



— David Lloyd —
**Police and Crime
Commissioner**
for Hertfordshire

Policing Budget Proposal for Hertfordshire 2018/19

Each year I set a budget for policing in Hertfordshire. It is one of the most important functions of a Police and Crime Commissioner as it sets out how the Constabulary will spend its money over the next 12 months. It also underlines the strategy I have set for how we protect Hertfordshire and keep people safe. My starting point each year is to make sure the public are protected and that the police service is as effective and efficient as possible. I have a duty to spend your money well, and each year I have written an open letter setting out the reasons for my proposals and to get your feedback.

The last 12 months saw a significant rise in the demand on Hertfordshire Constabulary. The horrific terrorist attacks in Manchester and London increased the national threat level resulting in Hertfordshire officers working around the clock performing additional duties. The Force Communications Room, where staff take your emergency calls and online crime reports, saw a 10% increase in the number of 999 calls received. After the Manchester attack, that rose by 18%. Each day we are now receiving the same number of calls we would expect on New Year's Eve – one of our busiest nights.

We've also seen a significant increase in reports of offences involving vulnerable victims – domestic abuse, child abuse, trafficking and modern slavery. This is actually positive news. It means that far more people who in the past were reluctant to report these horrible crimes now have the confidence to come forward and ask for help. It is absolutely vital that we recognise their courage by properly investigating these crimes and provide victims with high quality support. I am pleased to say that Hertfordshire is meeting this challenge but I also recognise that it represents a significant increase in pressure on the force's limited resources.

The rise in demand impacts on how we spend our money. In order to protect our neighbourhood policing model and strengthen the teams tackling burglary and other serious crimes, it will be necessary to raise additional funding from local people. The government has made it possible for me to increase the amount you pay towards policing by an additional £1 a month on the typical property. I propose to take advantage of this flexibility and raise the precept.

This allows the Chief Constable to provide long-term security to our local policing teams as well as invest to meet the demands on the force. It amounts to an increase of just over 3 percent in the total police budget. Despite this rise, Hertfordshire will continue to have one of the lowest levels of council tax spent on policing in the whole country.

Practically, this will deliver more officers on the streets working in our neighbourhood teams and in specialist units like Operation Scorpion. This is Hertfordshire's proactive crime-fighting unit which has reduced anti-social behaviour, burglary and drug dealing. With more calls coming in, it is necessary to invest more money in our Force Control Room, providing additional resources to meet the demand and provide the excellent victim care you expect when you dial 999, 101 or log on to the website or app. Significant additional resource will be invested to improve the response to victims at the first point of contact with the police and to assist with investigations.

This budget will deliver a step change in the support provided to victims through the expansion of the Constabulary's victim services team. Based at HQ, they'll deliver excellent care for victims as set out in the Victims Code of Practice. Alongside this, the development of an enhanced Beacon – Hertfordshire's dedicated Victim Care Centre – will provide greater and specialised support to victims and outreach programmes to extend services to those victims who do not report to the police.

I also have a duty to ensure that the Constabulary is as efficient as possible and it has made significant savings since I first became your Police and Crime Commissioner. This budget plan will see its savings totals since 2010/11 reach over £50m. We are also making the best use of the resources we already have and I've committed to spend around 80% of our reserves over the next four years.

As soon as I was informed about the settlement by the Home Secretary, I began a public consultation, asking residents and businesses what they thought about the idea. I'm grateful to the XXX respondents who took the time to provide me with a detailed response. Overwhelmingly, feedback on the proposed increase in the police part of the precept has been positive. Approximately 89% of those who responded did not object to paying the increased precept to protect neighbourhood policing and strengthen the teams tackling burglary and other serious crimes.

Some respondents who favoured an increase suggested that extra funding go towards the provision of increased visible policing and frontline policing, as well as an increase in resources to tackle issues such as burglaries and antisocial behaviour. There was support towards the continuation of PCSOs and the current neighbourhood policing model.


A number of responses agreed that extra funding should go towards the Force Control Room – as some those who contacted the police have had to wait for longer than expected periods of time for their calls to emergency services to be answered.

A number of responders said they would be willing to contribute even more than the £1 per month proposed. Just over 11% of people said they did not favour any increase.

I would like to thank everybody who sent their comments to me. The decision to raise the council tax is not one I take lightly and nor is it one which I automatically assume will happen. I ask the Constabulary's finance director to begin his planning from the perspective of a freeze and he then shows me how that will impact on the police force in Hertfordshire.

My decision this year is based on how this moderate rise will provide all the extra resources to help deal with the challenges we face in the years to come. I believe it is the right decision and one which has the support of Hertfordshire residents.

Yours sincerely,



David Lloyd

Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire

Background:

For each of the council tax bands, the cost would be as follows:

	Band							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Precept 2017/18	£101.33	£118.22	£135.11	£152.00	£185.78	£219.56	£253.33	£304.00
Proposed Precept 2018/19	£109.33	£127.56	£145.78	£164.00	£200.44	£236.89	£273.33	£328.00
Annual Increase	£8.00	£9.34	£10.67	£12.00	£14.66	£17.33	£20.00	£24.00
Weekly Increase	£0.15	£0.18	£0.21	£0.23	£0.28	£0.33	£0.38	£0.46

More details can be found at the PCC's website: www.hertscommissioner.org/precept