

Police & Crime Commissioner wants your views on plans to increase policing precept by £10

Police and Crime Commissioner, Philip Wilkinson, is urging residents to have their say on proposals to increase the policing precept by £10 per year for the average household (band D).

This follows a recent police funding announcement from the Home Office which was based upon the assumption that all PCCs would seek to use the maximum flexibility afforded them by the Government to increase local precepts.

A £10 per year increase is a 4.3% increase and equates to an 83p rise, per month, per household, in a Band D property.

The proposal includes plans to:

- Improve the way Wiltshire Police tackles Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) such as training for frontline staff to improve the service victims receive, bolstered digital investigation capability with the introduction of 5 new digital media investigators and dedicated officers and staff to review case files with the aim of improving investigation standards.
- Increase the number of roads policing officers and collision investigators to improve road safety, drive up enforcement and ensure serious collisions are investigated promptly and to a high standard.
- Increase the resources available to the child abuse and child internet exploitation teams to ensure that investigations are progressed as quickly as possible and children safeguarded from harm.
- An extra 62 police officers recruited via the national uplift programme

Extra officers

Uplift funding and your precept contributions have meant that by March this year, we will have 1,096 police officers and we are on track for Wiltshire Police to have 1,158 police officers by March 2023.

Residents consistently ask for more officers - and this will be the highest number of police officers from our lowest figure of 934.

While their initial recruitment is funded by Government, their ongoing funding and investment is met by us – met by your contributions.

More than 250 new officers have joined the Force since the start of the Uplift programme in September 2019 and a further 200 are set to start in the next 18 months – this includes Uplift officers as well as ordinary recruitment to replace leavers.

No alternative

Mr Wilkinson said: “This year has been another incredibly tough one with the economic impact from the pandemic still being felt across our communities and I am conscious that any increase will be felt keenly.

“The decision to ask for your support for a £10 per year increase has been a difficult one – and one that I would not make if there was an alternative.

“Previous precept increases have seen investments in a number of areas including officer numbers, rural crime resources and digital investigation teams.

“Given the landscape of Wiltshire rural crime remains a priority for me, in addition to road safety and serious and organised crime, only by investing in our police service and allocating resources effectively can we address the root causes of crime and enforce the law.

“Wiltshire is the fourth lowest-funded force in the country and ensuring we get our fair share from the centre will always be top of my agenda. However, we also need to ensure the funding we do have is used efficiently and focused on the front-line and delivery.”

Significant savings

Savings of more than £4million will need to be made if the precept is not increased next year, warned Mr Wilkinson and he would have no alternative but to reduce staff undertaking essential services.

“Even with an increase of £10, we still need to find nearly £1.4m of savings, but this is much more doable than the prospect of the savings required if there is no increase at all.

“I would have no alternative but to reduce essential services, which would include from within our Community Policing Teams. This would unquestionably lead to a less visible policing presence in your communities and a reduction in service levels.

“Remember, together we are Making Wiltshire Safer, so whatever your view or opinion, fill out the survey. If it matters to you, it matters to me and I am determined we will have a police force that Wiltshire needs – and deserves.”

The consultation is open until **Wednesday 2 February** and you can feedback [via the online survey](#) or by emailing PCC-Consultation@wiltshire.police.uk.

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Notes to editors

In 2021, Wiltshire recorded the lowest policing precept in the South West. Even with the increase, the band D average for Wiltshire will remain lower than the regional and national average.

The Police and Crime Commissioner’s overall budget is made up of 50% funding from central Government, and 50% from local council tax.