South Wales Police and Crime Panel

REPORT ON THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR SOUTH WALES' PROPOSED PRECEPT FOR 2024/25

Background

This report is made in accordance with the South Wales Police and Crime Panel's ("SWPCP") statutory duty contained in, Schedule 5, Paragraph 3(2) of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 ("the Act"). The Panel must make a report to the Police and Crime Commissioner on the proposed precept.

Review of Proposed Precept for 2024/25

The Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales notified the SWPCP on the 30th January 2024 of the Precept Proposal for 2024/25.

The SWPCP met on Tuesday the 6th February 2024 at Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council's offices at the Orbit Centre, Merthyr Tydfil to review the Precept and to report on the proposed precept. A copy of the report detailing the proposed Precept is available to view on the SWPCP pages on the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council website.

Link to Panel Report

https://democracy.merthyr.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=349&MId=6128&Ver=4&LLL=0

Report

The following Members of the Panel were present:

Cllr Bernie Bowen Thompson (Chair) (Cardiff Council)
Cllr Peter Littlechild (Cardiff Council)
Cllr Bob Councillor Bob Harris (Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council)
Cllr Louisa Addiscott (Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council)
Cllr Mark Tribe (Swansea City Council)
Cllr John Thomas (Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council)
Cllr Caroline Lewis (Neath Port Talbot Council)
Cllr Sandra Perkes (Vale of Glamorgan Council)
Cllr Johanna Llewellyn-Hopkins (Bridgend County Borough Council)
Mr Mel Jehu (Vice Chair & Co-opted Member)

Ms Sarah James (Co-opted Member)

The South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner recommended an 8.69 % increase in the 2024/25 precept.

Report

The SWPCP considered the Precept proposal and after questioning Commissioner, the Chief Constable and members of the Commissioner's team and following a full debate, unanimously resolved approve the proposed Precept. The Commissioner is therefore allowed to implement his proposed increase which provides for an increase of £2.35 per month per Band D equivalent property in 2024/2025, equating to a 8.69% increase on the 2023/2024 rate.

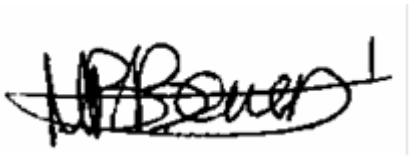
Recommendations

In the first instance the SWPCP expressed its disappointed that the financial burden of paying for an effective police force is being gradually transferred from central government to the public generally via the Precept and the Panel feels strongly that this should not continue.

The SWPCP considered the precept proposal to be high and by approving the same it recognised that once again this placed further financial pressure on the Council Tax paying public of South Wales at a time when the finances of the public are stretched. It was however made clear from the SWPCP Precept report (see link above) and in the Commissioner's presentation that the increase was needed and necessary to ensure the police continue to be adequately funded allowing trust and confidence in the police to not only be maintained but to be increased.

In coming to its decision, the SWPCP recognised the significant funding shortfall affecting the Police in areas such as the police pay rise, the Police Funding Formula, Capital City Funding and the application of the Apprenticeship Levy and to that end the SWPCP confirmed its commitment to support the Commissioner in addressing these shortfalls which even with the agreed precept will require the Police to find savings of £9 million.

Had the Precept been vetoed, it was likely that any funding shortfall resulting from this may have had to come from neighbourhood policing and this is something the SWPCP was not prepared to risk.



Signed: ……

Chair of the South Wales Police & Crime Panel

Dated: 6th January 2024