

The Police and Crime Commissioner for Lincolnshire

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The Police and Crime Commissioner for Lincolnshire

REPORT TO THE POLICE & CRIME PANEL

POLICE & CRIME PLAN 2013-2017 AND PRECEPT 2013/14

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Police Reform & Social Responsibility Act 2011 (s.5(6)(c)) requires me to send the Police & Crime Panel a copy of my draft Police & Crime Plan. I am also required by the Act to notify the Police & Crime Panel of the precept which I am proposing to issue (Schedule 5 s.2).

2. POLICE & CRIME PLAN

- 2.1 During my election campaign I spoke to many hundreds of Lincolnshire residents about my vision for policing the County in which we are privileged to live. There was a great deal of positivity, and I was heartened by the number of people who spoke publicly and privately to me about their problems and ideas; about the value of volunteers; about victims and witnesses of crime, and about the vulnerable in society.
- 2.2 I was constantly reminded of my obligations to the people of Lincolnshire, and I am pleased to say that, in letters and email, and at meetings since my election as the County's first Police and Crime Commissioner, that level of engagement is continuing. People do care about this County, and they care about their communities.
- 2.3 During the election campaign I made a firm commitment to listen to the people of Lincolnshire. I launched my proposed Police & Crime Plan on 14 January 2013 and invited comment from partners and the people of Lincolnshire.
- 2.4 Many people have spoken to me about my plan and we have received many responses in writing by a variety of routes. I have considered all the responses and in some cases tweaked the wording of my plan as a result.
- 2.5 The people of Lincolnshire have put their faith and trust in me, and I have no intention of letting them down. I am confident that my proposed Police and Crime Plan reflects their priorities.

2.6 My proposed Plan is attached as Annex A to this report, however, here are some of the main points:

- There is a downward trend in crime in Lincolnshire. Police presence is key to this continuing. I am therefore committed to maintaining 1,100 police officers. To ensure this, I have brought forward the recruitment of 23 police officers.
- With the help of the Chief Constable, I am introducing Volunteer Police Community Support Officers (VPCSOs). This is part of a wider plan to offer more opportunities for the people of Lincolnshire to make a real contribution to the policing of our County. Together with an expansion of our special constabulary and non-uniform volunteer roles, it is my ambition to have 1,000 Lincolnshire volunteers working alongside our employed officers and staff.
- I am aware that some people feel there is a lack of a visible police presence in their area. In addition to my plans for increasing volunteering opportunities and maintaining officer numbers, unless there is an operational reason not to, in future all police officers will wear their uniform when on duty and all police vehicles involved in front line policing will be clearly marked.
- As I pledged during my election campaign, police stations will not be closed where there is a demonstrable operational/community need. I am investigating the possibility of sharing the use of some of our police stations with the local community.
- In the Plan, I have recognised that partnership working is vital. It is impossible to prevent crime and ensure the safety of our communities without us all working together. In addition to the commitments I have made in the Plan, in the coming weeks I will announce how I will fund community safety initiatives and projects that support victims in partnership with others across the County.
- Alcohol is the cause of much anti-social behaviour. I am committed to zero tolerance of unlawful and nuisance street drinking.

2.7 In summary, I believe I have a Plan that will see crime reduce, deliver a fair deal for the people of Lincolnshire and provide police and services that are there when you need them. I can achieve all this against a background of continuing Government austerity because I have carried out a thorough and far reaching review of expenditure that has involved every aspect of the way in which we police the County. Savings have been identified that I am confident will enable the entirety of my Plan to be implemented effectively and also mean that I can set a precept within Government parameters.

3. POLICE PRECEPT

- 3.1 The Government announced its Provisional Police Grant settlement for 2013/14 on 19 December 2012. I should emphasise that the settlement is still provisional at this stage; I understand that it will be debated by Parliament during February 2013, following which I will receive confirmation of the government grant that is being made available to me.
- 3.2 The Government has yet to announce the Police Grant settlement for 2014/15. Whilst there remains uncertainty in respect of 2014/15, I believe that it is important for us in Lincolnshire to have robust plans into the medium term and to set my precept for 2013/14 in that context. I am also aware that public sector spending pressures will extend beyond the current spending review period. As a result, I have made a number of prudent assumptions in respect of 2014/15 on which my plans for that year are based.
- 3.3 The tables below, together with the supporting commentary, set out the funding assumptions that underpin my precept proposals (2012/13 figures are included for comparative purposes).

Policing Grants

		2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
3.4	Police Grant	65,805	64,772	61,533
3.5	Security Grant	375	375	375
	Total Home Office Grants	66,180	65,147	61,908
3.6	LCC PCSO Funding	1,500	1,500	1,500
3.7	Total Policing Grants	67,680	66,647	63,408
	Change		-1,033	-3,239
			-1.53%	-4.86%

- 3.4 Police Grant for 2013/14 is as announced in the provisional settlement. For 2014/15, the Police Grant figure represents a reduction of 5% over 2013/14 to reflect: the reduction implied in the 2010 Spending Review (-2.2%); the reduction in respect of public sector pay restraint implied in the Autumn Statement 2011 (-0.8%); and the further reduction in departmental spending announced in the Autumn Statement 2012 (-2%).
- 3.5 The level of Security Grant has yet to be announced by the Government: I am assuming the same level of Security Grant as in 2012/13 for both 2013/14 and 2014/15.
- 3.6 I welcome Lincolnshire County Council's intention to continue to provide support in 2013/14 for the provision of Police Community Support Officers in our county. For planning purposes, I am assuming the same level of support in 2014/15.
- 3.7 Overall, Policing Grants in 2013/14 are assumed to reduce by £1.033 million (1.53%) compared with 2012/13, with a further reduction of £3.239 million (4.86%) in 2014/15.

Community Safety Grant

		2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
3.8	Community Safety Grant		587	587

- 3.8 Community Safety Grant for 2013/14 is as announced in the provisional settlement. Whilst I am aware that the government intends to roll this into Police Grant in 2014/15, I have included it as a separate item in the table above for comparative purposes.
- 3.9 The vast majority of drugs, crime and community safety funding that the Home Office currently provides to a range of partners will cease at the end of this financial year (2012/13). The Government has been unclear about what funding will cease and this creates considerable uncertainty in managing this area. Instead, Police and Crime Commissioners are receiving funding from a transitional and un-ring fenced Community Safety Fund. Nationally, the funding has been reduced and has been allocated locally according to the current allocation of those funding streams which are ending.

Council Tax Grants and Council Tax

		2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
3.10	Council Tax Compensation Grant	1,058	1,058	1,058
3.11	Council Tax Support Grant	-	5,757	5,757
3.12	Council Tax	44,317	39,563	40,556
3.13	Total Council Tax Grants & Council Tax	45,375	46,378	47,371
	Change		1,003	993
			2.21%	2.14%

- 3.10 Council Tax Compensation Grant, which relates to the former Police Authority's precept decision in 2011, is as previously announced for both 2013/14 and 2014/15.
- 3.11 Council Tax Support Grant is a new grant to compensate for the loss of precept income as a result of the introduction of localised Council Tax Support Schemes and is as announced in the provisional settlement for 2013/14. I am assuming the same level of support in 2014/15.
- 3.12 The government has set a threshold of 2% for council tax increases in 2013/14, above which a local referendum would be triggered. Following my recent election, I have no desire to trigger a costly local referendum: I understand that the cost of a referendum would be of the order of £0.5 million with a further £0.5 million if a council tax rebilling exercise proved necessary. I am also aware that a Council Tax Freeze Grant would be available from the government, equivalent to a 1% increase in council tax, if I were to maintain the council tax in 2013/14 at its 2012/13 level. However, my priority is to maintain police officer numbers so I am assuming that the level of Council Tax will increase by 2% in each of 2013/14 and 2014/15. I am also making a prudent assumption about the

growth in the Council Tax Base (0.5% per annum) to reflect the risk to the collection rate as a result of the introduction of localised Council Tax Support schemes.

- 3.13 Overall, I am assuming that income from Council Tax Grants and Council Tax in 2013/14 will increase by £1.003 million (2.21%) compared with 2012/13, with a further increase of £0.993 million (2.14%) in 2014/15.

Policing Grants & Council Tax Summary

		2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
	Policing Grants	67,680	66,647	63,408
	Council Tax Grants & Council Tax	45,375	46,378	47,371
3.14	Total Recurrent Funding	<i>113,055</i>	113,025	110,779
	Change		-30	-2,246
			-0.03%	-1.99%
3.15	Earmarked Reserve			1,500
3.16	Total	<i>113,055</i>	113,025	112,279
	Change		-30	-746
			-0.03%	-0.66%

- 3.14 Taking Policing Grants, Council Tax Grants and Council Tax together results in a reduction in funding in 2013/14 of £0.030 million (0.03%) compared with 2012/13, with a further reduction of £2.246 million (1.99%) in 2014/15.
- 3.15 In addition to the recurrent funding streams set out in the table above, I am planning to make available £1.5 million, drawn from an earmarked reserve, to smooth the reductions over the two year planning period.
- 3.16 This mitigates the funding reduction on 2014/15 to £0.746 million (0.66%) compared with 2013/14.

4. EXPENDITURE

- 4.1 My expenditure plans are aligned with my priorities as set out in my Police and Crime Plan 2013-2017 and reflect my intention to maintain police officer numbers. A summary of my plans indicating the cost pressures and savings associated with the main expenditure heads is set out in the table below.

Heading	Base Budget 2012/13	Cost Pressures 2013/14	Savings 2013/14	Proposed Budget 2013/14	Cost Pressures 2014/15	Savings 2014/15	Proposed Budget 2014/15
Police Officers	58,124	728	-1,136	57,716	329		58,045
Local Policing	4,782	174	-117	4,839	38		4,877
Crime Command	6,061	168	-443	5,786	34	-50	5,770
Operations Command	1,433	139	-272	1,300	-52		1,248
Regional Collaboration	2,482		-32	2,450		-100	2,350
Major Incidents	915		-175	740		-250	490
Strategic Partnership	20,404	1,709		22,113	291		22,404
Lincs Road Safety Partnership	-248			-248			-248
Organisational Support	8,278	29	-1,280	7,027	75	-484	6,618
OPCC & HQ ¹	5,891	429	-470	5,850	155	-579	5,426
Capital Financing & Other	4,933	1,434	-915	5,452	606	-759	5,299
Grand Total	113,055	4,810	-4,840	113,025	1,476	-2,222	112,279

4.2 Cost pressures in 2013/14 total £4.81 million with savings of £4.84 million. In 2014/15, cost pressures amount to £1.476 million with savings of £2.222 million.

4.3 In terms of Community Safety Grants I am planning to make grants in both 2013/14 and 2014/15 at a level commensurate with the identified funding i.e. £0.587m per annum once there is clarity over the funding grants transferred by the Government and in close consultation with our partners. I have also set aside a sum of £0.030m per annum to finance my intention to create a fund to support community and volunteer initiatives.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 The funding constraints are challenging – that is why securing a fair deal for the people of Lincolnshire by getting a better share of the national funding pot is identified as a priority in my Police and Crime Plan.

5.2 The government has set a threshold of 2% for council tax increases in 2013/14, above which a local referendum would be triggered. Following my recent election, I have no desire to trigger a costly local referendum. My priority is to maintain police officer numbers so I am proposing that the level of Council Tax will increase by 2% in 2013/14 and planning for a similar increase in 2014/15.

¹ Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Headquarters

5.3 The impact on Council Taxpayers is set out in the table below – for the majority of Lincolnshire residents this equates to an increase of 6p or less per week.

BAND	2012/13 £	2% increase	2013/14 £	2% increase
		£ p.a.		£ per week
A	124.26	2.46	126.72	0.05
B	144.97	2.87	147.84	0.06
C	165.68	3.28	168.96	0.06
D	186.39	3.69	190.08	0.07
E	227.81	4.51	232.32	0.09
F	269.23	5.33	274.56	0.10
G	310.65	6.15	316.80	0.12
H	372.78	7.38	380.16	0.14