**Report of the West Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel**

**Precept Proposal 2014/15**

**Friday 7th February 2014**

**1. Executive Summary**

1.1 This document constitutes the report and recommendations of the West Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel (hereafter referred to as ‘the Panel’) in respect of the Commissioner’s proposed precept for 2014/15.

1.2 This report is submitted to the West Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner in accordance with the requirements of Paragraph 3, Schedule 5 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.

1.3 The Panel endorses the Commissioner’s proposal to increase the Council Tax by 1.99%.

**2. West Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel**

2.1 Those Panel Members present to consider the proposed precept were as follows:

* Cllr Alison Lowe Leeds (Chair)
* Cllr Sarah Ferriby Bradford
* Cllr Imran Hussain Bradford
* Cllr Michael Walls Bradford
* Cllr Malcolm James Calderdale
* Cllr Steve Sweeney Calderdale
* Cllr David Hall Kirklees
* Cllr Ken Smith Kirklees
* Cllr Mohammed Iqbal Leeds
* Cllr Les Carter Leeds
* Cllr Jean Askew Wakefield
* Cllr Alan Wassell Wakefield
* Jo Sykes Independent Member
* Roger Grasby Independent Member

**3. Powers of the West Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel**

3.1 The Panel have the functions conferred by Schedule 5 Part 1 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 (Issuing Precepts.) This enables them to:

 (i) Review the proposed precept notified by the Commissioner

 (ii) Make a report to the Commissioner on the proposed precept

 (iii) Include recommendations within the report as to the precept that should be issued for the financial year

3.2 The Panel may, having reviewed the proposed precept, veto the proposed precept:

 (i) If the Panel vetoes the proposed precept, the report must include a statement that the Panel has vetoed it

3.3 If the Panel does not veto the precept:

 (i) The Police and Crime Commissioner must have regard to the Panel’s report and recommendations and publish a response to it.

 (ii) It is for the Panel to decide in what way the Commissioner’s response is published.

3.4 If the Panel does veto the precept:

 (i) The Police and Crime Commissioner must not issue the proposed precept

 (ii) The Police and Crime Commissioner must issue a revised precept-

* Lower than the originally proposed precept if the Panel indicated it was too high

Or:

* Higher than the originally proposed precept if the Panel indicated it was too low

 (iii) The Panel must then review the revised precept and submit a second report to the Commissioner including recommendations as to the precept that should be issued.

3.5 The Police and Crime Commissioner will then:

 (i) Have regard to the second report and publish his response to it.

**4. Panel’s Consideration of the Precept Proposal**

4.1 The Panel received notification from the Office of the West Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner of the proposed precept on January 30th 2014.

4.2 The Panel considered the precept proposal at their meeting on February 7th 2014 in the Wakefield Suite, Wakefield One Building, Wakefield. The Police and Crime Commissioner attended to present his proposal and take questions from the Panel. The meeting was held in public.

4.3 The Panel asked the Commissioner a series of questions which related to his precept proposal, the budget assumptions which underpinned it and his future financial plans.

4.4 The questions covered:

* The projected outturn for 2013/14 and the use of the projected £3.5m underspend which is expected to go to the Devolvement Reserve;
* The terms of the Government’s offer to freeze council tax, its impact on the medium and long-term tax-base and the implications on frontline policing;
* The balance between Police Officers, Police Staff, PCSOs and Specials in West Yorkshire Police;
* The expected outcomes and management of the £5.5m earmarked as a top-up to Community Safety Funding / Grants;
* The oversight and decision-making mechanism for spending the proposed £20m Force Transformation Fund to ensure that business cases were robust and linked to improved outcomes;
* The impact on the budget of the Stage 2 Transfer; and,
* The considerable reduction in capital spending on estates and the PCC’s role in making best use of assets to underpin strong frontline policing.

**5. Panel’s Decision**

5.1 The Panel, through its discussion with the Commissioner on February 7th, agreed to endorse the proposal to increase the Council Tax by 1.99% on the basis that the Police and Crime Commissioner would:

* + 1. Involve the public, partners and Panel in a long-term planning process on the shape and size of frontline policing in West Yorkshire, covering the staffing mix of the Force and physical presence in communities;
		2. Bring forward a detailed report on the use of the £20m Force Transformation Fund, including the expected outcomes for residents and longer-term efficiency savings;
		3. Monitor the impact of the Force’s new assets so that savings in running costs are realised and reinvested in recruitment of Police Officers;
		4. Introduce, alongside the Chief Constable, a strategic approach to the use of Special Constables, including in specialist areas like cyber and financial crime;
		5. Ensure that the recruitment of 126 Police Officers reflects the diversity of West Yorkshire;
		6. Ensure that the costs of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner continue to reflect the spending pressures on the Force as a whole; and,
		7. Continue to seek external funding, including from the national Police Innovation Fund.
	1. The Panel voted on the proposed precept and those Members supporting the proposal were:

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Councillor Alison Lowe | Councillor Jean Askew | Councillor Sarah Ferriby |
| Councillor Imran Hussain | Councillor Mohammed Iqbal | Councillor Malcolm James |
| Councillor Ken Smith | Councillor Steve Sweeney | Councillor Alan Wassell |
| Mr Roger Grasby | Mrs Jo Sykes | - |

Those Members who voted to veto the proposed precept increase were:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Councillor Les Carter | Councillor David Hall | Councillor Michael Walls |

5.3 As at least two thirds of the Panel did not vote to veto the proposed precept, the Panel’s veto was not exercised.

**6. Conclusions and Recommendation**

6.1 On the basis of the commitments made by the Commissioner, as specified above, the Panel agreed to support the Commissioner’s increase of the precept by 1.99% for 2014/15.

6.2 The Panel confirmed this approval was based on their recognition of the importance of front line policing and thus the belief that the public would sufficiently benefit from the continued investment in police officers across West Yorkshire.

 **RESOLVED:**

**That the Police and Crime Commissioner increases the Council Tax precept by 1.99% for 2014/15.**