

PCC gives public their say on policing budget

Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Police and Crime Commissioner Rupert Matthews has launched a countywide survey asking residents their views as he prepares next year's budget.

Around 58 per cent of Leicestershire Police's total funding comes from central Government, with the remainder raised locally through the police 'precept'. This is the portion of council tax local people pay towards policing.

Amidst a challenging economic climate, the Commissioner has difficult decisions to make to ensure he sustains Leicestershire Police's exceptional performance and continues to build on the force's capabilities with new technology and resources to keep the public safe.

As a result, he is consulting the public on his budget and asking residents whether they would support paying a small increase in the proportion of their council tax bill they pay towards policing to help him strengthen local policing.

The survey asks residents whether they would be willing to pay an extra 19p, 23p or 29p per week for a Band D property.

Mr Matthews said: "The current financial landscape for policing is the most challenging for a decade. A nationally-set pay agreement for our local workforce working 24/7, inflation, and fuel costs have all put significant pressure on budgets.

"This is why, while asking you what is important to you, I have no choice but to ask for an increase in the amount of council tax you pay towards policing.

"I appreciate that the increase in the cost of living is proving difficult for many of us. Unfortunately, the police service is not exempt from the impact of energy increases, pay rises and other inflationary pressures.

"The intention is to invest to save - with better technology, support mechanisms and systems - to give Leicestershire Police more time with communities to prevent crime and find criminals."

2022 was marked by a series of achievements for both the Commissioner and the force including no fewer than three outstanding grades in Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Service's (HMICFRS) latest round of inspections.

Additionally, the force remains on track to recruit an uplift in police officers and has reached its highest-ever level of women serving as police officers in the process following a huge recruitment drive.

"Keeping people safe, protecting our communities and maintaining a visible and reassuring presence on our streets will always be my vision for policing. Times are hard and as other services are stretched it is vital for the police to be equipped and resourced to do their job," said Mr Matthews.

"I remain committed to sustaining and strengthening local policing. To do this, I need your help to give our frontline what they need. Please consider whether you are willing to pay a little more to do this."

To complete the survey please visit: <https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/7146840/Budget-Survey-2023-2024>.