

BEDFORDSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL
REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE POLICE AND CRIME
COMMISSIONER FOR BEDFORDSHIRE ON THE PROPOSED PRECEPT
FOR 2013/14
FEBRUARY 2013

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This document constitutes the report of the Bedfordshire Police and Crime Panel in respect of the Commissioner's proposed precept for the financial year 2013/14 and is submitted to the Commissioner in accordance with paragraph 3 of Schedule 5 to the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 (the Act) and regulation 4 of the Police and Crime Panels (Precepts and Chief Constable Appointments) Regulations 2012 (the Regulations).
- 1.2 Under the Act, the Panel is able to make recommendations to the Commissioner to amend the proposed precept and, if 2/3 of the whole membership of the Panel vote to do so, may veto the proposed precept. Having reviewed the proposed precept, the Panel has decided not to propose any changes, and has not exercised its power to veto the proposed precept. The report advises the Commissioner that the Panel supports the proposed precept for 2013/14 as submitted.
- 1.3 In submitting this report, the Panel would like to thank the Commissioner, his Chief Executive and his Chief Finance Officer, for their attendance at the Panel's meeting on 5 February 2013 and for the responses provided to the Panel's questions.

2. PROPOSED PRECEPT

- 2.1 The Panel's Secretariat received notification of the Commissioner's proposed precept on 28 January 2013, and notified the Panel of the Commissioner's proposals on the same day.
- 2.2 Having received notification of the precept by the statutory deadline of 1 February 2013, the law requires the Panel to review and make a report to the Commissioner on the proposed precept by 8 February.
- 2.3 The Panel reviewed the proposed precept at its meeting on Tuesday 5 February 2013. The following Panel Members were present:

Councillor Fiona Chapman (Panel Chair)
Councillor Colleen Atkins
Lay Member, Paul Cain
Councillor Michael Dolling
Councillor Alison Field Foster
Councillor Alison Graham
Mayor Dave Hodgson
Councillor Peter Hollick

Lay Member, Rose Parkes
Councillor Raja Saleem
Councillor Roxanna Whittaker

Officers of the Panel's Host Authority (Bedford Borough Council) were also present.

2.4 The Panel had the benefit of a detailed report (available at

<http://www.councillorsupport.bedford.gov.uk/documents/g3379/Public%20reports%20pack%2005th-Feb-2013%2018.00%20Bedfordshire%20Police%20and%20Crime%20Panel.pdf?T=10>)

submitted in support of the proposed precept and was advised at the meeting that the final financial settlement, which had not been announced until 4 February 2013, had confirmed the provisional settlement on which the budget and precept proposals were based. Whilst the settlement had resulted in a reduction in funding of 1.4 % from that received in 2012/13, the Panel noted that, at £70.7m, this was slightly better than had been envisaged.

2.5 The Panel understands that the total budget requirement of £102,878,000 will require a Council Tax increase of 2%, which equates to an increase of £3.01 per annum or 6p per week. The Panel noted that consideration had been given to the option of freezing Council Tax at the 2012/13 level, and accepting a government grant equivalent to a 1% increase in Council Tax which was available for 2013/14 and 2014/15 only. This option would however, have a significant impact in 2015/16 when the additional grant would cease. The Panel understands that the increase in funding through increasing Council Tax by 2%, compared to taking the freeze grant, is £0.242M per annum for 2013/14 and 2014/15 and then, due to the freeze grant being withdrawn in 2015/16, this would increase to £0.560M per annum thereafter. Therefore, over the three years 2013/14 to 2015/16 approximately £1.050M less funding would be available through a Council Tax freeze compared with a 2% increase in Council Tax.

2.6 The Panel was persuaded by the information provided in your report and the responses provided to its questions that this level of funding increase is required to support the commitments outlined in your proposed Police and Crime Plan (also considered by the Panel at its meeting on 5 February 2013) and to protect crucial policing resources, such as PCSOs and retaining officer and staff capability, as well as providing for future years' budget shortfalls of some £7M during 2015/16 and 2016/17.

3. CONCLUSIONS

3.1 Having considered:

- the need for you to set a budget which will enable you to deliver the proposed Police and Crime Plan, which has been considered and is supported by the Panel
- the impact of the 2013/14 financial settlement for Bedfordshire
- your proposed budget reductions for 2013/14
- your medium term financial strategy
- the impact of the proposed budget on the level of the Council Tax and
- your Chief Financial Officer's report on the robustness of the estimates included in your proposed budget,

the Panel resolved to accept the following recommendations set out in your report:

(a) That the Estimated Revenue Expenditure be set at **£102.878M**, including a Contingency provision for pay and price inflation of **£0.630M** and a contribution to reserves of **£0.972M**.

(b) That the budget requirement of **£102.878M** be met through:

Specific Police Grant	£44.458
RSG & NNDR	£25.452
Council Tax Benefit Subsidy Grant	£3.542
Council Tax Subsidy Grant 2011/12	£0.751

and that, subject to adjustments at c) below the Commissioner's Precept requirement be determined at **£28,675**.

(c) That the Precept in (b) be reduced by **£0.152M**, being the Commissioner's share of the estimated surplus on Council Tax Collection Funds for 2012/13 for each of the Unitary Councils, to **£28,523**.

(d) That pursuant to the provisions of the Local Government Finance Acts 1992 and 1999 and all other relevant statutory powers, the Commissioner's Monitoring Officer issue Precepts in the necessary form to each of the Unitary Councils indicated in Column 1 below, requiring those Authorities to make payments of the sum indicated in Column 2 in 11 equal instalments and payments for the Commissioner's share of the estimated surplus on the Council Tax

(3)

Collection Funds for 2012/13, in ten equal instalments on the agreed dates, of the sum indicated in Column 3.

(e)

Unitary Councils (1)	£000 (2)	£000 (3)
Bedford Borough	7,775	243
Luton Borough	6,861	9
Central Bedfordshire	13,887	(100)
Total	28,523	152

(f) That the amount of Council Tax calculated at 2%, in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992, to be payable in respect of each category of dwelling be confirmed as follows:

Valuation Band	Council Tax for Band
A	102.33
B	119.39
C	136.44
D	153.50
E	187.61
F	221.72
G	255.83
H	307.00

Fiona Chapman MBE
Chair, Bedfordshire
Police and Crime Panel

Philip Simpkins
Clerk, Bedfordshire
Police and Crime Panel

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