

WEST MERCIA POLICE AND CRIME PANEL 7 FEBRUARY 2024

WEST MERCIA POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S PROPOSED PRECEPT AND BUDGET 2024/25

Recommendation

1. It is recommended that the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel (PCP) considers the:
 - (i) West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner's (PCC's) Proposed Budget 2024/25 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2024/25 – 2028/29;
 - (ii) report of the PCP's Budget Scrutiny Sub Group; and
 - (iii) provides a report to the PCC on the proposed precept, including any recommendations, outlining whether it vetoes the precept or not.

Background

2. Each police force area raises extra money to pay for policing activity through council tax. This is called the police precept and is included in every council tax bill. The level of police precept is set locally every year (in February) by the PCC.
3. Under the provisions of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, the PCP has a statutory role to review the PCC's proposed precept level and formally respond to it. The Panel is required to submit a formal response to the PCC.
4. The legislation only requires that the Panel 'responds' to the proposed precept – there is no requirement that the Panel has to either support the precept or veto it; therefore, the Panel can choose to only comment on the proposal if it wishes. Guidance related to the scrutiny of the precept by Police and Crime Panels is attached at Appendix 1.

Budget Scrutiny

5. During January 2024 a Panel Sub Group met with the PCC and his officers to discuss the proposed budget for 2024/2025, the Medium Term Financial Plan through to 2028/2029 and the proposed Precept for 2024/25 in context of the Policing Plan and the Commissioner's election promises. The Report of the Sub Group is attached at Appendix 2.

West Mercia PCC proposed Budget 2024/25 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2024/25 – 2028/29

6. The West Mercia PCC Proposed Budget 2024/25 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2024/25 – 2028/29 is attached at Appendix 3.

Consultation

7. To understand the priorities of residents and help inform the PCC prior to firming up his draft budget proposals for 2024/25, public consultation was undertaken through community engagement events. The events took place during six months throughout the summer period.
8. The PCC followed this up by carrying out a survey, specifically on the draft precept and budget proposals. This consultation launched on the 7 December 2023 and ended at 12am on the 7 January 2024. A precept proposal, the Proposed Budget 2024/25 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/25–2028/29 was published as part of the consultation process, along with a short online survey to enable people to comment on the proposals being put forward. The Budget Consultation Summary is attached at Appendix 4.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 - Guidance related to the Scrutiny of the Precept by Police and Crime Panels

Appendix 2 – West Mercia Police and Crime Panel – Budget Sub Group Report (to follow)

Appendix 3 West Mercia PCC proposed Budget 2024/25 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2024/25 – 2028/29

Appendix 4 - Budget Consultation Summary 2024/25

Contact Points for the Report

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Democratic, Governance and Scrutiny Manager (Interim Monitoring Officer) there are no background papers relating to the subject matter of this report.

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