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## Durham PCC proposes tax increase for 'robust budget'

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A **POLICE** chief has outlined his plans for the service.

Ron Hogg, Durham's Police and Crime Commissioner, has published his plans for the 2013-2014 police precept and outlining proposals for Durham Constabulary over the next four years.

Durham Constabulary will see its budget cut by £18.5m over the next four years and this has prompted Mr Hogg to call for an increase in council tax precept in order to pay maintain front-line policing.

He said: "My consultation sought views on precept increases of zero per cent or two per cent with 62 per cent of respondents opting for a two per cent increase.

"This will cost the majority of households in the force area a little under 4p per week.

"I have set a robust police budget for 2013/2014 that is balanced, doesn't rely on the use of reserves and aims to protect the quality of policing in County Durham and Darlington.

"Significant reductions of approximately £100,000 in my own office budget, together with savings from the current year will enable me make a contribution of approximately £200,000 to support Community Safety Partnership arrangements."

There will also be savings of £750,000 per year from a new capital spending programme in County Durham.

Mr Hogg also released the top policing priorities from his public consultation were:

- ! Tackling anti-social behaviour;

- ! Tackling the harm caused to individuals and communities by drink and drugs;

- ! Improve road safety by tackling careless and dangerous driving and other road safety related offences;

- ! To make policing services visible and accessible at all times.

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