

DECISION NUMBER: PCCG-2020-061

OFFICE OF POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

TITLE: Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent's Budget Requirement and Council Tax Precept Proposal 2021/22

DATE: 29th January 2021


TIMING: Routine

PURPOSE: For Decision

1.	<p><u>RECOMMENDATION</u></p> <p>That the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent (Commissioner) considers the budget proposals and background information covered in the Annexe and Appendices to this submission and approves, subject to consultation with the Police and Crime Panel:</p> <p>(i) A budget requirement for 2021/22 of £147,554,856;</p> <p>(ii) The planned efficiency savings in 2021/22 of £676k and further planned efficiency savings of £3.102m (totalling £3.778m) detailed in Appendix 5b of the Annexe to this submission;</p> <p>(iii) The further proposed utilisation of the Reserves and Committed Funds (Appendix 7);</p> <p>(iv) The initial Capital Programme as described in Appendices 8a and 8b; and</p> <p>(v) The 2021/22 proposed Council Tax Precept to be levied in respect of general expenses of £64,159,178. (equivalent to a Council Tax Band D of £287.96) and that this sum be apportioned to each City/County/County Borough Council according to the following table:</p> <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Unitary Authorities</th><th>£</th><th>Tax Base Band D Equivalent</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Blaenau Gwent</td><td>5,987,866</td><td>20,794.09</td></tr><tr><td>Caerphilly</td><td>17,506,027</td><td>60,793.26</td></tr><tr><td>Monmouthshire</td><td>13,451,170</td><td>46,711.94</td></tr><tr><td>Newport</td><td>17,417,143</td><td>60,484.59</td></tr><tr><td>Torfaen</td><td><u>9,796,972</u></td><td><u>34,021.99</u></td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>64,159,178</td><td>222,805.87</td></tr></tbody></table> <p>The Council Tax Precept shown in the above table generates the following amounts of council tax for the various bands:</p> <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Council Tax Band</th><th>£</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>A</td><td>191.97</td></tr></tbody></table>	Unitary Authorities	£	Tax Base Band D Equivalent	Blaenau Gwent	5,987,866	20,794.09	Caerphilly	17,506,027	60,793.26	Monmouthshire	13,451,170	46,711.94	Newport	17,417,143	60,484.59	Torfaen	<u>9,796,972</u>	<u>34,021.99</u>	Total	64,159,178	222,805.87	Council Tax Band	£	A	191.97
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		B	223.97	
		C	255.96	
		D	287.96	
		E	351.95	
		F	415.94	
		G	479.93	
		H	575.92	
		I	671.91	
2.	<u>INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND</u>			
	The Commissioner is required to determine the budget for 2021/22 and then set the Council Tax Precept following consultation with the Police and Crime Panel. The greater part of the budget will be allocated to Gwent Police for operational purposes, but an element needs to be retained to cover the cost of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the commissioning of services from organisations other than the Chief Constable.			
3.	<u>ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION</u>			
	In determining the budget requirement for 2021/22, the Commissioner has had regard to the Police and Crime Plan 2017/21; the Policing Vision 2025; the Strategic Policing Requirement; the Chief Constable's view of the financial resources required to deliver the operational requirements of the Plan; the level of resources to be allocated for commissioning other than from the Chief Constable; and the cost of running the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.			
4.	<u>NEXT STEPS</u>			
	The Police and Crime Panel are required to review the proposed Council Tax Precept and make a report to the Commissioner on the proposed Council Tax Precept (whether it vetoes or not) by the 8 th February 2021.			
5.	<u>FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS</u>			
	This is a major financial report with clear financial implications. These are fully articulated within the Annexe and Appendices.			
6.	<u>PERSONNEL CONSIDERATIONS</u>			
	The majority of the Policing and Crime Budget covers Police Officer and Police Staff salaries and employer's contributions. Currently, Central Government Grant Funding is directed to nationally increasing Police Officer numbers by 20,000 at March 2023, but this is to the backdrop of significant reductions in real term funding for many years previous. Managing this situation in a sensible and timely manner as part of budget preparation demonstrates the actions of a good employer.			
7.	<u>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</u>			
	Setting the budget requirement and Council Tax Precept are statutory responsibilities of the Commissioner.			

8.	<p><u>EQUALITIES AND HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS</u></p> <p>This proposal has been considered against the general duty to promote equality, as stipulated under the Strategic Equality Plan and has been assessed not to discriminate against any particular group.</p> <p>In preparing this report, consideration has been given to the requirements of the Articles contained in the European Convention on Human Rights and the Human Rights Act 1998.</p>
9.	<p><u>RISK</u></p> <p>A timely decision on the Council Tax Precept will minimise the risk of failing to achieve the statutory deadline.</p>
10.	<p><u>PUBLIC INTEREST</u></p> <p>This report will be placed on the website of both the Commissioner and the Police and Crime Panel.</p>
11.	<p><u>CONTACT OFFICER</u></p> <p>Darren Garwood-Pask, Chief Finance Officer to the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent.</p>
12.	<p><u>ANNEXES</u></p> <p>The Annexe to this report and its Appendices provide full details in support of the proposal.</p>

Jeff Cuthbert, Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent	
I informed the Police and Crime Panel on the 22 nd January 2021 of my intention to raise the precept level by 5.49%.	
The Police and Crime Panel considered a detailed report, annexe and associated appendices in support of the proposal at their meeting held digitally over Microsoft Teams on 29 th January 2021.	
Following a full debate regarding the financial outlook facing the Commissioner; the policing provision in Gwent; and the proposed Council Tax Precept increase of 5.49% (£15.00) on an average Band D property, the Panel resolved to not veto the proposed Council Tax Precept increase, but make a recommendation to the Commissioner for his full consideration.	
On the 9 th February 2021, the Commissioner received the formal report from the Panel, for him to consider the recommendation to review the budget proposal to look for any additional savings which could be achieved whilst retaining existing and planned extra frontline staff.	
Having reviewed the financial case; considered public opinion; and seen first-hand Gwent Police's commitment to ensuring Gwent has safe communities, the Commissioner believes that it is the right decision to increase the Council Tax Precept by 5.49% (£15.00) for 2021/22 for an average Band D property. Anything less than this proposal will jeopardise the Chief Constable's ability to protect and reassure the public of Gwent, particularly those most vulnerable.	
I will now issue the precept to the relevant billing Authorities.	
I confirm I have considered whether or not I have any personal or prejudicial interest in this matter and take the proposed decision in compliance with my code of conduct. Any such interests are recorded below. The above decision has my approval.	
Signed 	Date: 22.02.21
Contact Officer	
Name	Darren Garwood-Pask
Position	Chief Finance Officer
Telephone	01633 643083
Email	Darren.Garwood@Gwent.pnn.police.uk

Background papers	None
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