

Name of Meeting:	Sussex Police & Crime Panel
Date of Meeting:	29 January 2021
Report by:	Councillor Mrs Gill Yeates
Relevant Cabinet Member:	Cabinet Member for Community Wellbeing

This meeting on 29 January had two substantive items to consider:

1. The draft Police & Crime Plan from 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2024
2. The Police precept for the forthcoming year

As previously, the Police & Crime Panel had set up a working group to consider possible levels of precept increase but, this time, it was able to be done in tandem with consideration of the draft Plan as they are inexorably linked.

When looking at the draft Plan, the group considered the changes in 2020 which had necessitated the need for a revision. Firstly, the appointment of a new Chief Constable, the continued impact of Operation Uplift to increase Police numbers, and the effects of Covid-19.

The Commissioner presented her draft Plan which is based around the public's three core priorities:

1. Strengthen local policing, tackle crime and prevent harm. This includes ASB, rural crime (covering over 60% of Sussex), road safety, business crime, hate crime, etc.
2. Relentless disruption of serious and organised crime, such as serious violence, knife crime, drugs (inc county lines), modern slavery, child sexual exploitation, fraud and cyber crime.
3. Support victims and safeguard the vulnerable.

For the precept, the group considered a £10 or £15 pa rise (7.5%) on a Band D property. Even with this increase, the Sussex Police precept remains in the lowest quartile nationally. They felt able to recommend the higher rise if:

- A. The policing targets were realistic and measurable.
- B. That further provision from reserves could be made available if needed to cover the unforeseen financial impact of the pandemic.

The Commissioner gave assurances that she would ensure that both would happen. The Panel had three options; to accept, to request that the PCC's Office review, or to veto (only one per year). The Panel then supported the £15 rise.

In discussing the proposed precept, there were questions from the public and the panel around the process for public consultation. The Commissioner explained how widely this had been done, even with C-19 restrictions. The precept will enable a further 121 officers to be recruited, in addition to those already recruited/announced.

In addition to the expansion of the rural crime team, a new Public Confidence

Team is to be established to listen to and learn from complaints and feedback, and to resolve issues swiftly, which was welcomed. Also, long-term support to Operation Centurion (in conjunction with the Metropolitan Police) to liaise on county lines. A Digital Investigation Improvement Programme, to manage capture and processing of digital evidence, is also underway.

In terms of measuring success, this will be reported as usual through the PCC's Annual Report, the monthly Performance & Accountability meetings, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, public surveys, and the 'sentiment meter' on the PCC's website which offers users the opportunity to indicate their postcode and how safe they feel in their area.

The full Police & Crime Plan has been published to the PCC's website.