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## West Mercia Police PCC Bill Longmore not seeking tax increase

**The West Mercia police and crime commissioner has said the force will not be seeking extra revenue from council taxpayers for 2013-14.**

Bill Longmore, an Independent, will not be asking for an increase in the precept - the police force's share of the annual council tax bill.

It follows a consultation in which some 75% of respondents said they did not want pay more for their police service.

Mr Longmore said West Mercia Police had "healthy reserves".

He added that there had been "better than expected savings" over the previous year.

Mr Longmore has put forward a plan he says will enable the force to save £21m from its budget over the next three years.

He said it involved a "major restructure" across the police force, which covers Herefordshire, Shropshire and Worcestershire, "particularly impacting on back-up and support services".

### 'Recruiting again'

These would be provided "more economically" in alliance with Warwickshire Police.

The proposals will be put before the Police and Crime Panel on Tuesday.

Mr Longmore said: "I am pleased to announce that a significant phase of the restructure will be completed in 2013-14 and that no further reductions in police officer posts will be needed from 1 April, with the planned level of police officer reductions having been achieved.

"Therefore the force is now recruiting police officers again.

"Frontline policing requires effective back-up and support services but, by restructuring those services and working closely with our partner Warwickshire Police, these can be modernised and provided at lower cost.

"This will involve the loss of some 250 West Mercia posts by 2015-16, but these job losses will be achieved over time and it is hoped that compulsory redundancies can be minimised."

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