to the place with a focus on volume acquisitive crime and volume offenders. Subsequently this will reduce the fear of crime through increased traditional community presence and engagement

In increasing the Precept by £22.95 last year the Commissioner was clear that the Chief Constable needed to deliver against these concerns.

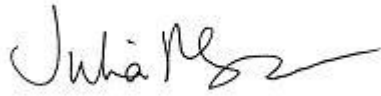
To deliver these proposals required an increase in both Police Officers (51 FTEs) and PCSO's (23.5 FTEs) and all of these posts will be filled moving into 2020/21. Some delays were experienced in filling these posts in 2019/20 and therefore these unspent funds have been set aside and will support investment in the following areas:

- Whole Family Approach' pilot for vulnerable Children and Young People affected by Domestic Abuse.
- Domestic Abuse Reducing Reoffending and Harm Prevention: Perpetrator Work and System Improvements
- Programmes to Support Early Intervention and Prevention

Decision Record

The Commissioner has decided, after taking into account the financial needs of the Force to be able to deliver against the North Yorkshire share of the national increase in Police Officers, to be able to meet the unavoidable increases in costs that result from nationally agreed pay awards, to meet the costs of general inflation and cost pressures, and continue the needed investment in

Policing and Crime services, to propose to the Police and Crime Panel a police precept for 2020/21 of £265.77 for a Band D property within North Yorkshire. This would be an increase of £10 per annum, or 3.91%, from the 2019/20 level.



Julia Mulligan
Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for North Yorkshire

Statutory Officer Advice

Legal, Management and Equality Implications

The Commissioner's Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer, having read this report and having considered such information as has been provided at the time of being asked to express this view, is satisfied that this report does not ask the Commissioner to make a decision which would (or would be likely to) give rise to a contravention of the law.

Financial and Commercial

The Commissioner's Chief Finance Officer and S151 Officer has advised that the financial implications of this Decision are set out in the Executive Summary and/or the attached report. The decision will ensure that the Commissioner meets her legislative requirements in relation with the Police element of the precept and will also ensure that there is sufficient funding available in 2020/21 to fund the organisation to deliver against the Police and Crime Plan priorities.

The CFO would like to draw to the Commissioner's attention that the forecast average increase in Revenue funding across England and Wales is, subject to all areas experiencing a 1.33% increase in tax base, and increasing their precept by £10, 7.84%.

North Yorkshire however will only get an increase of 6.81% with a £10 precept increase. This is therefore significantly below the average level of increase and, depending on the actual tax base growth elsewhere in the country and the precept agreed in those areas, likely to be the second lowest increase in the country.

The highest increase in total revenue funding, as a result of this settlement, within the country, excluding the City of London Police, is expected to be in Northumbria at 9.26%, with the lowest expected to be 6.79% in Surrey. These increases assume that both areas increase the precept by £10 and that the tax base in both areas have increased by 1.33%.

The difference between the average settlement nationally (7.84%) and the forecast settlement in North Yorkshire (6.81%) equates to a financial cost of nearly £1.6m. This gap would widen if a precept increase of less than £10 is set for 2020/21.