

Mr Geoffrey Barlow:

"I suggest that the panel looks at the accuracy of claims made to try & justify the (always high) police precept.

A claim was made in the press that "most people in Dorset support the increase" & this was based on an online survey that had been carried out.

I doubted that this was true & emailed the PCC. In reply I was told that only 1662 people replied to the (apparently badly promoted) online consultation and that this is only 0.21% of the total population of 772,270 (includes residents under 18yrs of age).

77% of respondents [ie 0.17% of Dorset population] said that policing needed more funding and 66% of respondents [0.14% of population] said that they would pay the increase.

The claim therefore, that most people in Dorset support the increase was UNTRUE. 0.17% and 0.14% are pretty close to zero and are not "most people in Dorset".

All the figures above were provided by P&CC staff except for the 0.17% and 0.14% figures which I calculated from the figures given to me."

Answer:

"The questioner has had extensive contact with my office, and my staff have provided him with the answer to this matter. However, I note that there is no question posed here.

However, for the avoidance of doubt let me be clear, this states that a claim was made in the press that "most people in Dorset support the [precept] increase".

Whilst this was reported in the local press in slightly different ways, the various reports appeared to accurately report my comments – which were that the precept increase was overwhelmingly supported by the respondents to my survey rather than the entire Dorset population, for example:

"Mr Sidwick claimed the extra amount was overwhelmingly supported by most people in an online consultation in December." (Advertiser & Times, 7 Feb)

"Police and crime commissioner, David Sidwick, claims the extra amount is overwhelmingly supported by most people – evidenced by an online consultation in December." (Bmth Echo, 8 Feb)

"Mr Sidwick claims the extra amount is overwhelmingly supported by most people – evidenced by an online consultation in December." (Lyme Online, 9 Feb)

Now, it might be the case that the questioner is quoting a more obscure source, that may or may not have reported what I said accurately, but either way I would respectfully suggest that the questioner's continued assertion that I claimed that most people in Dorset supported the precept increase is inaccurate, as it was clear

that I was speaking about the respondents to my precept survey, rather than the population as a whole.”

Mr Dan Hardy:

There is public data in circulation that 86% of new recruit 'uplift' Officers (those with 0-2 years' service) are leaving Dorset Police, this coupled with other full time officer leavers and retirements may (if the shared data is true) result with Dorset Police having low officer numbers. The public are concerned that as a County we will not achieve uplift levels, wasted vast monies on recruitment and training, and not being told the truth regarding FTE officer levels.

1. What is the total number of full time new (uplift only) officers recruited in the last two years, versus full time officer leavers in the last 12 months by service timeframe - 0-2 years (uplift joiners) 3-10 years 11 - 20 years 21-25 years and retirees at 25 years +.
2. What are the readily available Dorset Police Officer full time officer numbers now, versus pre-austerity levels from 2010 and compared to the last five years of officer number volumes?

Answer:

“The questioner has asked for a number of detailed statistics. These have all been provided, and the full datasets will be placed on record in the minutes of this meeting and sent to the questioner. However, I will refrain from reading these statistics out in full and give Members an overview. I hope that is acceptable.

The questioner was unable to confirm the source of the statistics he has quoted, and neither my office nor Dorset Police recognise these data. However, here are the facts.

It is not true that “86% of new recruit officers are leaving Dorset Police”. The attrition rate for new recruits for the period Sept 2019 - March 2022 is 9.7%. Very different indeed. I think if 86% of recruits were leaving, I think we would notice. This refers to 27 leavers from 277 recruits during that period.

This period reflects the newly implemented PEQF entry routes (Policing Education Qualifications Framework – so PCDA, degree entry and DHEP, degree holder). The PEQF route is considered more challenging than its predecessor, IPLDP (Initial Police Learning & Development Programme), but the student officer attrition rate in Dorset has actually marginally reduced compared to IPLDP, as it was previously it was 10.9%. So even under this more challenging system, we are doing better.

Whilst some Forces have experienced higher attrition rates recently, our low rate is largely due to the work undertaken to support student officers through our Wellbeing and Retention Plan, which was developed over the past year in partnership with student officers, training teams, local policing areas and our academic partner, the University of South Wales. Because we foresaw the importance of this retention, those measures were put into place.

On Tuesday this week I actually attended the second day of a new recruit cohort and I saw 18 – 37 years in that room, a breadth of experience, a breadth of keenness and enthusiasm and one of the things we were emphasising was the well-being measures which are being taken by Dorset Police

It is not true that the public are “not being told the truth regarding FTE officer levels”. The uplift data is published quarterly by the Home Office, as part of the ‘Police Officer Uplift Statistics’ collection, albeit by headcount, with the full-time equivalent (FTE) figures continuing to be published biannually in the established ‘Police Workforce, England and Wales’ statistical bulletin.

I am pleased to confirm what the published statistics show, which is that we have met our uplift targets for years 1 and 2 and remain confident with our progress against our year 3 target. These are monitored very closely on a weekly basis and reported monthly to a variety of boards that my office attends. In recent months, The Chief Constable and I have taken the decision to build in flexibility to our recruitment plan to increase as necessary, and in doing so are able to allow for unanticipated variations.

In terms of the questions then, firstly the officers recruited in the last two years:

- In 2020-21 we recruited 89 officers (with our uplift target being 50)
- In 2021-22 we recruited 130 officers (with our uplift target being 67)
- That gives a total of 219 officers recruited in the last two years.

In terms of officer leavers, a total of 88.3 officers have left between April 2021 and March 2022. This does not include officers who transferred or seconded to other Forces:

Tenure (years)	Leavers (FTE)
0 to 2 years	20.0
3 to 10 years	2.0
11 to 20 years	22.8
21 to 25 years	15.7
25+ years	27.8
Total	88.3

Finally, the questioner has asked about the change in officer numbers in 2010 compared to the last five years. For complete transparency, my office has provided these both by headcount and FTE, and for every year since 2010.

These are management data, and so might vary slightly from Home Office published statistics but the downwards trend from 2010 to 2014, is evident, followed by a plateau from 2015 to 2019, ahead of the upwards trend from 2020, aligned to the police uplift programme.

In March of this year there were 1349 FTE officers in Dorset, over 100 more than five years ago, but around 110 less than in 2010:

Establishment as at 31 March	FTE	Headcount
2010	1462.6	1502
2011	1429.4	1473
2012	1357.0	1403
2013	1280.1	1330
2014	1203.5	1253
2015	1255.0	1304
2016	1195.7	1246
2017	1247.7	1290
2018	1246.4	1286
2019	1201.0	1238
2020	1223.0	1259
2021	1274.7	1309
2022	1349.2	1382

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to place on record my commitment to all our student officers, whichever route they have joined us on, and to the recruitment, selection and training teams who are working so hard to continue to recruit, support and develop them.

Police officer recruitment is currently open, and so if anyone listening wants to learn more about a career where they can make a real difference to the people of Dorset and our communities, whilst earning over £40k within 7 years – then do join one of our online awareness events on either 7 or 14 July, please see the Force website for further details.

So, Dorset Police are very much setting a standard in well-being and have a mission to be tough on crime, put victims first and keep people safe. Come and join them.”

Mr Trevor Bevins:

1. What is the estimated cost of the demolition of the A10 Winfrith building and the further costs of the construction of the, planning approved, three storey block to replace it, and is it possible to estimate the difference in running costs between the old, to be demolished, building and its replacement?
2. Can the OPCC and/or the Chief Constable's office give an estimation of the timescale for the complete works programme – ie from demolition to occupation of the new building.

Answer:

“To start with, the old HQ building will not be demolished prior to the new build. The plans submitted very clearly show that the footprint of the new building has been designed so that demolition of the existing building is not needed until after the construction has completed. This allows for the officers and staff currently working in the building, to continue to do so – without the need for temporary accommodation to be found at additional cost.

Secondly, the questioner is well aware that an application to amend a condition to the planning consent provided by Dorset Council has been submitted, and that this matter will be heard at a planning meeting on 20 July. Therefore, the questioner will know that the final specifications for the building cannot yet be confirmed.

Thirdly, the questioner will know that the Dorset Police and Crime Panel is due to discuss the wider Estates Futures programme on their agenda today.

For avoidance of doubt, I can confirm that the question of cost remains commercially sensitive, but we will bring this to the public as soon as possible – we believe we will be able to do this by September. In terms of the timescales, the plans suggest that the building will be ready by early 2024.”