

Report to the Police and Crime Panel

1st February 2019

Council Tax Precept 2019/20

Purpose of Report

1. To notify the Police and Crime Panel of my proposed council tax precept for 2019/20.
2. Full supporting documentation is provided in the attached Revenue Estimates report which was presented to and agreed at my public Level 1 meeting with the Chief Constable on 22nd January 2019.

Decisions Required

3. The Panel is asked to receive my proposed precept for 2019/20 and note:
 - That the council tax requirement for 2019/20 be set at £186,558,099
 - That the police element of the council tax for 2019/20 be set at £206.28 for properties in Band D, with the charge for other bands as set out in below. This represents an increase in the band D precept of £24, or 13.2%

Council tax 2019/20

Property Band	Relevant Proportion	PCC Element of the Council Tax £
A	6/9	137.52
B	7/9	160.44
C	8/9	183.36
D	9/9	206.28
E	11/9	252.12
F	13/9	297.26
G	15/9	343.80
H	18/9	412.56

Conclusions

4. The revenue budget is fully balanced in 2019/20 with a 13.2% (£24 for band D) increase in council tax. This is in-line with my Annual Financial Strategy for 2019/20.
5. On 19th December I launched a short public consultation on the proposed increase in council tax for 2019/20. The response deadline was 9th January 2018. In order to reach as many people as possible, it was sent to:
 - All users of TVP Alert – at least 82,787 residents
 - All town and parish councils
 - All councillors from county, unitary and district councils
 - All media in the TVP area via a press release

- Regular social media updates via Twitter
6. In total, 8,031 people voted, of which 5,599 or 69.7% voted yes
 7. The main areas of additional investment in 2019/20, being funded through the increase in council tax precept are under the following schemes:
 - **Improved Services to the Public through Contact Management £1.3m** - The rise in demand and the complexity of that demand have increased the length of time it takes to assess the threat, harm and risk and ensure every call receives the appropriate response. We will reduce call handling times, particularly for 101 calls, by recruiting additional staff to deal with the additional demand and more complex crime and incidents being reported.
 - **Increasing Local Front Line Policing and Service Delivery £2.5m** - we will recruit additional officers and staff to increase visibility to our communities and respond to increasing crime demand and complexity and the impact (particularly in the areas of mental health and children's safeguarding) of the reduction in the resources of and services provided by other agencies.
 - **Improved Investigative Capacity and Process for Complex Crimes £2.2m** - stretched resources are operating in an increasingly expanding and complex environment with investigations at all levels growing in size and complexity. There has been an impactful increase in organised crime which exploits the vulnerable as well as cyber enabled crime fraud and economic crime. We will recruit more investigators and invest in appropriate new technology and tools.
 - **Increasing Our Digital Development Programmes £2.5m** - we will exploit the modern platforms we have been investing in through the development of operational designed tools, expanding our mobile capability and improving connectivity will allow officers and staff to maximise the use of online digital applications facilitating the fast access and transfer of data, while investing in Intelligence technologies will improve the efficiency of transactional processes.
 8. The medium term financial plan is balanced in all four years (2019/20 to 2022/23). It provides for inflationary increases and limited investment to address some service and performance issues by increasing our resources, both police officers and police staff, alongside investing in the technology to make our staff more productive. The investment has only been possible because of the additional flexibility in the council tax precept.
 9. The Force continues to prioritise its work on the Productivity Strategy to ensure resources are directed to priority areas and that services are delivered in the most effective and efficient manner. This work focuses the drive for continuous improvement, improved efficiency and alignment of resources with demand. It will continue to release savings in future years in order to address future unquantified demands and provide additional resource to reinvest in priority policing areas
 10. The current Medium Term Financial Plan requires revenue savings of at £15.1m over the next four years. This is over and above the £101m of cash savings already removed from the base budget in the last eight years (i.e. 2010/11 to 2018/19) meaning that, over the twelve year period in excess of £116m will have been taken out of the base revenue budget.

Anthony Stansfeld
Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley