

## **OFFICE OF POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER**

**LEAD CHIEF OFFICER:** Chief Finance Officer

**TITLE:** Findings from the Public Consultation on the Proposed Precept Level

**DATE:** January 2018

**TIMING:** Annual

**PURPOSE:** To report the findings of the consultation on the proposed precept level for 2018/19

<b>1.</b>	<b><u>RECOMMENDATION</u></b> That the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) Executive Board considers and notes the findings within this report and utilises them to inform the setting of the 2018/19 precept level.
<b>2.</b>	<b><u>INTRODUCTION &amp; BACKGROUND</u></b> The current Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Gwent was elected on 5 <sup>th</sup> May 2016 and has a statutory duty under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 to consult with ratepayers on budget and precept proposals.  The precept is the part of the council tax which is allocated to the PCC. It is the responsibility of every local PCC to set the level of the precept for their area annually.  The OPCC launched a consultation on 29 <sup>th</sup> November 2017 running for a total of five weeks and four days, closing on the 7 <sup>th</sup> January 2018. During this time, the residents of Gwent were asked for their views on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The proposed level of increase for the precept (2018/19)</li></ul> The consultation was conducted bilingually in both electronic and paper format, asking a total of three questions (all of which were open ended in order to gather more detailed responses). A demographics question was also included at the end of the survey.  The e-consultation was proactively publicised via paid promotion on social media, Gwent Now, local press and the PCC's website, as well as being shared with community groups, partner organisations, the third sector and local authorities. Paper copies were also completed at a local community event as well as being available in easy read versions (on request) from the OPCC.  This report analyses the results of the consultation and reports the findings.
<b>3.</b>	<b><u>ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION</u></b> It was agreed, prior to the launch of the consultation that a representative sample size of 600 would be used. This provided a confidence level of 95%, including a +/- 4 margin of error.

In previous years, the OPCC has struggled to achieve a representative sample for precept consultations. In order to try and resolve this issue, it was agreed to invest in paid post promotion on Facebook, as well as pre-programmed social media posts to ensure the consultation remained in the public domain over the festive period. A total of £31.00 was paid for the Facebook promotion and yielded a much increased engagement rate compared to standard OPCC posts. These included:

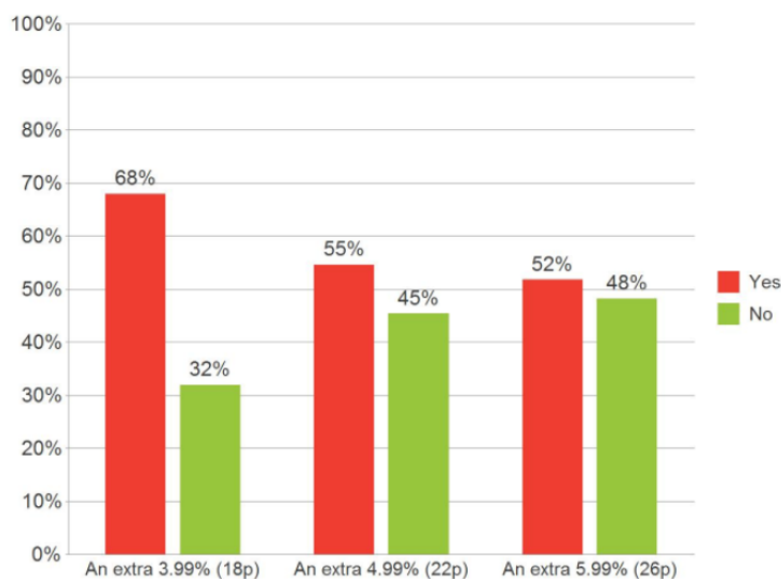
- 10,548 post reaches
- 30 post shares from individuals and organisations/groups
- 20 post comments (both positive and negative)
- 30 post likes
- 4 post dislikes

A total of 609 responses were received meaning a representative sample **was** achieved.

All responses received electronically were through the medium of English, with the exception of one which was received through the medium of Welsh. All paper copies received were conducted through the medium of English.

The detailed findings from each question can be found in Annex A. An overview of the findings are as follows:

**Precept Increase Options**



*(Note: Respondents were asked to select their opinion on each suggested increase).*

**Q1. Increase council tax by 3.99% (extra 18p per week)**

A total of **68%** respondents agreed with this increase


**Q2. Increase council tax by 4.99% (extra 22p per week)**

A total of **55%** respondents agreed with this increase

**Q3. Increase council tax by 5.99% (extra 26p per week)**

A total of **52%** respondents agreed with this increase

	<p>If a respondent answered 'No' to one of the questions, they were given the opportunity to explain why. The most popular reasons given were as below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 45% - The level of service currently experienced is poor/lack of value</li> <li>• 37% - Government cuts/Austerity/High Living Costs</li> <li>• 15% - Reduce Senior Officer numbers/Remove the PCC role and supporting office/Reduce Councillor Salaries</li> <li>• 7% - Make further efficiencies</li> <li>• 4% - Use Gwent Police reserves</li> <li>• 1% - Money being wasted on new Police Headquarters</li> <li>• 1% - Reduce the overall number of police forces in the UK.</li> <li>• (4% - Other)</li> </ul>
4.	<p><b><u>NEXT STEPS</u></b></p> <p>The findings within this report along with feedback received from partner's consultations (Annex B), comments made on social media and through complaints received into the public response unit (PRU) demonstrates the significant obstacles we face in showing the public the 'real' policing picture in Gwent.</p> <p>This report will not only be used by the PCC to inform the 2018/19 precept level (the final announcement on which will be made at the public Police and Crime Panel meeting on Friday, 26<sup>th</sup> January, 2018), but also to initiate discussions as to how we offset the comments and perceptions of residents in Gwent and in turn, raise public confidence in the Gwent police service.</p>
5.	<p><b><u>FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS</u></b></p> <p>A social media marketing campaign was launched on Facebook costing £31.00.</p> <p>250 copies of both English and Welsh versions of the consultation were printed, incurring at a cost of £75.00. A large number of these were left remaining following the closure of the consultation. It is therefore recommended that in future, 100 copies of each be ordered, with more being available should they be required.</p>
6.	<p><b><u>PERSONNEL CONSIDERATIONS</u></b></p> <p>There were no personnel considerations arising from this report.</p>
7.	<p><b><u>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</u></b></p> <p>The PCC has a statutory duty under Section 14 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act to consult with ratepayers on budget and precept proposals.</p>
8.	<p><b><u>EQUALITIES AND HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS</u></b></p> <p>This report 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. As the consultation was open to all it has supported the equality requirements.</p> <p>Consideration has been given to requirements of the Articles contained in the European Convention on Human Rights and the Human Rights Act 1998 in preparing this report.</p>

9.	<b><u>RISK</u></b> The risk identified in this report is low as the Commissioner is discharging his statutory duties in carrying out this consultation.
10.	<b><u>PUBLIC INTEREST</u></b> This report will be available to the public on the OPCC website.
11.	<b><u>CONTACT OFFICER</u></b> Jessica Tippins – Engagements Officer <a href="mailto:jessica.tippins@gwent.pnn.police.uk">jessica.tippins@gwent.pnn.police.uk</a>
12.	<b><u>ANNEXES</u></b> <b>Annex A – Detailed Consultation Findings Report</b>  18.01.23 FINAL SNAP Report.pdf