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Sent via Email.

Dear Commissioner,

Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner Precept for 2025/26

Pursuant to Schedule 5 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 and the Police and Crime Panels (Precepts and Chief Constable Appointments) Regulations 2012, I am writing to you to formally notify you of the decision of the Surrey Police and Crime Panel regarding your proposed precept for 2025/26.

At its public meeting of 3 February 2025, the following recommendation was presented to the Panel:

- **That the Panel endorse the Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner's proposal to increase the Precept for a Band D property by £14, being a 4.3% increase, to £337.57 in 2025/26.**

The Police and Crime Panel reviewed the precept proposal. In accordance with paragraph 3.7 of the Surrey Police and Crime Panel's Constitution, **a recorded vote** was requested by three panel members. Four panel members voted for the precept proposal, four panel members voted against, and there was one abstention. With the Chairman's casting vote the majority of the Surrey Police and Crime Panel did not approve the PCC's proposal to increase the Band D Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner Precept by £14 to £337.57

In accordance with the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 a veto must be agreed by two-thirds of the full panel membership, which equates to nine panel members. That requirement was not met, therefore the panel records

- (i) **That a majority of the Surrey Police and Crime Panel in attendance did not approve the PCC's proposal to increase the Band D Property Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner Precept by £14 to £337.57, on the use of the Chairman's casting vote**
- (ii) **That the requirement for a veto to be agreed by two-thirds of the full panel membership, which equates to 9 panel members, was not met.**

- (iii) **That the panel accepted that the PCC's proposal to increase the Band D Property Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner Precept by £14 to £337.57 will come into effect; and**
- (iv) **That the panel would formally report to the Commissioner noting its concerns and reasons for not supporting the proposed precept by 8 February 2025.**

In reaching its position, panel members noted the following:

- The panel's shared desire to help the Chief Constable for Surrey Police, and to maintain the Force's financial sustainability.
- Historic rates of inflation, including pay inflation, and other pressures outside of the Force's control which contribute to the medium-term funding gap, and the concern that a rise below the maximum allowable may risk Surrey Police being 'left behind' due to a funding gap that increases in future years, potentially requiring greater subsequent savings. The referendum limit on the council tax precept makes it important that the precept does not fall below inflation and other funding pressures in the medium term.

However, panel members also noted:

- Cost-of-living pressures continue to impact many and exert severe pressure on some residents of Surrey, something that members felt makes it difficult to justify another above-inflation increase while there are also funds available for transfer into reserves. The panel felt that the delivery of efficiency savings is vital given pressures on residents and the Commissioner's responsibility to scrutinise the Force's saving's programme.
- Levels of precept increase proposed by the Police and Crime Commissioner continue to be cumulatively above the rate of inflation and typically the maximum rate allowable.
- The change in the phrasing of the public consultation survey questions offers less information on resident preferences about potential different levels of precept than in previous years.
- The panel continue to encourage the adoption of specific targets (in addition to the use of the Data Hub) to aid transparency and enable progress against objectives to be monitored.

All panel members have previously discussed the fact that Surrey Police is uniquely disadvantaged by the current funding formula, being the only force in England where the contribution from ratepayers exceeds that from Government and that a revised funding formula, rather than an increased precept, was a more appropriate way to meet Surrey's needs in the long term. It should be noted that the Chairman of the panel recently wrote to the Home Secretary again to lobby for changes on this matter.

Thank you for your engagement with the precept scrutiny process and for the clear and insightful briefings which staff from your Office and Surrey Police provided to the Police and Crime Panel's Finance Sub-group.

Yours sincerely,



