

Police seeking council tax rise

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A DRAFT Hampshire policing blueprint has been unveiled for the next year, which includes a rise in council tax.

The draft Police and Crime Plan has been prepared and submitted by Simon Hayes, police and crime commissioner for Hampshire, ahead of its launch later this month.

It outlines policing priorities for 2013/2014 and includes raising the policing element of the council tax.

The commissioner's proposed rise of 3.4 per cent, or £5 a year for a Band D household, was approved by the Hampshire Police and Crime Panel (PCP) in January.

The police and [Test Valley Borough Council](#) are the two Hampshire authorities adding to council taxes this year – Hampshire County Council and the fire service have not asked for more.

The PCP gave its backing at a meeting on 1 March to the draft proposals to reduce crime in the county.

These include improving frontline policing to deter criminals and keep communities safe, placing victims and witnesses at the heart of policing and a wider criminal justice system, working together to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour in the community and reducing reoffending.

As part of the role of the PCP to scrutinise the work of the police and crime commissioner, the panel is required to review the plan and provide feedback ahead of the final publication on 21 March.

CLlr David Stewart, chairman of the Hampshire PCP, said: "Among Mr Hayes' policing priorities and budget plans is a clear commitment to community safety and protecting victims of crime, and following thorough questioning from panel members, we are satisfied that these have been developed based on important input from local communities and guidance from partner organisations."

Mr Hayes said: "The Police and Crime Plan is my opportunity to show how I intend to keep the promise I made to our communities when I took office – ensuring that the police and other partners are able to cut crime and protect the public."

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