



STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

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COMMUNITY SERVICES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE MEMBER REPORT

NAME OF ORGANISATION/BODY	Gloucestershire Police & Crime Panel
DATE OF LAST MEETING ATTENDED	February 8, 2025

BRIEF REPORT

The main purpose of the meeting was to support the proposed precept from the PCC.

The PCC recommended that the Police and Crime Panel support the Council Tax precept increase of £14 in 2025/2026, giving a Band D Council Tax of £322.08 for 2025/2026, an increase of 4.54%. The maximum he is permitted to levy.

The PCC kicked off with an overview of the budget. Wide pressure across all forces. Government hasn't given them full cover for pay rises, NI and drift. With the 20,000 uplift 25/26 will see big rise in drift (pay increase after 4-5 years service), financial penalty if current numbers not retained. So Police staff have to be cut (PCSO's are staff btw). Government has given an extra £1.5m for Neighbourhood Police. No new money for capital investment for the last four years. XL bully dogs housing is a pressure. Failure to deliver new funding formula causes problems for rural forces. Gloucestershire is the seventh lowest funded force per 1,000 population. The new government must address this.

OPCC Interim Chief finance Officer then went into detail. Bulk of the expenditure relates to staffing. 50% of budget relates to police officers pay. Cannot reduce number of officers. Staffing is significant and is where cuts will have to fall. Most other costs are fixed, limited flexibility. No capital grants. Borrowing has to therefore increase.

As things stand things don't balance, pressures vs. funding. So efficiencies have to be made:-

Officer overtime, staff overtime, Mutually Agreed Resignation Scheme, frozen posts, re-balancing of the neighbourhood policing establishment, Third party, regional and national contracts, service choice reviews & OPCC efficiencies. Totalling £12m. Reserves are going to be used a bit more but they are already at absolute minimum.

OPCC Interim Chief Finance Officer offers confidence and gives assurance that the savings are deliverable and hands over to the Temporary Chief Constable.

Temporary Chief Constable has been in post for six months. Crime is more complex and volume of certain crimes is changing. Crime is moving behind closed doors (online). 20% of Gloucestershire crime is domestic abuse. 300 referrals a week for online child abuse. Need to keep most vulnerable safe. Need to have best ICT to deal with crime. Implementing new crime recording system, the last force in the country to do so. Working with other south west forces to collaborate. Never in 35 years service has the Temporary Chief Constable seen such financial stretch. But the workforce is motivated and confident.

PCC says with deep regret that along with Chief they will have to face redundancies and staff cuts to balance the budget. They are cornered with their backs to the wall.

Motion to approve precept passed unanimously despite the Panel not knowing exactly where the cuts will fall.

REPORT SUBMITTED BY	Cllr Gareth Kitchen
DATE	24 th February 2025