



10 January 2025

Dear all,

We are writing to provide an update on Wiltshire Police's financial position, the policing budget challenges faced in the future and the measures being taken by both our offices to address these.

The Home Office's police funding settlement, announced last month, leaves Wiltshire Police facing significant shortfalls which need to be addressed. This is not particular to Wiltshire – every police force in the country are facing these financial challenges.

The funding settlement, and formula it is based upon, assumes all PCCs will take the maximum precept increase available to them.

And, despite previously identifying savings of £1.2m for 2025/26, the settlement means the Force is left with a budgetary deficit of an additional £5.2m.

Without an increase in the policing precept this gap would stand at an additional £9.8m on top of the already identified savings, so you can see the scale of what we are facing.

With a maximum permissible precept rise of 5.2%—equivalent to £14 per year (or £1.16 a month) for a Band D household, and which is now being consulted on, the gap can be plugged.

However, balancing the books this year – and ensuring the most effective and efficient police service in the future - necessitates further transformation and review of the way Wiltshire Police delivers its services to the public and we wanted to ensure you were kept updated as we embark on this.

A comprehensive savings plan – informed by Wiltshire Police – has now been outlined in the Police and Crime Commissioner's draft budget for 2025/26 ahead of next week's Wiltshire Police and Crime Panel meeting to scrutinise the proposals.

Notwithstanding the financial challenges outlined above, we want to reassure you of our joint commitment to continue improving the policing service provided.

We have committed to not reducing police officer numbers and continuing improvements in visible policing and public access to Force services.

Both of us are clear that, while there will be tough decisions ahead, we will not lose momentum in the strides made in improving the standard of service we deliver and our community engagement.

The savings proposed are focused primarily on efficiencies with our estate footprint, rationalising vehicle numbers and, where we must look at people, the aim is to reduce numbers by not recruiting into non-operational vacancies.

We are both determined that no police station with a public front counter will be affected and the increased use of our mobile police stations.

Wiltshire Police is on an improvement journey. Earlier this year it was lifted from Engage status, the enhanced support mechanism by HMICFRS after several areas were identified as inadequate in 2021/2022.

Following the most recent inspection, no areas have been graded as inadequate. We are also seeing improved 999 and 101 response times, increased officer visibility, and enhanced crime detection and justice outcomes.

We have both been clear these improvements do not come without cost and why it is vital we continue to invest in Wiltshire Police to ensure our communities not only are safer places to live, work and visit but so residents are also feeling safer too.

It is vital we make the right decisions to sustain Wiltshire Police's transformation journey. The rationalisation of our estate and fleet will allow investment where it matters most, ensuring Wiltshire Police becomes one of the most effective and efficient forces in the country.

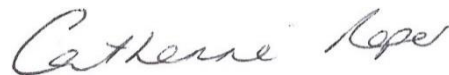
Earlier this week, "Use Your Voice: Budget and Precept" survey, inviting residents to share their thoughts on these financial proposals, was launched. The survey is open until Friday, 31 January 2025, and can be accessed here: [Use Your Voice: Police budget and precept consultation](#)

Your feedback is invaluable in shaping the decisions that will impact policing services across Wiltshire. Thank you for your continued engagement and support.

Yours faithfully



Phil Wilkinson OBE
Police and Crime Commissioner
for Wiltshire and Swindon



Catherine Roper
Chief Constable