



Dorset Police and Crime Panel

Minutes of the meeting held at County Hall, Colliton Park, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ on Thursday, 7 February 2019

Present:

Mike Short (Chairman) (Independent Member)
John Adams (Vice-Chairman) (Bournemouth Borough Council)
Mike Byatt (Weymouth & Portland Borough Council), David Brown (Borough of Poole),
Les Burden (Borough of Poole), Norman Decent (Bournemouth Borough Council),
Bobbie Dove (Bournemouth Borough Council), Mohan Iyengar (Borough of Poole),
Andrew Kerby (North Dorset District Council), Barbara Manuel (East Dorset District Council),
Iain McVie (Independent Member), Bill Pipe (Purbeck District Council), Byron Quayle (Dorset
County Council), John Russell (West Dorset District Council), David Smith (Bournemouth
Borough Council) and Jon Andrews (Dorset County Council)

Officers Attending:

Martyn Underhill (Police and Crime Commissioner), Simon Bullock (Chief Executive, OPCC),
Alexis Garlick (Chief Finance Officer, OPCC), Adam Harrold (Director of Operations, OPCC),
James Vaughan (Chief Constable), Fiona E King (Communications Officer), Mark Taylor
(Group Manager - Governance and Assurance), Denise Hunt (Senior Democratic Services
Officer) and Fiona King (Senior Democratic Services Officer).

(Note: These minutes have been prepared by officers as a record of the meeting and of any decisions reached. They are to be considered and confirmed at the next meeting of the Dorset Police and Crime Panel to be held on **Tuesday, 9 July 2019.**)

Chairman's Announcements

- 1 The Chairman offered congratulations on behalf of Panel members to the Chief Constable on being awarded the Queen's Police Medal in the New Year's Honours List 2019. This was not only good news for him but for all the residents of Dorset.

He advised members that this would be the last meeting of this Panel before Local Government Reorganisation, when the newly constituted Dorset Police and Crime Panel would consist of 12 members, 5 from each of the new councils plus 2 co-opted independent members. He took this opportunity to thank all members for their time and efforts over the past 6 years.

He also paid thanks to Dorset County Council for hosting the Panel and to the Group Manager for Governance and Assurance for his support, direction and hard work to get the Panel where it is today.

Apologies for Absence

- 2 Apologies for absence were received from Bernie Davis, Christchurch Borough Council and Janet Dover, Dorset County Council. Jon Andrews, Dorset County Council attended as a substitute.

Code of Conduct

- 3 There were no declarations by members of disclosable pecuniary interests under the Code of Conduct.

Minutes

- 4 The minutes of the meeting held on 13 November 2018 were confirmed and signed.

The Group Manager for Governance and Assurance, Dorset County Council advised members that all items that had previously been requested were either included on the agenda or were included on the work programme for future meetings.

Public Participation

5 Public Speaking

There were no public questions received at the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 21(1).

There were no public statements received at the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 21(2).

Petitions

There were no petitions received at the meeting in accordance with the County Council's Petition Scheme.

Confirmatory Hearing for Chief Constable

6 The Panel considered a report by the Chief Executive, OPCC which outlined the appointment process for the selection of the Chief Constable for Dorset Police.

The Chief Executive, OPCC explained that the confirmatory hearing for the appointment of the Chief Constable was required by the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.

The Chairman of the Police and Crime Panel had acted as a silent observer on the appointment process and confirmed that it had been clear, honest, unbiased and transparent and he was satisfied that the marking system was fair. The Chairman confirmed in writing to Panel member's (copy to the OPCC) that the **entire** process had been clear, honest, unbiased and transparent.

The Police and Crime Commissioner introduced his preferred candidate to members, Mr James Vaughan and reminded members that a confirmation hearing was held in respect of Mr Vaughan's appointment as Temporary Chief Constable exactly one year ago.

This vacancy had been advertised locally (PCC website) and nationally (Association of PCCs website) and feedback received confirmed that the national chief officer cohort knew about the vacancy. However, with the vast majority of Chief Constable appointments in recent years, the campaign resulted in a similarly low number of applications; in this particular case one.

The Chief Executive made reference to the fact that there had only been 1 candidate for selection and highlighted the process and issues around this. He explained that the role of the Chief Constable was not what it used to be, and was more about trying to move resources around without not necessarily having the resources they needed. Alongside this the level of strategic risk that went with that role was also significant. He also highlighted that in a larger force the salary of a Deputy Chief Constable would not be that much different to a Chief Constable's salary of a smaller force (such as Dorset) and felt that this could be a reason why there were no other applications. He confirmed that the selection panel had received training for the selection process. References had now been taken for Mr Vaughan and no concerns had been raised.

In response to a request for further information on references the Chief Executive explained that for each of the competencies candidates were required to supply one or more referees for these. These included the PCC, the former Chief Constable, a range of staff associations, people at similar levels in partner agencies and also

another Chief Constable. Each referee was written to individually and provided with the evidence as supplied by the candidate for verification. The Chief Executive was content that the process was robust and advised that no one had come back with any areas of concern. On being asked whether two or three generic references were also taken, the PCC noted that if there had been an external candidate in the process he would have done so.

Following a question about the scoring for the shortlisting, the Chief Executive advised that for each of the required areas there was a competency element. Each panel member then scored against each one of the competencies individually.

In respect of employee support offered to the Chief Constable, the PCC advised that he was responsible for looking after the well-being of the Chief Constable as this was a key part of his role. PDRs were undertaken regularly and he spoke with the Chief Constable on a daily basis to check on his workload. It was noted that both he and the Chief Constable had regular access to a psychologist.

Following a question from the Chairman regarding the professional expertise of the candidate, the PCC responded that he felt that Mr Vaughan brought massive operational knowledge to Dorset and his ability to measure the mood of the workforce was key. Since his temporary appointment last year he had noticeably boosted the workforce and quite often turned up at the start of certain shifts (early and late) to welcome the workforce.

Mr Vaughan stated that throughout the selection process and with his working relationship with the Panel he had been able to demonstrate a range of experience. His major in policing was crime, namely the investigation of serious crime and he was the National lead for forensic science. He highlighted his track record along with the delivery of difficult efficiency programmes. He had spent the last 6/7 years building a strong network of contacts throughout the region and county.

The Chairman asked the following question:- The recent HMIC Public Perceptions of Policing report confirmed that it continued to be important to people that there was a visible police presence in their area, whether this is on foot (78% say it is important), or in a vehicle (77%). How do you intend to balance this requirement against an increase in demand?

Mr Vaughan responded that this had been a topical debate in policing and he felt that there was a balance to be struck. Satisfying the demand for visible policing was difficult and he was very conscious of this. In respect of neighbourhood policing he had ringfenced a visible brigade of men and women in communities so people knew who to go to. He was also looking to work smarter, for example the force also had a huge online presence, with currently 100k followers on Twitter and Facebook. He also mentioned the publication of positive press stories which he felt gave assurance to members of the public there was an active police presence.

Members voted unanimously to endorse the recommendations of the Selection Panel and to also accept the recommendations in the Chief Executive's report.

Resolved

That following full and comprehensive discussion the Commissioner's preferred candidate of Mr James Vaughan for appointment to the post of Chief Constable be supported unanimously.

Reason for Decision

To assist the Panel in conducting a fair review of the process followed by the Commissioner and the suitability of the preferred candidate.

Budget and Precept 2019/20 and Medium Term Financial Forecasts 2019/20 to 2022/23

7 The Panel considered a report by the PCC's Chief Finance Officer which set out the proposed precept for the Police and Crime Commissioner for Dorset.

Members were advised that the precept decision for 2019/20 needed to consider both the immediate and the medium-term resourcing requirements to enable the delivery of the Police and Crime Plans in the context of the changing and increasing demands on policing.

The final 2019/20 Police Settlement was announced recently which advised that PCCs had been given the flexibility to raise the precept by £24 for a Band D equivalent property. The PCC urged members to take full advantage of this flexibility to enable the force to continue to maintain the high quality services it was currently able to provide whilst also allowing investment in new capabilities to meet growing demand and the expanding mission of modern policing.

The PCC addressed members about the rationale for the proposed precept increase and considerations involved in this process prior to taking any questions and his opening address is attached as an Annexure to these minutes.

The Chief Constable updated members on the increasing demand on policing; and what the £24, if approved, would be used for. He circulated a diagram which showed the demands on Dorset policing over the last 12 months along with the daily figures relating to demand over the same period. Overall crime in the county had risen by 8.9% and violent crime by 22%. Officers were seeing a continuing upward pressure on the 101 and 999 services and these were also expected to rise again next year. The types of crimes now being investigated were very different to a few years ago and there was still a rise in the defence of non-recent sexual offences.

Unprecedented levels of demand had been seen throughout the summer months and he had briefed the Force to say a better plan was needed in the coming months to address these seasonal demands. He also highlighted that officers were spending too much time dealing with inappropriate calls which should be addressed by other agencies.

With regards to the recent settlement, the Chief Constable noted that this was the first one for 8 years which would allow him to bring about investment in critical areas that required growth. He had sent a comprehensive letter sent to the PCC which set out his plans for future budgeting in terms of the precept and a summary of this was included with the report at Appendix 7. He highlighted his main areas of focus which were:-

- Rural crime prevention/detection enhancement.
- Marine crime prevention/detection enhancement.
- Tackling county lines drug networks.
- Volunteer Police Cadets.
- Improvements to youth justice.
- The Bobby Van scheme.

He would also be looking carefully at county and conurbation approaches to homelessness to try and tackle street sleeping in order to offer a more focused approach. He had managed through the budget proposal to put a small amount of money into the innovation fund to help take Dorset Police which was currently judged as a Good Police Force, to an Outstanding Force.

The Director of Operations highlighted the outcomes of the consultation exercises that had been carried out and noted all the surveys had been conducted by software this

year. The document detailed more responses than last year, although quite similar views were recorded. There were 4029 responses received which was an increase on previous years. There had been 14 events held with 809 face to face consultations. The result was that 69% of respondents were content to pay an additional £2 per month to support policing in Dorset. It was also noted that the number of comments left this year was higher than in previous years. In response to a comment about the reasons why 31% of responders said that they didn't want the precept to go up, the Director of Operations advised that a number of people felt the additional funding should come from central government, some people couldn't afford it whilst others felt that the police could make additional savings elsewhere.

One member commented that a number of the consultation respondents felt they were going to see a greater police presence and queried how this was dealt with. The PCC advised that although there were a large number of responses received on this people were not promised extra police and were told quite clearly the additional £24 would result in a standstill position.

The PCCs attention was drawn to the increase in government grants that had been received and one member felt therefore that the standing still statement was really more about moving forward. The PCC advised that the felt that the government was saying these grants were basically a bridging loan until the police funding formula was rectified.

The Vice-Chairman suggested that the responses to consultation be added to website to show people's comments, which the PCC felt was a good idea as he appreciated the high number of responses.

The Chief Finance Officer highlighted the precept required and highlighted to members the proposals for the various council tax bands.

Following a question from the Chairman regarding the cost of demand, the Chief Constable advised that whilst some areas were able to be costed i.e. call centre costs, a day in the life of a frontline police officer was more difficult and would not help to drive the business forward.

Members of the Panel asked the following questions to the Police and Crime Commissioner, who responded accordingly:

Question 1: In a nutshell can the Police and Crime Commissioner set out how he proposes to invest the resources he can expect to generate from his £24 per annum proposed increase in the 2019/20 police precept for a Band D property (*e.g. £9.15m section 4.2*).

Answer

To be clear, the resources that will be generated by a £24 precept increase will provide c.£7m and will largely backfill costs elsewhere. These include:

- Pay inflation and cost inflation;
- reductions in security grant;
- increases in pensions costs;
- training costs arising from the implementation of the Police Education Qualification Framework;
- higher charges for the National Police Air Support service;
- increases to safeguarding funding, and
- forensic services cost increases.

However the Chief Constable's letter outlined a number of areas of investment; including:

- 6 x new police officer posts which will return establishment to 1200
- The piloting of a Dorset Police Cadet Scheme
- The introduction of a Bobby Van Scheme.
- A strengthening of the Force road safety enforcement capability.
- The recruitment of a Streetsleepers' Champion.
- A Forcewide focus on vulnerability.

Following a question about the number of officers in Dorset Police, the Chief Executive advised there was funding for 1201. They would be able to maintain this and expect it to grow by 6. Numbers remained static going into next year and progress on the innovation and efficiency programme would be reported to the PCC in quarter 3. With regards to PCSO numbers there were 84.

The Chairman highlighted the reduction in the police pay budget and queried the reasons for this. The Chief Constable advised that this was around pay and increments which shifted the cost of the workforce in conjunction with the retirement of long serving officers who were paid more than junior officers.

Following a question about who owned the Innovation Fund, the Chief Constable advised that it was a joint enterprise between him and the PCC with the Deputy Chief Constable and the Chief Executive jointly managing the process.

Question 2: Can the Police and Crime Commissioner outline the alternatives that he considered before coming to the decision to propose a 11.6% increase in the 2019/20 police precept.

Answer

Thinking is outlined in the Chief Constables letter - £12, £24 and £36 increases. Significant national work has been undertaken to describe the need for an increase in the police settlement.

However, as with previous years, I am very clear that whilst the Government continues to state that its "first priority" is the safety and security of its citizens; our brave men and women who are charged with that protection have yet to see any meaningful support from Government, and instead this burden has once again been shifted to local taxpayers.

I, alongside my fellow PCCs, of all parties and none, continue to press Government for relief to enable the service to get ahead of the demand curve and to narrow the gap between the service we would all like to deliver, and the service we are able to deliver.

Question 3: In light of the future pressures on the service why did the Police and Crime Commissioner decide not to hold a public referendum (*e.g. £4.4m section 11.1, table 9*).

Answer

The Localism Act 2011 introduced the power for the Secretary of State to provide that any rise in council tax above a set threshold must be approved by a binding local referendum. However, in the years since this enactment, no precepting authority has successfully held a local referendum to increase council tax above the stated thresholds.

The most relevant learning comes from Bedfordshire, where taxpayers voted overwhelming (69.5%) against a proposed increase by the then PCC.

The legislation makes it difficult to achieve a successful referendum result due to precise limitations on how the referendum question must be posed. For example; the

question in Bedfordshire was as follows:

For the financial year beginning on 1st April 2015 the Bedfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner has set an increase of 15.8% in the amount it charges.

If most voters choose 'yes', the increase will be 15.8%.

If most voters choose 'no', the increase will be 2.0%.

Do you want the Bedfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner to increase the amount it charges by 15.8%?

Legislation does not permit the question to specify the actual increase in monetary terms, only in percentage terms. This meant that many members of the public did not appreciate that the increase being sought was relatively modest (48p per week for a Band D property).

Separately there are strict rules about the nature of public engagement that can be carried out in support of a referendum campaign, including that the OPCC and Force must remain neutral, and therefore could not support a PCC-led campaign.

Finally, the cost of a failed referendum can be considerable, estimated at £1m in Bedfordshire, due to council tax rebilling. Based on previous costings by the PCC a referendum in Dorset would also cost in the region of £1m. Legislation dictates that a precepting authority must make provisions for changes to happen ready for an increase in April, but any referendum would not be held under the local government elections in the following month.

Question 4: Can the Police and Crime Commissioner outline the impact that a lack of a merger with Devon and Cornwall has had on both the requested precept and proposed areas of investment for 2019/20.

Answer

There was is no impact of the decision not to merge on the requested precept for 2019/20. Even if the decision would have been to merge, the two PCCs would have remained as separate precepting authorities until May 2020 at the earliest, meaning that the 2019/20 budgets would have also remained separate. Discussion on harmonisation of precepts would possibly have been discussed if the merger had gone ahead.

Question 5: Why does the £9.2m extra resources not equate to an increase in the number of employed Police Officers (*Section 1.2 in Appendix 2 which shows 1,201 for 2018/19 going down to 1,200 in 2019/20*).

Answer

I have explained at Question1 the cost pressures the Force is having to deal with. Ensuring that the force has the capacity to deal with the changing demand has been a key consideration in setting this budget which has led to the introduction of the Innovation Fund.

One member expressed concern that out of 1200 officers, only 12% were available to undertake frontline activities at any one time and asked if that was normal or would it be something that should be looked at in respect of police modelling. The Chief Executive confirmed this figure was from the HMIC report 'Demanding Times' and made reference to this national policing survey and applied the Dorset officer figures to their figures. The methodology was robust and unfortunately this was a reality of operating a 24 hour, 365 days a year service. The Chief Constable added that he was relentless in his pursuit of improvements but in respect of days off, leave, training etc 12% availability was a reality.

Following a conversation about the forecast of no pay rises for 3 years, the Chief Executive advised that the OPCC was under the same inflationary and cost pressures as the Force. OPCC costs were being held level but officers were looking to reduce specific non-pay costs.

The local member for Sherborne Town now understood the pressures for the Force but was concerned that all police officers seemed to be deployed in the south of the county and residents in the north of the county felt under resourced. The Director of Operations advised that the roadshows had visited Sherborne and he reported that there had been a 73.4% positive responses from that area.

Question 6: Can the Chief Finance Officer for the Police and Crime Commissioner explain why £1.7m (£3.1m extra cost less a £1.4m specific grant) of the extra resources generated by the 2019/20 precept is required to pay for additional contributions to the Police Pension Scheme.

Answer

As a consequence of the last actuarial valuation all employer contributions for Police Officer pensions will increase from 1 April 2019. The main reason for the increase is a reduction in the forecast values of future investment returns, so that contributions therefore have to increase to meet forecast future liabilities.

Previously the Government carried such risk for unfunded pension schemes but this is being transferred over time to employing bodies.

For 2019/20 £1.4m specific grant has been provided towards this but this does not fully cover the additional costs of £3.1m. It is assumed in the future year forecasts that this grant will continue but there is a risk that it may not.

Therefore the additional £1.7m of costs for 2019/20 will fall to be funded from the overall increases in funding which comprise additional government grants, and council tax income.

Question 7: As the capital programme includes an investment in 2019/20 of £6.1m into ICT, can the Police and Crime Commissioner outline the benefits of this investment and the savings and efficiencies that it has been assumed that it will generate.

Answer

Central to the 2019/20 ICT capital investment is the enhancement of mobile policing and replacement of legacy systems.

Investment in mobile policing devices and solutions will allow greater efficiency in provision of operational policing, increasing visibility, providing a more responsive service, and ultimately enabling and supporting estates rationalisation. It is also a requirement of the recently introduced Organisational Business Design model. Provision of mobile devices includes the replacement of desktop computers with laptops, allowing more flexible working, increasing productivity, reducing use of paper, and again facilitating estates savings. Such mobile and flexible working is key to the future estates strategy, with the potential for cashable and efficiency savings to be realised.

Replacement of legacy systems, such as the Command and Control system, is required where older systems are no longer fit for purpose, and maintenance is no longer an option. Legacy systems represent a barrier for collaboration, often carry significant risk, and will rarely support efficient working. The 2019/20 includes funding to replace the existing Command and Control system, gazetteer and mapping

systems. While these replacements will not lead directly to cashable savings, they will enable significant efficiencies through joint working – particularly within the Alliance, and an improved operational service.

Following concern about the slippage in IT as reported in the monitoring report the PCC advised that both Deputy Chief Constable's were involved in this. The Chief Constable added that it was difficult to guarantee there would be no slippage in major programmes as there often was but assured members there were robust and rigid governance processes in place.

Question 8: Can the Chief Finance Officer explain why it is proposed to borrow for the first time in 2019/20.

Answer

The budget report for last year identified a number of unfunded potential capital growth requirements. During this year an extensive review of the capital programme has been undertaken which has resulted in the planned programme for capital investment now being increased.

In accordance with the requirements of the recently updated Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities a Capital Strategy has also been developed this year, which is now published on the OPCC website. This sets out, amongst other things, the governance process for determining the capital programme and the methodology for identifying and prioritising capital projects. It also sets out the funding approach to be adopted for the capital programme, which includes borrowing.

The borrowing strategy is set out in the Treasury Management Strategy for 2019/20 which has also been through internal governance and will be published in due course.

The first application to fund capital expenditure is capital grant. The amount receivable from the Home Office for 2019/20 is £421k. Historically this used to be at a much higher level (£1.3m in 2010/11). Whilst the capital grant has reduced, the need for capital investment has increased.

Capital receipts from asset disposals are the second source of funding for the capital programme, but these are finite, and are forecast to be fully utilised more or less as soon as received. Revenue contributions to fund capital expenditure have also been reviewed and increased from £0.7m to £1.1m in 2019/20.

Finally the balance of capital expenditure, after all other funding has been exhausted, will be funded through prudential borrowing. The current forecasts show that although the underlying need to borrow will increase (Capital Financing Requirement) it should not be necessary to externally borrow in the plan period and the impact of the proposals on the Capital Financing Requirement by the end of the period will be minimal; from £32.8m at 31/3/18 reducing to £30.8m at 31/3/23 i.e. indicating that total net debt will have reduced over the plan period.

In respect of the different rules attached to borrowing a question was asked if there was anything dramatic that could happen if this didn't go to plan. The Chief Financial Officer advised that the borrowing had to be paid back and this added pressure to the revenue budget.

Question 9: In respect of General Fund Balances how concerned is the commissioner that this is dangerously close to the minimum 3% level advised by the Home Office, especially as he is forecasting to overspend in the current 2018/19 financial year (*section 14.1, Table 11, £4.315m balance 31 March 202 which is 3.2% of the 2019/20 net revenue expenditure*).

Answer

The recent Home Office focus on reserves relates to PCCs being asked to justify where there are perceived excessive reserves being held. This is clearly not the case for Dorset, where the General Balance is forecast to be £4.3m and the total Revenue Reserves £5.4m.

There is a balance to be struck between providing a reserve to cover the possibility of higher costs arising from the various underlying budget risks and making valuable investment in the Force, and I believe we have struck that balance in these budget proposals.

The proposals are in line with the Reserves Strategy (provided at Appendix 3) and supported by a budget risk assessment. £4.3m is considered to be an adequate contingency amount to provide for any unforeseen shocks.

In addition, there is a plan to replenish the reserves over the term of the plan towards a target of 5% of net revenue expenditure and a cautious estimate of the future amounts of the Collection Fund surpluses has been made, which in all likelihood will turn out to be higher.

Following a question about the use of apprentices, the Chief Constable advised the aim was to be in a netted position by the end of next year.

Following a vote the Panel were unanimous in their decisions to:-

Resolved

1. That the increase in the precept of £24 per annum on a Band D property for 2019-20 be supported.
2. That for the purposes of issuing a report to the Commissioner on the proposed precept, the Panel endorsed the council tax requirement and the basic amount of council tax for police purposes in Dorset for 2019-20.

Reason for Decisions

The Police and Crime Panels (Precepts and Chief Constable Appointments) regulations 2012 required the Police and Crime Commissioner to notify the panel of their proposed precept for 2018-19 by 1 February 2019. This then needed to be considered by the Police and Crime Panel who could either approve the proposed precept or veto it. A two thirds majority of the Police and Crime Panel was required to veto any precept proposal.

Police and Crime Plan Monitoring Report

- 8 The Panel considered a report informing them of the progress against the Police and Crime Plan and Priorities 2017-21. The report provided information on the financial outturn position for Quarter 3 2018/19.

The PCC highlighted areas of work related to each of the pillar themes. Members of the Panel, who were leading on each of the themes in the Plan, were also invited to provide updates.

Pillar 1 – Protecting People at Risk and Harm – Cllr Andrew Kerby/Cllr Byron Quayle

Councillor Andrew Kerby advised the Panel that he had been invited to a meeting in relation to the Disclosure and Barring System (DBS) and that he was currently in the process of writing his report. He explained that a completed DBS form was initially sent to the DBS office in Liverpool and thereafter forwarded to DBS offices in other parts of the country for any previous address listed on the form. If the post involved dealing with vulnerable people then an enhanced check would be conducted. There

had previously been an issue with the DBS checking turnaround times, however, this had reduced to 1.62 days in November 2018 from 17.97 days in June 2018 demonstrating improved efficiency in this area.

He had been provided details of the work of the Dorset DBS team and had been assured that his key areas of focus on safeguarding and turnaround times were being met and that the team were doing a good job.

Members asked about the requirement for Councillors to have more than one DBS check for each organisation and the Panel was informed that this could be avoided by using the online service and also that moving to the Dorset Council would require a single check.

The Chairman asked the PCC what direction he was giving to the Chief Constable to reduce the overstretch of police resources, in particular with regard to mental health related incidents.

The PCC advised that there was a good protocol in place with the mental health crisis teams that could receive people under Section 136 from the Police. Hahnemann House in Bournemouth was receiving 40 people a day on average, a third of which were taken there by police officers and this had an impact on resources by reducing the amount of police time. A second retreat was currently being built in Dorchester that would include an "airlock" of two doors to enter the premises and an anti-room for any form of disturbance or violent behaviour.

General welfare issues, however, were becoming more prevalent and the PCC was in discussion with the fire service concerning sharing of resources in this area of work. Attendance by the fire service at non-injury Road Traffic Accidents (RTAs) had been discussed at the previous Panel meeting, however, fire officers were not currently empowered to undertake breath tests following RTAs.

The Chairman asked the PCC about the steps he was taking to bring in other agencies to relieve the strain on police resources.

The PCC advised that discussions concerning multi agency approaches were being explored including sharing of premises, but liaison had been slightly less productive so far in respect of the South Western Ambulance service.

Pillar 2 – Working with our Communities – Cllr Bernie Davis/Cllr Mohan Iyengar

The PCC advised that there was a delay in the statistical information in relation to problem solving due to the process required when a person highlighted a confidential issue directly to the PCC.

The PCC was asked whether there would be a designated intelligence officer for the rural crime team.

The PCC stated that the Chief Constable anticipated having separate analysts for both rural and marine crime which was now being better reported.

Pillar 3- Supporting Victims, Witnesses and Reducing Reoffending – Cllr Barbara Manuel/Cllr Bill Pipe

The PCC was asked about the Women's Diversionary Support Scheme, an initiative that had been implemented in Bristol and Hampshire.

The PCC advised that there was a gap in the restorative justice approach in respect of female offenders and this programme sought to find suitable diversionary routes for

them.

Councillor Bill Pipe advised that he had attended a meeting at the Winfrith Headquarters in December 2018 with Councillor Barbara Manuel to discuss new ideas with senior management. These included expanding the restorative justice meetings between victims and perpetrators and a better understanding of the complainant advocate project. The result of the latter would not be known until an assessment of its effectiveness had been undertaken during a 2-3 month pilot that would be reported to the Panel in Summer 2019.

In response to questions in relation to Victim's Champions arrangements, the Panel was advised that the existing Victim's Champion was shortly due to leave the post and that the Victim's Bureau Manager would take over this role, in addition to the PCC's caseworker who also played a Champion type role. A victim's lawyer pilot scheme would be arranged if it became in the PCC's remit to deliver this provision.

It was also reported that work was progressing in identifying a Collingwood Wing to be converted for military veterans and a charity had been identified to work with these prisoners.

Further to a discussion in relation to tagging of high risk offenders pre-charge, the PCC stated that he would be willing to reinvigorate this topic with the Justice Secretary. Previous lobbying by the PCC to attempt a change in the law had not proved successful despite the support of senior police officers.

Councillor Barbara Manuel noted that Pillar 3 had proved to be the most difficult to progress due to the need for change in legislation and resources. Although progress had been slow, these factors had been beyond the control of the PCC and she was pleased that part of the increase in the precept would be used for those areas that currently had a Red RAG status.

The PCC explained that he had wanted to make the most difference with this Pillar, however, this was an area where the most partnership working was involved and at a time when the community rehabilitation contract was failing.

Pillar 4 – Transforming for the Future – Iain McVie

The PCC advised that the only Red RAG status for this Pillar in respect of the total establishment would be amber by the next Panel meeting.

The Chairman asked about the use of spit guards and was advised that the PCC had supported the operational decision of the Chief Constable and funded their use at a cost of £5k. However, the PCC considered the national approach used to provide the evidence base for issuing spit guards overall had been poor.

Iain McVie reported on the Pillar 4 scrutiny meeting that looked at how the OPCC managed the activity that the PCC was seeking to achieve. He was embarking on a scrutiny review of court remote enabled access for witnesses and others. His aim was to complete this during the course of the next 2 months and his review would not only scrutinise, but also provide some support to the recent work of the PCC in this area where appropriate.

The PCC sought the Panel's support in respect of pre-charge bail limits as it had become apparent that Dorset was using bail limits that were less than the average in England and Wales and invited the Panel to take part in a deep dive in this area. Iain McVie advised that he would give consideration of some key lines of enquiry (KLOEs) for this scrutiny which could take place in a similar timeframe as the scrutiny of court remote enable access.

Iain McVie asked how the PCC could ensure value for money for Dorset residents in respect of the remote service for the Regional Organised Crime Unit (ROCU) funded by the five PCCs on a pro rata basis and whether there was a danger that regional funding would always be diverted to the larger areas, such as Bristol.

The PCC responded that Dorset had full access to performance data and outcomes of police forces and that Dorset's portion of the funding of 12% had provided value for money.

Further to his scrutiny of body worn video (BWV), Iain McVie highlighted that it had been difficult to provide that provision to Special Constables. However, he asked whether this would now be considered alongside its rollout to Poole Forum members.

The PCC advised that provision of BWV to Special Constables and Poole Forum members was part of phase 3 of the project and that costs were currently being investigated. Decisions in relation to spit guards and BWV could be taken by individual Chief Constables rather than nationally.

The Panel considered the Quarter 3 finance update attached as an annex to the Monitoring Report and was informed that the budget would be in balance by the end of the financial year.

The Chairman asked about the 4% overspend in relation to overheads and was informed that the variances were spread across a range of expenditure types and could be due to over pessimism in the forecasts. Forecasting against the outturn was currently being reviewed and an explanation would be provided in the next financial outturn report.

The Chairman asked how the Revenue Support Fund was used and was advised that this had been created in 2018-19 to align with the Devon & Cornwall Police Force and smooth the impact of the ongoing funding reduction.

Noted

Update from the PCP Training Day

9 The Panel considered a report from the Chairman which informed members of the key issues discussed and developed at the recent Panel training day. The Panel's formal support and approval was sought in relation to these key outcomes.

Resolved

1. That the proposed scrutiny review of frontline policing was closed within the PCP Forward Plan and oversight continued through the routine quarterly monitoring of the Police and Crime Plan be approved.
2. That the principle to establish an informal partnership forum which sought to join-up and share common outcomes and activity in addressing criminal justice be approved.

Reason for Decision

To support and develop the effectiveness of the Police and Crime Panel.

Complaints Update

10 The Group Manager – Governance and Assurance advised members that a further correspondence from an existing complainant in relation to a previous topic, the 'Lush: paid to lie campaign' had been received and that a meeting of the Sub Committee would be convened on 18 March 2018 to independently review and consider whether the correct complaint processes had been followed.

Noted

Work Programme

- 11 The Panel considered its Work Programme and noted the items to be considered for their next meeting on Tuesday 9 July 2019. As the Panel had approved the precept proposal it was confirmed that the reserve date of Monday 18 February 2019 would not now be needed.

The Group Manager – Governance and Assurance reminded the Panel of its decision that following Local Government Reorganisation, the new Panel would consist of 10 elected members and two independent members. Induction sessions, supported by the OPCC, would be arranged prior to the first meeting on 9 July 2019. He also suggested that further work may be required to ensure that the provisional dates in the forward plan were properly aligned with the quarterly monitoring reports

Noted**Questions from Panel Members**

- 12 There were no questions by members of the Panel.

Meeting Duration: 10.00 am - 2.25 pm

PCCs Budget Speech

Today I formally request that you consider my proposal to raise precept for Dorset Taxpayers by 11.6%, or the equivalent of £24 per year for a Band D property.

I will start today's presentation, followed then by the Chief Constable who will outline the operational need for this precept increase. My Director of Operations will then briefly outline the results of the public consultation to assist your decision making and my Treasurer will conclude with the figures. We will then go into your questions.

Before I provide the details of this proposal, I'd urge you to note three important things right away:

1. This proposal will provide the Force with a balanced budget for next year. However, this will only be achieved with some continued support from balances; by increasing the borrowing requirement; and by taking up the full annual increase in council tax, which I am seeking today.
2. The requirement for all of those factors to secure a balanced budget, hopefully dispels any thoughts you may have that this precept proposal will serve up a cash rich bonanza for Dorset Police. It won't. The increase will help pay for various cost pressures that I will explain later, and allow a small margin for growth.
3. This precept rise proposal is made by Government, not by me. The Home Secretary wrote to me, stating:

"That is why we will increase funding available to PCCs by up to £813m, if PCCs use their precept flexibility fully. This is the biggest annual increase since 2010. That is within the context of increases in CT police funding and investments in serious and organised crime meaning an increase in total police funding in 2019/20 by [approximately] £970m, again if PCCs use their precept flexibility fully. We are personally committed to ensuring our police have the resources they need."

That the Government announced the £970m uplift in policing via media and PR channels, before PCCs had even considered the settlement, might cause some eyebrows to raise. Nevertheless, the Home Secretary's words are clear – PCCs are expected to seek the full £24.

With those three points laid out, let me now set the scene. I'd like to start by thanking you for supporting my proposal to raise the precept last year by £12. The rise, although not meeting all of the financial needs of the Force, did allow Dorset Police to change some of its business practices and invest in several key areas. I will now give examples of where that money was used, as well as outlining a state of the nation overview of Dorset Police this year.

First off, the precept rise allowed an uplift in staffing in crucial areas of the Force. Additional resources were created in the Paedophile On-line Investigation Team to increase the number of officers proactively looking for the most dangerous offenders.

Further uplift of resource went into Dorset's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) which initially dealt with children and young people but due to this further investment now has an Adult safeguarding arm – increasing its ability to safeguard the most vulnerable in our communities. The Hub continues to grow and develop and plans for greater expansion are anticipated in the future. We look forward to engaging with the two new Unitary Councils on future transformation, as they go live in just two months' time.

Precept funds also enabled us to preserve our Safer Schools provision, which enables ten safer school's officers to deliver countless educational and preventative inputs to young people across our county.

Additional staffing resource was added to the Marine Unit to ensure our maritime community receive neighbourhood provision. Equally additional resources have been provided to our Rural Crime Team, who have seen untold success and generate huge levels of interest and support. It is likely we will need further investment to sustain service delivery.

The precept investment of last year was also critical to the design and implementation of OBD; a different operating model, enabling us to effectively deal with the busiest period in our demand history and allowing us to continue to deliver service to the public of Dorset by utilising resources in a different way. This change in operational delivery has enabled a more flexible response to crime attendance, ensuring the public see an officer when it is convenient to them.

Investment led to the creation of an enhanced volume crime team to deal with detained people and provide support to frontline officers.

Precept investment also led to the formation of an investigation resolution team (IRT) to progress crimes; ensuring timely investigation and evidence capture for members of the public and also provide investigative support to the frontline.

We have also introduced a fraud triage role into the IRT, to ensure members of the public are signposted to the appropriate agency and route at point of contact. Additional funding could be channelled into better fraud training for officers and staff to raise awareness and capability and equally to grow our capacity to examine digital media when we have tangible lines of investigative enquiry.

The additional precept led to the creation of a new and developmental role for some of our PCSOs, who have become Police Community Support Investigators focussing on volume crime and assisting with neighbourhood taskings. The Force now has 29 PCSIs managing low threat and low harm yet high demand incidents.

The force have also put in place a police officer scheduled appointment car across the county to try and offer the community better availability at a time to suit them. My office has noticed, through correspondence with the public, that this appears to have improved the service provided to victims of volume crime.

The implementation of OBD has also prompted some realignment of neighbourhood policing staff. Aside from the introductions of PCSIs, we have also introduced new Neighbourhood Engagement Officers, ensuring we connect with people through the diversity of platforms available.

The changing landscape of neighbourhood policing has increased the demand on neighbourhood policing teams, particularly crimes taking place in private, largely involving victims and witnesses who are the most vulnerable in our communities. The impact of social media and closer working with partner agencies and the third sector has improved the engagement and problem solving within Neighbourhood policing.

That said, there is more work to do in this arena – in April 2018 the College of Policing issued new guidelines for the delivery of Neighbourhood policing which Dorset have signed up to. Informed by national best practice we are structuring our neighbourhood around seven principles:

1. Engaging communities
2. Solving problems
3. Targeting activity
4. Promoting the right culture
5. Building analytical capability
6. Developing officers, staff and volunteers
7. Developing and sharing learning

The Force is working to ensure that the neighbourhood officer (establishment of 17 NPT Sgt's, 76 NPT PC's) and PCSO establishment of 84 PCSOs, 4 Neighbourhood engagement officers, 10 safer schools PCSOs, 1 marine and 1 rural crime PCSO, is up to full complement. This will be amplified by the recruitment of more Specials into existing teams, including a positive action approach enabling the Force to further develop strong connections with local communities.

Further investment is required however to boost visibility and reassurance patrols across the Force and to strengthen long term problem solving. Evidence would suggest that further uniformed, partnership, problem solving capabilities can be effective in dealing with pernicious localised crime in ASB hotspots. The Force has also signed up to a new Neighbourhood Engagement Contract, which I look forward to discussing with you in more detail this summer.

The Force has recruited some officers under the Police Now initiative. The first cohort of eight officers joined the force in September after their summer academy and they will bring new thinking and fresh energy to our most challenging problems.

In addition to neighbourhood recruitment, the Force is working on the 'detective incentivisation programme'. This will explore direct entry, transferees, as well as internal training and development to fill the detective gap and sustain investigative capability – this is of a national and local concern.

Our communities still face significant challenge with regards to child exploitation and the link to 'County Lines'. The force has adopted a Gold lead with a sound strategy

being led by a Superintendent and continues to invest in operational plans focussing on enforcement, education, safeguarding and rehabilitation.

A range of briefings to all partner agencies, stakeholders and the third sector continue to be delivered covering the subject of 'County Lines', 'Dangerous Drug Networks' and Criminal Exploitation of the Vulnerable. This has resulted in all Community Safety Partnerships in Dorset, and the Dorset Criminal Justice Board, including Criminal Exploitation of the Vulnerable within their priority setting.

The delivery of the event hosted by my office aimed at all partner agencies in Dorset has significantly assisted in this key area. A County Lines package is also being delivered in schools in Dorset through the Safer Schools and Community teams.

The National County Lines Coordination Centre (NCLCC) visited Dorset on the 21st & 22nd November to review our approach to County Lines and, whilst we await the written feedback, the debrief carried out at the end of the visit was very positive – particularly the approach being trialled of using a dedicated neighbourhood team in Weymouth & West Dorset. The use of a dedicated neighbourhood team focused on the delivery of enforcement and disruption, but supported by joint safeguarding visits and prevention is considered best practice and unique in the approach nationally to County Lines.

Further investment in this area will be necessary in future years if the Force is to make a measurable impact on a national priority.

Dorset Police also continues to support the National Vulnerability Action Plan and with further investment, we would aim to introduce a 'vulnerability champion', who will drive the vulnerability culture, training and best practice.

Road safety is also an area of significant concern to our communities and an area in which I am keen to invest. I have an ambition to strengthen our enforcement capability through the No Excuse team as well as support our keen and willing Community Speed Watch network through investment in camera capability and an additional camera van would be welcome. Members will be aware that Dorset bucks the trend nationally in seeing a reduction in KSI's last year.

The drug and alcohol harm reduction team was fully embedded in July this year with a completely new team in Dorset and a fresh approach. The team has four licensing officers, and constables are no longer used and can be redeployed back into frontline roles. The team are reinvigorating some licensing campaigns such as RU too drunk, Ask for Angela and Pub Watch and the focus of the team has moved from one of bureaucratic enforcement processes to harm reduction, engagement and enforcement. We are already seeing results, for example the review of a licence premises in Christchurch where the culture of violence, poor management and lack of regard for public safety was terrible and, as a result of the hard work by the new team, the licensing sub-committee saw fit to impose conditions on the license which restrict times and sale of alcohol. The owners consequently removed the entire management team and installed a whole new team plus a security team, thus breaking the culture.

It is important that I also discuss the need to transform for the future.

With your continued support we are working hard to develop and invest in new technology as well as support multiple projects in the digital policing arena, principally through the joint PRISM programme with Devon and Cornwall Police.

This year has seen the roll out of Body Worn Video, investment in online services such as 'ASK NED' and increased use of drone technology. Skype meetings are becoming more widespread as we drive efficiencies through use of technology. Operationally, skype is now used in custody for inspector reviews and Superintendent extensions where appropriate and PACE legislation has been amended to reflect this option.

If we look at drones in detail, my office was pivotal in driving the establishment of the Alliance Drone Team, as the first dedicated unit in the country in May 2017, and this small team has grown from strength to strength in terms of capability. Last financial year there were 182 drone deployments and this year we anticipate in excess of 300. July alone saw 52 deployments, believed to be the highest in the country. The drones provide resilience to helicopter support but they remain much more efficient and with greater flexibility. For example out of those 300 anticipated deployments, if only a 1/3 of those had previously gone to NPAS – this would equate to approx. £170 000 savings per annum. Dorset Police are in a strong position thanks to your previous support but ideally we would like to improve on this service by ensuring we have 24/7 response to spontaneous incidents across the three counties. We would like to expand the team to meet operational demand, train more pilots, collaborate with other agencies and continue to improve our technology.

Cybercrime is a growth business and has seen investment already and needs further investment to ensure the Force can service the increasing demand. Locally we deal with cyber enabled crime whilst cyber dependant is tackled at a regional level. Precept funding last year enabled a programme of cyber prevention inputs targeting businesses by our cyber-crime prevention officer. These were an unparalleled success. If we are to continue to assist our public in protecting themselves from online threats further investment in cyber prevention will be essential.

Innovation is definitely an area for investment. The Chief and I have discussed ideas for where best to focus our transformation efforts and we are looking at process automation and the use of Artificial Intelligence. As you know, Sir Tom Winsor echoes a view nationally that this is an area requiring significant investment and progress. It is our shared ambition for Dorset to lead the way in developing new technologies to provide yet further evidence of our ability to transform for the future. In particular, we would like to invest in propositions that could provide automation for some of our high volume demand which currently remains under performance pressure – for example, firearms licensing, vetting, 101 triage and digital forensic investigation.

As we transform for the future it is vital that our people are looked after and this is an area where I invested some of my commissioning money in the wellbeing of Force staff. My £250,000 for wellbeing initiatives is being very carefully managed to ensure it reaches the right people; those most in need of physical or emotional support. The Force have delivered a costed options plan to cover a range of interventions for staff to keep them at work, get them back into work quickly if they are unwell and to ensure the appropriate support is offered. Evidence is clear that a healthy, motivated and engaged workforce provide higher performance and productivity. Therefore, properly

investing in our people and their wellbeing will assist Dorset Police in improving the service to the public.

A significant impact on wellbeing is the current demand profile. Dorset Police has seen an increase of demand over all areas of the business in 2018. In particular, calls for service from the public have increased and 2018 saw the highest number of calls and incidents ever recorded. This falls against a backdrop of a steady decline in the total number of incidents attended by police in previous years, however the amount of time officers have to spend dealing with the incidents has increased year on year due to the ever increasing complexity of crime and wide range of safeguarding requirements. Since 2017, the single greatest cost to police resources in time has been concern for welfare related calls. Many of these are vulnerable repeat callers with wider complex needs which are not best suited to a police response, such as mental health. Missing persons has also seen a considerable increase in resource requirements, with over a 100% increase in demand over the last 8 years.

I have already described a focused uplift is required in many areas of specialist capability. In light of the demand picture presented and the need to both deliver a quality service and ensure the wellbeing of our staff the Chief Constable argues that he would also seek an increase in frontline patrol resources / PCSO's and a similar increase in our core investigative capability.

In relation to supporting victims, witnesses and reducing reoffending, as a Force Dorset continues to put victims at the heart of what they do and precept funding has enabled them to deliver on this. As a result of previous investment restorative justice (adults) was rolled out in September 2017 and has seen fifty post-conviction referrals and thirty-two cases taken forwards including victims of road traffic collisions, burglary, criminal damage, fraud and GBH.

Future investment could assist in the national drive towards 'virtual courts' for overnight remand cases under ambitious reform plans for Her Majesty's Courts. However, be warned these changes will bring financial implications for Police forces as additional resources and potential estate changes will be required to facilitate this opportunity.

Further funding is also required to increase the live link facilities across the north of the county for victims and witnesses to give evidence remotely or even potentially a mobile live link van facility.

The Chief Constable and I are passionate to emulate Wiltshire and introduce a 'Bobby Van' concept. This is an initiative that could support vulnerable victims of crime in Dorset. Whilst our vision is to create a self-sustaining charitable trust, initial investment will be required to develop and establish the service, over and above the £50,000 I have paid into the scheme as PCC.

In relation to reducing re-offending, cross sector investment in reducing reoffending and the apparent failure of the Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) initiative has led to a growing gulf in "Hard-edged Prevention". The Force has fairly limited capability in the Integrated Offender Management team delivered through the joint Prevention department; little or no 'through the gate' services for Dorset, such as

mentoring for Dorset prisoners; and we have unacceptable delays in delivering youth justice despite an excellent Youth Offending Service delivered pan-Dorset.

As is now well understood, crime and particularly violent crime is rising both locally and nationally at an alarming rate and only significant investment in 'Hard-edged and Situational Crime Prevention' will break us out of a recent cycle of simply responding to rising demand. Investment needs to be focussed on growing capabilities to catch and convict recidivists and persistent and determined perpetrators of anti-social behaviour. A toughening stance on enforcement against persistent offenders needs to be coupled with an enhanced partnership approach to diversion, rehabilitation and therapy.

Investment is also required to bring youth offenders to the point of accountability and or sanction in a fast-tracked manner. Resolving youth offending through out of court disposals months after the event is leaving victims dissatisfied and offenders undeterred.

National Best Practice initiatives such as 'team around a teen' encourage effective integrated working with partners (social care, health schools and YOS) to reduce the risk posed by and to a cohort of very challenging adolescents.

As mentioned earlier in my speech, my proposal does not represent a 'windfall' for Dorset Police and any growth will only be possible if aided by the usual, relentless, pursuit of efficiency, some details of which are:

A new force initiative will be the requirement for each department head to deliver a year on year 1% efficiency saving from their area of business which in turn will be used for reinvestment and to build capability. A new small efficiency team working to the corporate development team would deliver a rolling programme of efficiency resulting in a rolling investment to meet new and emerging capability linked to the workforce plan. This team would work with departmental heads to assist in identifying savings and horizon scanning improvements for the future.

And at this stage in my speech, I will touch again on demand increases, something the Chief will expand on in a moment. In the last year, nationally and locally, demand on policing is going up. Members will be aware of a 9% increase in emergency calls to police, and a 9% increase in reported crime.

Sadly, as demand increases on a static number of staff, wellbeing, and psychological issues for the frontline are now a real issue, something I have already touched on, and I know the Chief Constable will talk about.

This matters not just from a sickness, welfare and productivity point of view, it also means that much needed funding is being diverted to staff welfare, at a time when recruiting more frontline staff is so vitally needed.

And this against a backdrop of real term cuts to the budget of over £25m, leaving the Force with policing numbers lower than in 1981.

Whilst we ponder last year's £12 rise, and now go onto consider the £24 proposal, I feel it prudent and only fair to share my view on the Government's proposal. Because, as I started by saying, it is a Government proposal, not mine.

I struggle with this position. For the Government to assume I will raise the precept, and that you will approve that proposal, is not only an arrogant stance, it is also a bizarre way to run democracy. Cart before horse and all that. However, if I don't raise, policing faces more cuts, I will discuss the ramifications of not raising later.

Since 2017, this Government directive of huge increases in precept is a Treasury led strategy of securing public sector financing from local taxes. Do I agree with that? No, I don't, this should be centrally funded by the state. The longer this Treasury strategy continues, the more the balance of police funding moves towards localism rather than Westminster. In effect, if this continues, we will adopt the American model of poor communities having poor policing, and rich communities having better policing, because the local tax is more. I am sure you are aware that as a broad-brush statement, poor underprivileged deprived communities in England and Wales receive far less from the policing precept than here in Dorset.

Liverpool, Northumbria, Yorkshire to name a few all receive roughly 80% of their funding from the central Government, and 20% from precept. This means a precept rise raises less for their Forces than here in Dorset, where Government funding roughly equates to precept income on a ratio of 50/50.

On the face of it, you may think £24 is a huge settlement for Dorset Police. Actually, it just about leaves us in credit. That's because the £24 is needed to pay for costs that we were mainly unaware of this time last year.

Without repeating details in the full report, a significant element of our cost base is subject to pay and pensions increases beyond our control. Specifically, changes in treasury approach have resulted in an increased pension cost which I will shortly touch on. The annual pay award which after many years of being frozen, is still below inflation at 2% adds a further £2.1M to our budget.

We are facing very significant price inflation on our non-staffing budget through general indexation of many of our contracts, compounded by the impact of falling exchange rates which have impacted on our IT budgets. The market itself, specifically within forensics is turbulent, resulting in additional cost pressures following on from a contraction in the available suppliers - the combined impact of these is in excess of £1.3M. We are also facing pressure on our capital programme. Whilst we continue to examine how we can drive further value through rationalisation and partnership working, we also need to provide for some of our shorter-term assets (Transport, IT and Communication) through revenue funding, an area that is likely to grow in future years. This together with the need to readdress a shortfall in our reserves places a further £1.2M of demand on next year's budget. There are further areas of pressure that are in the full report which brings the total to in excess of £9M.

As I am sure you appreciate the Chief and I are exploring every opportunity to identify savings and efficiencies to mitigate this demand and this process will continue into the next financial year and beyond.

The demands placed on the Force will require an increase of precept to the very maximum allowed before capping if we are to provide anything like the existing service levels. A precept of this level would also enable the Force to continue on its journey of continuing efficiency and redirecting resources to meet the increasing demand base.

Whilst this above inflation increase to maintain the status quo may appear counter intuitive, it is very much a result of three distinct areas:

- i. Continued reduction in government funding.
- ii. Increased demand in volume and complexity.
- iii. Continuing financial pressures.

Central funding becomes ever more complex with the Force receiving a combination of general and specific grant streams.

The general grant is designed to support the Force in providing its core requirements. The original model was based on the premise that an individual tax payer should face the same council tax requirement for the same level of service irrespective of where they live.

The reality is the funding mechanism was frozen over ten years ago. The Force has clearly demonstrated errors in the calculations and the last two attempts at revising the formula were abandoned. Both attempts would have substantially increased our funding.

Our grant (core settlement, specific government grants, and capital) for next year has now been set at £58.96m million. This represents £76.50 per person in the County and is the second lowest nationally. Eight years ago the equivalent figure was £107.50.

At the risk of stating the obvious, the continued impact of this freeze means that one hundred percent of inflationary and demand cost pressures are passed across to the local tax base.

The Force does receive a number of specific grants; however, each of these is directly attached to a specific requirement or commitment. These also significantly impact on the Force. In the current year our security grant was reduced by £400,000, this only being notified after the budget was set.

In addition to the indexation of our contracts we are facing a range of increased financial challenges which are unavoidable if we wish to continue our current service levels.

There has been much publicity and debate on the rising cost of police pensions. Whilst this could be seen as counter intuitive as police officers are having to work longer, retire older and will no longer have the protection of a final salary scheme, all factors that reduce the long-term cost, the Treasury are attempting to tackle the national issue of 'unfunded public sector pensions' and pass this to the police. Unlike the NHS, this is not being funded centrally.

The full impact to Dorset is likely to be an extra £3.1 million a year, although grant funding has been made available in 2019/20 that reduces the effect to £1.7m. There is no certainty of such grant funding in future years. This figure on its own would need a precept increase of £10.70.

The Force is justifiably proud of its record in avoiding taking on any new external debt. This has been achieved through efficiencies, rationalisation, success in attracting specific grants and partnership working.

Moving forward we are close to exhausting this capability and need to look to a more sustainable long-term strategy.

The Force has an underlying requirement to continually replace many of its shorter life assets, vehicles, computers, mobile devices, forensic and specialist operational equipment.

In addition to this, we need to be continually investing for the future to maintain capability, investigative capacity and public contact. Primarily this will need investment in technology and the Estate.

Whilst continued efforts will be made to release resource from under-utilised assets, this will not meet the longer-term needs.

A combination of funding direct from revenue for shorter life assets and increasing the underlying borrowing requirement will be needed for the longer term. The combined effect of these will be an additional requirement in our revenue budget of £1.5 million per annum by 2022/23.

There is a very ambitious, and overdue, national agenda particularly with technology and forensics.

These work programmes are essential if the Service as a whole and Dorset is to maintain and enhance capability to continue to meet the increasing demand.

Projects include transforming forensics, replacement communication system, national data base, single online home for public access. Each programme will require every force to prepare, train and implement locally and then share the national cost. This approach is supported. As the public are increasingly mobile and criminality has no respect for historic boundaries then national approaches are the only viable option.

Naturally, greater detail is provided in the full report.

Before I outline what the £24, if approved, will be spent on, I know you will want to know what my other choices are:

Well firstly, I could do nothing. That would leave roughly a £7m hole in our finances, meaning that the Force would need to cut roughly 225 frontline jobs.

But, I hear you ask, why not use further reserves? Well, as you know from the papers you have with you today, I have used reserves, and our General Balances are sufficient as an adequate contingency amount for unforeseen shocks, but cannot afford to go any lower. Continued use of reserves is not sustainable.

Secondly I could raise by a lower amount. Well, as you have heard, we need this money just to stand still, so if I raised by £12 and not £24, the Force would need to find £3.5m in efficiencies, which will equal losing over a 100 staff.

Thirdly, I could hold a referendum. Well, the Government has made it clear that this year's precept is a bridge to a new CSR and a new police funding formula coming soon. I think my constituents would balk at the million pound cost of holding a referendum now, especially as a referendum in policing has yet to be seen as anything other than a disastrous tactic. We all know we live in uncertain Brexit times, but as of today, I am not aware of polling stations opening for another reason next month...

Finally, there is the argument that we could save money by improving efficiency and stopping waste.

The Cllrs in the room will know from their own Local Authorities, that ruthlessly chasing efficiencies for a decade, has left the cupboard almost empty in any public sector larder. The Chief Constable and I have our plans for efficiency savings to help achieve a small amount of growth, however, those efficiencies total under a million pounds. We cannot find £7m that way.

Chair, in closing, with a background of a static, exhausted workforce facing rising demand; a financial space where reserves are sufficient but no more, and future year projections showing a growing deficit, I unashamedly ask you to approve a precept rise.

I have told you what the Force and I did with last year's precept, and today the Chief Constable and I have articulated what the £24 increase could do.

My constituents will see growth and investment, although neither on a massive scale.

As PCC I haven't sat still, neither has my treasurer. In the last year we are exploring new borrowing, and have made a conscious choice to divert revenue funding to build the capital programme...

I understand the pressures on household budgets, the public made that very apparent in their comments during the consultation, but the Government direct me to bolster policing through precept, and frankly, I have little choice.

I make this proposal as we go into purdah for County wide Elections (never ideal) And at a time of huge uncertainty with Brexit unfolding into what could become a new referendum or a new Government.

Before I close, it is timely and prudent to remind ourselves where we would be WITHOUT the Government mandated £24.

You will note from what I have already said that anything less than £24 is in fact a reduction in overall budget and whilst we would seek to meet budget reductions with further efficiencies – it is inevitable that headcount would fall and service delivery would need to be reviewed.

Members, the Government, in the main YOUR party in Government, directed this stance, the public have supported this stance, and I now ask you to do the same.

This money will give our new Chief Constable space to address the ruthless pursuit of efficiency at the same time as addressing the increases in crime, demand and staff welfare issues that you have heard of earlier.

But as one final thought, I'd like to repeat the words of Dorset MP Richard Drax, who spoke at the House of Commons' Police Grant Debate on Wednesday.

He said: "The worrying fact is that unless there is more money for the police in Dorset in the mid-term, more frontline officers might have to go and this is unacceptable to me and my constituents. Let's cut out all the waffle, give them the assets and the money to get on with the job and keep our people safe."

Thank you.