

Budget Update
15 January 2013

Police and Crime
Commissioner
for Hertfordshire

Recommendation

That the panel approves my proposal to freeze the precept for 2013/14 and notes my draft budget for 2013/14 as detailed in the attached paper.

Consideration

In setting this budget I have paid particular regard to the following issues:

1. My election commitment was to keep taxes low. The Constabulary finances are in a healthy position. Our savings plans are well developed, we have a high level of reserves and performance is strong against all significant measures. There is no justification for seeking a further council tax increase from the public to maintain high quality policing in Hertfordshire. Although a number of budgetary pressures have been identified, the Chief Constable considers that they can be accommodated within the existing budget in 2013/14. He considers that this proposed level of resourcing should prove sufficient to enable the Constabulary to address known or anticipated crime threats and also to support the Commissioner's developing Police & Crime Plan.
2. The budget is based on delivering continuity. My plan is currently being developed but with regards to police action I am promoting continuity of approach. We are a low crime county with effective police action to catch criminals and maintain low crime levels. This has been due in part to a consistent approach built over a number of years; I have no wish to disrupt that. Over time I will want to adjust priorities to ensure that the actions of the constabulary are even better focused on the needs of the Hertfordshire public. However, given the short time that I have been in post I do not think it would be the right time to enact fundamental change in policing.
3. My Police and Crime Plan is being developed; even when it is published during March it will set out my evolving policy. In the previous item I will have provided a strong sense of direction for policing and crime. We will still need to work up some of my policy demands into a detailed budget plan and this will happen over the next year. Some proposals will cost money whilst others will save it. Although a number of budgetary pressures have been identified, the Chief Constable considers that they can be accommodated within the existing budget in 2013/14. He considers that this proposed level of resourcing should prove sufficient to enable the Constabulary to address known or anticipated crime threats and also to support my developing Police & Crime Plan.

4. New development work in my Police and Crime plan, in addition to the continuity of approach to policing will centre on three large strategic themes:
 - a. Public Focus
 - b. Offender Pays
 - c. Business Sense

5. I recognise that members of this panel will be interested in how this budget relates to their authorities' direct responsibilities for crime reduction and community safety. For this year, it is my intention to pass on the money that we receive from Government that was previously allocated to the County, District and Borough councils. This budget is greatly reduced from last year and the monies passed on will also be reduced accordingly. I will be discussing with your community safety leads about how our funds can be best used in the year ahead and how they can plan for a transition to a more business-like approach to meeting our individual statutory responsibilities.

6. I trust that the panel will find this budget in line with my promises to the electorate. This is a budget that will maintain high quality policing and provide the base for implementation of some radical reforms that will benefit the people of Hertfordshire in the years to come.

David Lloyd

Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire