



Chair of Panel: Councillor Tony Riordan

Redcar and Cleveland House | Kirkleatham Street | Redcar | TS10 1RT

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CLEVELAND POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

6 FEBRUARY 2024

THE PROPOSED PRECEPT OF THE CLEVELAND POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/25

REPORT OF THE PANEL

A review was undertaken by the Cleveland Police and Crime Panel ("the Panel") on Tuesday 6 February 2024 of the proposed precept of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cleveland ("the Commissioner") for the financial year 2024/25.

Present

Councillor Tony Riordan (Chair), Councillor Norma Stephenson OBE (Deputy Chair), Mayor Chris Cooke, Councillor John Coulson, Mr Paul McGrath, Councillor Jim Platt, Councillor Debbie Powlay, Mr Luigi Salvati, Councillor Janet Thompson, Councillor Mike Young

Apologies

Councillor Pauline Beall, Councillor Chris Jones, Councillor Jonny Neal, Councillor Carole Thompson

Officers

Steve Newton and Alison Pearson (Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council)

Also in attendance

Steve Turner (Police and Crime Commissioner), Lisa Oldroyd and Michael Porter (Commissioner's Office), Chief Constable Mark Webster

Declarations of Interest:

There were no interests declared.

The Review Process

The Chair reminded Panel Members of the procedure to be followed when reviewing a proposed precept, including the timescales for submitting a report to the Commissioner at the conclusion of the review.

The Review

A report from the Commissioner regarding the proposed precept for the financial year 2024/25 was considered by the Panel. The proposal was to set the Band D Police Element of the Council Tax within Cleveland for 2024/25 at £303.73 representing an increase of £13, or 4.47%, over the 2023/24 level should be supported.

The Commissioner indicated that he had considered the following in making his proposal for the 2024/25 precept:

- The views of the public of Cleveland
- The financial impact on the people of Cleveland and the current financial environment.
- The financial needs of the organisation as currently projected both for 2024/25 and in the future.
- The limits imposed by the Government on a precept increase before a referendum would be triggered in Cleveland.

The Commissioner had also discussed his proposals with the Chief Constable and engaged and consulted with the public on the options available to him.

The Panel noted that the Police Funding Settlement 2024/25 had been announced on 14 December 2023 in a written statement by the Minister for Crime, Policing and Fire and that nationally, the overall funding for policing would rise by up to £842.9 million when compared to the restated 2023-24 police funding settlement, bringing the total settlement for 2024-25 up to £18.4 billion.

The settlement also confirmed that PCCs would be empowered to raise additional funding through their Band D precept flexibility by up to £13 in 2024/25 without the need to call a local referendum.

The Government stated that: “In return for this significant investment, it is imperative that policing continues to deliver on driving forward improvements to productivity and identifying efficiencies where possible. The Government will continue to work with the sector to unlock the full range of opportunities and benefits of productivity and innovation to enable officers to have the tools to deliver on their core mission of keeping the public safe.

We, therefore, expect policing to approach the 2024-25 financial year with a focus on this Government’s key priorities:

- Maintaining 20,000 additional officers (148,433 officers in total nationally) through to March 2025.
- Continuing to deliver on the opportunities presented by new technology and innovation to deliver improvements in productivity and drive forward efficiencies, therefore maximising officer time and service to the public.
- Improving the visibility of police officers and focusing on providing a targeted approach to tackling crime and antisocial behaviour to make neighbourhoods safer, which should be a priority for all forces.”

The Chief Constable, Mark Webster presented a recap of remedial actions following HMI placing the force into special measures in 2019 and progress made in recent years:

- Cleveland Police released from special measures in September 2023 and received endorsement of actions going forward. While there remains a lot to do the force has also made a lot of progress and the importance of maintaining momentum was underlined.
- The staff survey in 2022 identified a lack of stable leadership so issues were addressed and reflected in improvements in the 2023 survey. This has been accompanied by improved performance data after changes were made to leadership and organisational design.
- Cleveland Police deal with approximately 1000 calls per day, of which between 250 and 300 are 999 calls. The force is proactively tackling crime through prevention and problem solving and strategic planning.
- Initiatives have been launched such as Clear Hold Build and Right Care Right Person to enhance this approach and the Force Impact Day assesses performance management and enables resources to be properly focussed.
- Current progress data is positive but shows some of the highest crime rates in the country. Momentum is being maintained through prevention and problem solving and the Matrix Team focussing on proactivity and deterrence.

The Panel had regard to the detailed information contained within the Commissioner's report in relation to the overall funding position, and specifically how this related to Cleveland. In determining the budget strategy and LTFP for Cleveland in 2024/25, a number of future funding and planning assumptions had been made:

- Pay awards budgeted for a 2.5% increase in 2024/25 returning to 2% in subsequent years. If pay awards exceed 2.5% it is hoped that government funds this as it has done so previously. £185 million of the 2024/25 policing settlement had been committed to last year's 7% pay award.
- A precept increase of £13 (4.47%) in 2024/25.
- Underlying Tax Base Growth expected to be 1.39% in 2024/25.
- The plan included a specific grant of £1,680,000 to achieve the Government targets for a further 35 Police Officers in 2024/25. In Cleveland, plans are in place to increase officers within Cleveland to over 1,530, which includes growth of 48 FTE and costs circa £2.1 million.

The Panel gave consideration to the report that had been prepared by the Task and Finish Panel and thanked the Members for their time in looking at the budget strategy and precept proposals in greater depth. The Panel had recommended that the proposal to apply the maximum uplift of £13 to the Police Element of the Council Tax within Cleveland for 2024/25 should be endorsed.

Having considered all the information available to it and discussed the funding assumptions and associated issues in detail, the Panel **RESOLVED** to endorse the Task and Finish Panel's recommendation and support the Commissioner's proposal to set the Band D Police Element of the Council Tax within Cleveland for 2023/24 at £303.73 representing an increase of £13, or 4.47%, over the 2023/24 level.