

PCC plans for protecting police officer numbers approved

Sponsored by  **VCARS**

For you to enjoy all the features of this website Derbyshire Times requires permission to use cookies.

[Allow Cookies](#)[Find Out More ▼](#)**Published on Monday 4 February 2013 09:11**

Derbyshire Police and Crime Commissioner Alan Charles' proposed council tax rise has been given the green light to pay for front line policing.

Without this increase, the Commissioner explained, the Force would face losing at least 20 police officers in years to come. The increase equates to an annual rise of £3.21 for Band D and £2.14 for Band A households and will deliver £1m a year towards the police budget.

The Panel has also given its support for the Commissioner's Budget and his Draft Police and Crime Plan.

Mr Charles commented: "I am delighted that the Panel agrees with my proposals as I believe that they are the way forward in maintaining frontline police officer posts which are so crucial to protecting the public.

"If we didn't increase the precept now it would lead to a further fall in police numbers. I hope that my budget will promote confidence in the public that we are using our resources both efficiently and effectively in tackling crime, and doing all we can to keep our neighbourhoods safe.

"The council tax increase – which amounts to less than a penny a day for taxpayers – will help to offset some of the challenges that Derbyshire Constabulary face as a result of Government cutbacks. In all, police funding in the county has lost out on some £30m over the past seven years, despite already being one of the lowest spending police forces in the country."

Previously, Derbyshire has benefited from a grant worth £1.6m to freeze the council tax. But, explained Mr Charles, that is not perennial – it will stop in two years' time. This year the Government offered a similar grant to freeze the precept, which was equivalent to a 1% increase in Council Tax, but this was limited to two years. Consequently, the freeze grant offer for 2013-14 does not provide financial stability for the long term, and would inevitably place further pressure on officer numbers in years to come.

The Commissioner explained: "If we take the Government Grant this year, then in two years' time, when it ceases we would have to lose at least a further 20 police officers. In addition, other Government Grants cease in 2015, which means that we have to find alternative sources to balance the books."

The provisional revenue budget for 2013/14 is £170.6m. This takes into account Government funding reductions of around £2m compared with 2012/13 and the ending of the council tax freeze grant.

Mr Charles' capital programme worth £23.2m for 2013/17, earmarked for supporting investment plans, has also been supported by the Panel. This programme would not have been possible if there had been continued acceptance of the Government's precept freeze grants.

The Commissioner's budget reflects a saving of £100,000 from the costs of running his own office – money used instead to provide an extra four PCSOs.

Also provided within the budget is a Crime Prevention Fund of £0.25m for groups to bid for funding to support local crime prevention schemes, and further funding for neighbourhood engagement plans.

The Commissioner said that he now looked forward to putting his Police and Crime Plan into action, with his team and partners, so that he can carry out the pledges he had made to the public to make Derbyshire a safer place for those who live and work in its communities.

Like 0 Tweet 4 0