



Open Letter on the Police Precept for Council Tax 2022/23

A key role as your Police and Crime Commissioner is to set the budget for Hertfordshire Constabulary. It is one of the most important functions I have as it sets out how the Constabulary will spend its money over the coming year. It also seeks to underline the strategy I have set out to deliver an effective and efficient police force, one that puts more frontline officers on our streets, meets our growing demands of reported crime, is evidence-led and improves our digital capability.

Ahead of setting the police precept for Council Tax, I issue an Open Letter that sets out my proposals and seeks your views on the level of the precept. I firmly believe that to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of policing, the police need to be properly resourced and equipped, they need to focus on preventing crime as well as fighting crime, and they need to work with partners and be open and responsive to the needs of the public. Collaborating with our neighbouring police forces has enabled us to improve services at lower cost through the sharing of several operational and back-office functions. In my first year of a three-year term, I will be looking at how we can continue to drive out efficiencies over the coming year through joint ventures and outsourcing and will review this on an ongoing basis.

The police funding settlement for 2022/2023 represents a third year of unprecedented investment in policing with an additional £7.583m in core grant from the government and £2.060m to support the final year of the police officer uplift programme. The government have once again suggested that Police and Crime Commissioners should use the flexibility to raise the police element of council tax precept by £10.00 for 2022/2023 so that the benefits of this investment can be properly maximised. You have consistently told me that you want to see more police officers on the streets, and we have made real strides to bolster the ranks of officers with 99 more police officers above establishment than we had in March 2021 and are on target to meet the year-end figure of 2,267 FTE¹ by March 2022. This budget enables us to consolidate the current substantial officer growth in recent years embedding the desired culture and behaviours across the Constabulary and build in for new growth for 2022/23.

Prioritising Prevention

Our transformational Prevention First model has started to embed across policing in Hertfordshire supporting our wider efforts to prevent crime and intervene early, reduce waste, inefficiencies, and demand across the force. The additional income raised would enable the recruitment of a further 90 police officers and 20 Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) enabling the proactive work in neighbourhoods that you tell me you want to see, particularly in schools and with young people. Unlike many police forces, I have continued to invest heavily in PCSOs and will increase numbers further with a £10.00 rise in the police precept. PCSOs are a vital part of the policing family,

¹ Full Time Equivalents (FTE)

supporting Hertfordshire's unique local policing model in delivering effective policing, helping to cut crime, provide visibility, and build trust and confidence in our communities.

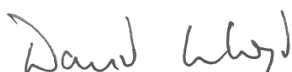
This year presents several new challenges. Nationally, the safety of women and children has rightly been under the spotlight. Whilst Hertfordshire Constabulary have seen an increase in the reporting of a range of crimes disproportionately affecting women and children, I am pleased that we have the lowest number of Rapes and Sexual Offences in our Most Similar Group (MSG) and the highest criminal justice outcomes. Victims now have greater confidence to report these crimes and get the help they deserve through Beacon, our award-winning victim care centre, but we need to be smarter and evidence-led if we are to prevent and reduce the likelihood of these crimes occurring in the first place. I want to redouble our efforts around improving the safety for women and children, by using income raised through the police element of council tax to extend our analytical and digital capacity and capability to better target vulnerability, enabling us to be more effective in how resources are allocated and directed.

This is a positive budget which will bring some significant benefits over the next year. The government has given the flexibility to raise the police element of council tax precept by £10.00 a year (based on an average Band D property) and I am minded to increase by this amount. This would represent an increase of just under 20p a week for the average household, generating an additional £4.59m income for 2022/23, and a 4.69% percent increase in the total police budget. This would mean the average Band D household would pay £223.00 in total a year. The income raised will enable the Chief Constable to invest to meet current demands and further strengthen frontline policing, embedding the Prevention First model, and growing our digital and analytical capability. Even after this increase, as a Hertfordshire resident, you would still pay one of the lowest council tax contributions for policing in the country².

Your views are important

These are my thoughts, but I want to hear from you. This is your chance to have a say on the amount you pay for policing across Hertfordshire. I need your views and comments to help determine whether this is the right decision for Hertfordshire. Your views and comments are an important part of this process. If you would like to make comments, please send them to your.views@herts.pcc.pnn.gov.uk or by letter to: The Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire, 15 Vaughan Road, Harpenden, Hertfordshire, AL5 4GZ by **14 January 2022**. For more information, visit: [Herts PCC - Public Consultation \(hertscommissioner.org\)](https://hertscommissioner.org)

Yours faithfully,



David Lloyd
Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire

² Hertfordshire's current 2021/22 Band D council tax precept of £213.00 is below the English national average of £236.44. If all PCCs for English police forces, were to also increase by £10.00 then Hertfordshire would be 9.5% below average.