

Commissioner fears for 200 police jobs



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POLICE and Crime Commissioner Sue Mountstevens fears the Government's latest budget cuts could put more than 200 jobs at risk.

Last week, Chancellor George Osborne announced £11.5 billion of "savings" in the Comprehensive Spending Review for 2015-16.

Although effects on police funding have not yet been announced, the Home Office, which provides about two-thirds of police funding, may see its annual budget cut by 20 per cent.

This is bound to mean Avon and Somerset police will have to make more budget cuts. And Ms Mountstevens fears that could leave the constabulary's policing and staff levels at risk. Currently, police officers cannot be made redundant but, when spending is tight, retiring officers tend not be replaced.



Ms Mountstevens said: "There is no question that cuts of this scale will be painful to the organisation and will be felt by residents. Finding further savings of nearly £15 million over the next two years will mean fundamental changes to policing and tough decisions about what we do in the future. It will also mean fewer police officers and staff, with more than 200 further policing posts at risk to meet the required savings.

"Over the coming weeks, we will be working through the detail of the Government's announcement. I will be talking to the public about the tough decisions we face and I will carry out a full discussion with residents about any possible increases to the policing part of the council tax to protect frontline officers. There are huge challenges ahead. The priority remains to keep residents safe and feeling safe."

People are being asked to have their say on the policing part of the council tax at www.consultation.avonandsomerset.police.uk or at local events.

Read more: <http://www.thisisbristol.co.uk/Commissioner-fears-200-police-jobs/story-19452069-detail/story.html#ixzz2YT13Pu9g>

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