

5. Public Questions/Statements

No public questions or statements were received.

6. Review of Complaints

No complaints have been received since the last report.

ACTION

The Panel **AGREED** to note the report

7. Precept Report 2021/22

The Panel received a report to notify them of the Acting Commissioner's proposed Net Budget Requirement (NBR) and precept for 2021/22 and to enable them to review the proposed precept.

The Acting Commissioner and his staff presented the information contained within the report to the Panel.

The Panel made comment, asked questions, and received responses from the Acting Commissioner and his staff regarding the proposed Net Budget Requirement and precept, these included:

- a) Councillor Massey stated it was sad that vital and core services were now forced to have discussions on how to make savings due to underfunding
- b) Councillor Daunton stated that last year the Panel had been asked to agree a rise in the precept of 4.6% to provide a balance budget but then were faced with a cut of £1.7million therefore Councillor Daunton asked for reassurance that sufficient risk was built into today's report. The Acting Commissioner responded stating the reason for the report was to give Panel Members as much information as possible and this was also why the pre-briefing which was held for the Panel a few weeks ago, to give Members a chance to see the information, understand it and ask questions. The Acting Commissioner reiterated that it was important for all Panel Members to understand the background to the information. Chief Constable Nick Dean reassured Panel Members that the sustainability and the risks had been fully considered as had been shown in the presentation. The £1.7million cuts related to the cuts announced by the Chief Constable and the change in neighbourhood policing model prior to Christmas; these were necessary to build sustainability going forward. The budget was based on the budget asset reserve, but this has not been sustainable and therefore there was a need to look forward to building in a medium financial strategy which meant those 'unpalatable' cuts and an ability to transform the organisation to build in the sustainability for the future. Unfortunately, no categorical assurance can be given going forward as this has been based on a one-year funding formula. The Police have requested a more sustainable and projected budget going forward over 3 to 4 years to be able to do more detailed planning; the assumptions currently are made on a one-year settlement given from the government. Councillor Daunton stated that it was obvious that Cambridgeshire was not receiving sufficient funding considering how low they appeared compared to other similar forces and asked what more could be done to help this issue. The Chief Constable gave his reassurance that several lobbies had been submitted from himself, other Chief Constables, Police and Crime Commissioners and successive Police and Crime Commissioners over the years. They also had the support of the local MPs and a link in with current Home Secretary and Policing Minister, who are undoubtedly well aware of the unfairness of the policing funding formula, which was built on historic census data, different elements of the demographics, the make-up of the county; Cambridgeshire is a growing County in population, investment, economy, transformation and

scientific services and a fairer funding formula has to reflect different criteria in order to make it fairer for keeping communities safe. The Chief Constable assured the Panel that they had lobbied hard for a change in the funding formula.

- c) Edward Leigh, Chairperson, suggested the panel discuss later how the panel would help lobby for a better funding formula.
- d) Councillor Massey voiced concerns that the public were again being asked for more money when many had lost jobs due to the pandemic and it was not just the police asking for more money, the county was asking for more for social care, along with the districts also allowed to increase their precept. This added increase to the public would be a huge squeeze for some. The Acting Commissioner responded stating that he could only deal with the police precept which is required to ensure the community stays safe. The Chief Constable gave his reassurance that it was not removal of the whole community safety team, it was 6 officers and the opportunity for these 6 staff to be redeployed are there and a number have taken this opportunity and if this precept is successful then another officer will have that opportunity to be retained too. As crime has change then the plan is to now introduce four Cyber Online Prevention Officers into the organisation; the PCSOs (Police Community Support Officers) could not be redeployed into the Professional Development Unit as they do not have the knowledge and cannot provide the guidance to regular officers and therefore do not have the ability to give frontline advice to regular constables. However, the Policing Community Support Officers could take advantage of the police uplift programme and a number of those PCSPs have applied to become regular constables and if they are successful and transfer across as regular officers then they will be redeployed back into the communities to which they were Police community support officers as their knowledge, skills, community contact is vital to build up community safety. Positive action is around the inclusion of the organisation seeking people within minority groups across the county and beyond to enter the organisation to reflect the community. The Inclusion Coordinator will work actively with the Positive Action Team to increase the diversity not only with attraction and application but with mentoring and retention.
- e) Councillor Massey asked several questions regarding figures. Matthew Warren, Chief Finance Officer responded stating that options were still being looked at for the city centre police station across both the public and private sector; the commitment was still there to maintain the city centre police station in terms of the neighbourhood policing team. The £100,000 within the city centre is an assumption around remodelling a premise that in the city centre (although this is unknown); this is in tandem whilst the Milton scheme is in the process of planning permission. The public will be engaged with once the preferred option is chosen.
- f) Councillor Lynn stated that the OPCC had removed the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) funding and therefore would they take over the responsibilities of the Community Safety Partnership to cover what would be lost through the reduction of the funding. The Acting Commissioner stated this was separate to the precept. There were monies set aside for the CSPs to be able to bid for but again, this was separate to the precept. Jim Haylett explained that the Crime and Disorder Reduction Grants that were allocated historically to each of the CSPs was in the region of £24,000 per year and they were specifically allocated for improvement in the way that services were delivered rather than to fund a post; the cumulative amount across the county was £150,000 and historically there had been a lot of administrative bureaucracy around managing those six £24,000 grants. The money is still there for the CSPs, but we are now looking at a better way to have county wide impact on crime and disorder reduction and in ways whereby the improvements that get made through that are sustainable. With a new Commissioner coming in May, with a new Plan; this is part of a new dialogue that started last year, Jim Haylett agreed to send Councillor Lynn further information. The last round of awards for CSPs was for two years and these conclude in March 2021, part of the criteria was the funding was not to be used to fund posts and it will be up to the new Commissioner as to how he/she wishes to allocate these. Jim Haylett explained that a grant is allocated for a specific purpose, duration, and outcome, therefore at the end of that grant, it is not a cut when the grant stops. Further monies would be the next round in the grant, but he reiterated that he would send further details through directly.

- g) Councillor Ali stated Cambridgeshire was the 5th lowest funded and this had been an issue not just for this year but for the last decade and therefore the government should fund the county adequately. He welcomed the increase in diversity within the workforce and hoped this would be reflected within all the various levels of the constabulary. Councillor Ali explained he represented an area which was very diversity with lots of challenges and was often contacted by those that were dissatisfied with the response they were given and therefore wanted reassurance from the Acting Commissioner that challenging diverse urban communities who feel they have been let down, crime is rising; what long term plan is there for them? The Acting Commissioner responded explaining who they asked regarding the consultation for the precept, local authority, elected bodies, and members and CSPs, MPs and the Panel Secretariat. It was also distributed to the local authorities and district councils, representative groups via local media outlets, Media First Peterborough, Countryside Watch, Neighbourhood Watch, the National Farmers Union, the Cambridge and Peterborough Against Scams Partnership, Voiceability, Healthwatch, Youth Panel, Huntingdonshire Business Against Crime, Little People UK, Huntingdonshire Community Group, Gladstone District Community Group, Stop Hate UK, Speak Out Counsel, Cambridge University Jewish Society. The Chief Constable thanked Councillor Ali for his continued support for the communities of Peterborough and gave his reassurance that the police do listen to the communities, it is challenging times but the allocation of officers and PCSOs through the neighbourhood policing model is based upon three elements: crime volume, crime harm and vulnerability. Satisfaction has increased over the years which is testament to neighbourhood policing.
- h) Edward Leigh stated the survey was not representable by age as it showed that 41% were aged over 65 and over 62% were aged over 55 therefore the OPCC needs to look carefully at which organisations are included to get a more representable sample response from younger people. It would also be useful to see a breakdown of responses by district, to see if one district is more supportive than another. The Acting Commissioner stated that these would be done and if this precept went through then hopefully the difference it makes would be seen and next year people would respond.
- i) Discussions took place around the figures within the budget which were clarified by staff from the OPCC.
- j) Councillor Bywater stated that the year had been vastly different, and we were still coming out of a global pandemic and the world was a completely different place to where it has been in the past, which has put pressures on policing. Councillor Bywater shared the same concerns as Councillor Lynn regarding CSPs but in Huntingdonshire and felt like there was no alternative as there was not decent funding available from the government and he had been arguing with the Children's Minister for funding for children's services in Cambridgeshire and the same issue is repeated in other panels and committees, that government funding to Cambridgeshire is poor in every aspect. These are challenging times and are tough times financially for the residents of Cambridgeshire but what was the alternative, to not agree this, which would put pressure on the police to make further cuts, resulting in crime snowballing. Therefore, he would agree to the precept with a heavy heart.
- k) Panel members wished to publicly thank all the Officers and staff for all their work over the last 12 months as this was not recognised enough.
- l) Councillor Giles stated he reluctantly supported the precept as he hoped that public satisfaction and neighbourhood policing would improve as local policing was the most prominent issue to the public as this was not always happening; responses to complaints are returned as standard stating that there is not time, or not enough staff etc. Councillor Giles asked if the PCSOs were being replaced. The Acting Commissioner replied stating that in relation to public confidence, he had been holding regular surgeries with the parish councils, councils and therefore they were doing everything they could to ensure that the public were heard, and that public confidence was raised within the constabulary.
- m) Edward Leigh stated that the need to demonstrate to council taxpayers that their money has bought a better policing service, the Panel would be looking for a report setting out how five objectives setting out; safeguarding the vulnerable, inquisitive crimes etc would be measured whilst demonstrating that there has been a meaningful improvement and how that has been

reflected in the public's understanding of policing. The Panel would be looking at this from the new Commissioner as there was a need for this to be monitored.

- n) The Chief Constable explained that the announcements made before Christmas to reduce the PCSOs down from 80 to 40, these will not be replaced. The operating proposed was for 40 PCSOs across the county as opposed to 80.
- o) Councillor Lynn explained he was juggling between the police precept and a rise in mental health. He appreciated the police and realised they need more funding and would be happy to fight for more funding from the government, but he did not feel comfortable squeezing more money out of people's pockets that are already really struggling and losing their jobs through covid therefore unfortunately he was not able to support the increase in precept.
- p) Edward Leigh mentioned that the report stated that 80% of police time is not crime related and this crops up regular in reports to which the Panel ask questions, but he did not feel that the Panel had a clear picture of what that 80% comprises. Of that 80% what is it that the Constabulary thinks is 'not reasonable' for the police to be responsible for and that other agencies are not pulling their weight. The Panel would look for a more detailed analysis of what the 80% consisted of in a future report. The Acting Commissioner stated the police do respond to suicidal situations and assured that a report could be brought to the Panel later.
- q) Edward Leigh asked if the Panel could have sight of a full consolidated loan and table to be able to see the full liabilities of the OPCC. Matthew Warren, Chief Finance Officer explained that the OPCC would bring a consolidated stand-alone paper back to the Panel which would explain the figures.

The Panel **AGREED** to **SUPPORT** the precept proposed by the Acting Commissioner.

The Panel also agreed/recommended to:

- *Help lobby the Government for a better funding formula*
- *Jim Haylett to circulate new CSP funding instructions to Panel Members*
- *Future precept surveys need to seek broader representation of younger people and other "hard to reach" groups. We would like to see survey results broken down by district to see if opinions vary significantly.*

8. Decisions by the Acting Police and Crime Commissioner

The Panel received a report to enable it to review or scrutinise decisions taken by the Police and Crime Commissioner under Section 28 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. The Panel was recommended to indicate whether it would wish to further review and scrutinise the decisions taken by the Police and Crime Commissioner taken since the previous Panel meeting.

The Panel **AGREED** to note the report and decisions that had been made by the Acting Commissioner.

Edward Leigh asked the Acting Commissioner if he was confident that enough work had been done on the planning application for the Southern Policing Hub to satisfy all the concerns about the application as it has been delayed twice. The Acting Commissioner responded stating he was satisfied; the main reasons for the delay have been worked through therefore he was quite confident of a good outcome.

The Acting Commissioner and his staff left the meeting.

9. Task and Finish Group – Review of Working Panel Arrangements – Verbal Update

Claire George, Chair of the Task and Finish Group explained that the Centre of Governance and Scrutiny had been commissioned to carry out the Review of Working Panel Arrangements. Interviews with Panel members, officers and the OPCC have taken place; this information will be collated along with further information from agendas, meetings into a report that will contain recommendations. The end outcome will be a workshop for all Panel Members probably once the new Commissioner is in place as this would be a timely opportunity to reflect and refine the Panel’s approach as it begins working alongside the new Commissioner.

10. Meeting Dates and Agenda Plan 2020-2021

March Meeting – 24th March 2021
 June Meeting – 23rd June 2021

The Panel **NOTED** the forthcoming meeting dates.

Future reports

- Update on the impact of COVID on Policing
- Analysis of the oft-cited “80% non-crime related demand on policing”. As far as reasonably possible we would like a breakdown that is quantified in terms of time and money. The report should identify areas where the police shares responsibility with partner agencies, especially where this has changed over time, necessitating the police to assume greater responsibilities.
- Consolidated analysis of capital expenditure, borrowing and repayments, profiled over the loan terms.
- Roads Policing

Further scoping on the above reports to follow

The meeting began at 2:00pm and ended at 5:00pm

CHAIRPERSON

	ITEM	ACTION
1.	Acting Commissioner’s Response to Panel's Recommendations	The Panel AGREED to NOTE the report.
2.	Precept Report 2021/22	The Panel AGREED to SUPPORT the precept proposed by the Acting Commissioner. <i>The Panel also agreed/recommended to:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>help lobby the Government for a better funding formula</i> • <i>Jim Haylett to circulate new CSP funding instructions to Panel Members</i> • <i>Future precept surveys need to seek broader representation of younger people and other “hard to</i>

		<i>reach” groups. We would like to see survey results broken down by district to see if opinions vary significantly.</i>
3.	Decisions by the Commissioner	The Panel AGREED to note the report and decisions that had been made by the Commissioner.
4.	Task and Finish Group - Review of Working Panel Arrangements - Verbal Update	The Panel AGREED to NOTE the update.
5.	Meeting Dates and Agenda Plan	<p>The Panel NOTED the forthcoming meeting dates.</p> <p>Future reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on the impact of COVID on Policing • Analysis of the oft-cited “80% non-crime related demand on policing”. As far as reasonably possible we would like a breakdown that is quantified in terms of time and money. The report should identify areas where the police shares responsibility with partner agencies, especially where this has changed over time, necessitating the police to assume greater responsibilities. • Consolidated analysis of capital expenditure, borrowing and repayments, profiled over the loan terms. • Roads Policing <p><i>Further scoping on the above reports to follow</i></p>

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