



# Councillor Newsletter

*February, 2018*

## Welcome

Welcome to February's Councillor e-newsletter to keep you informed of news and developments on policing and crime and the work of my office.

I was pleased to be able to approve the medium term police budget at the end of last month, ensuring that Thames Valley Police continue to deliver an efficient and effective service to the public.

Over the last 7 years £99m has been removed from the Thames Valley Police budget and a further £14.3m savings need to be made over the next 3 years. The force has risen to this challenge and managed to make efficiency savings across the organisation, however, with demands on policing continuing to increase we have now reached the stage that any further cuts would have a fundamental impact on the front line.

The policing settlement we received from the government before Christmas allowed for an increase in funding to local policing but that additional funding has to be raised by increasing the local council tax.



This increase which is the equivalent of £12 a year for a band D house, has allowed Thames Valley Police to set a 3 year budget that both protects the current level of policing and allows for additional resource in areas of demand such as protecting vulnerable people and child sexual exploitation as well as investments in new technology. I am delighted that it has enabled me to stop some cuts to the front line that I had grave misgivings about. Included in this are such things as our horses which provide a valuable service across the whole of the South of England.

The budget was still a challenging one to set and demand on the police will need to be continuously reviewed over the coming months and years to ensure that it remains fit for purpose.



## Results of public consultation on raising Council Tax

The Police and Crime Commissioner carried out a public consultation last month seeking the views of residents on raising local Council Tax in order to protect local policing.

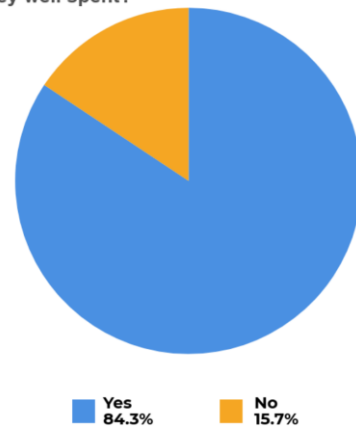
An online survey was conducted which closed on 11 January. 5,600 people were surveyed and nearly 85% agreed to an increase in council tax to fund policing.

Of those who opposed the increase the majority felt that Thames Valley Police should manage on existing budgets, make further savings or review their spending priorities or that additional funding should be provided by government through income tax or savings made elsewhere at national level.

The full breakdown of the survey results can be found [here](#).

Following the survey results, the Police and Crime Commissioner made the decision to increase the

Do you think an extra £12 per year in council tax, for a Band D property, to protect operational policing would be money well spent?



policing element of the council tax.

Anthony Stansfeld, Police and Crime Commissioner said “Like many who took part in the survey, I strongly believe that the additional funding should come directly from government and I will continue to highlight this to the Home Secretary and the Policing Minister. However, to ensure that we protect the front line I have made the decision to increase the police element of the council tax by £12 for the equivalent of a Band D property.



## New service to support victims of crime

A brand new service to support victims, witnesses and family members affected by crime has been announced by the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Thames Valley Partnership, a well-established local charity, has been awarded the contract for the Emotional Support and Advocacy (ESA) Service following a formal tender process which began in October 2017.

From early April, the ESA Service will offer individualised and group support to adults affected by many different forms of crime, including violent crime, burglary, robbery, fraud and repeat episodes of anti-social behaviour.

Anthony Stansfeld, Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley said “This contract forms a key part in the re-design of my services to support victims of crime across Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire. The service will be able to assist a victim or witness through any criminal proceedings, as well as provide further emotional support to help them cope with the impact of the crime. The need to provide advocacy services to victims is something that has been previously highlighted and I am delighted that this will also form part of the service.

“I look forward to working further with Thames Valley Partnership and I hope that the Emotional Support and Advocacy Service, alongside my new Victims First Hub and other services, will go some way in ensuring that any victim or witness who requires help can receive the tailored support they need.”

The new ESA Service joins a suite of other services for victims funded by the PCC to help those

affected by crime, which includes a Young Victims Service, an Independent Sexual Violence Advisory Service, and a Restorative Justice Service.

Follow our [Victims First Facebook](#) page for information on victims services and crime prevention advice.

