



Council tax precept 2015-2016



Policing in austerity certainly has its challenges, but I am pleased to say that Lancashire Constabulary is meeting those challenges well and in the last few months was ranked among the top forces in the country by HMIC (Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary).

Austerity though comes at a price and we begin the new financial year with 700 fewer officers and 560 less staff than we had in 2011.

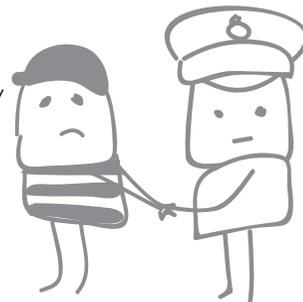
In total the police and crime budget for Lancashire has seen £60m in cuts to date and by 2017/18 we will have lost more than £80m: each year it becomes harder to meet these tough new financial challenges.

Through consultation a significant number of residents told me that they are prepared to pay more for police through the council tax. That is why I made the difficult decision to increase bills by 1.99%. Although the rise is only 6p per week or £3.12 a year increase for the average Band D bill across the county this will raise an extra £1.2m to help mitigate some – but not all – of the cuts this year. What the money will not do is pay for more officers on the streets, as we are still facing significant cuts, but it will help to save a number of roles and for that I thank you for your positive support.

Keeping residents safe

When I was elected I promised to be the voice of the public in policing. You have told me through extensive research and consultation just how important the police are to you and what your priorities are. On that basis I made a commitment to residents when setting the budget for the year. I promised that:

- Residents will be kept safe round the clock. If they need to call the police, their call will be answered and they officers will respond proportionately and appropriately to the situation.
- Crimes will continue to be investigated proportionately, prioritising crimes that have the biggest impact on victims and are seen as important in terms of priorities for the public of Lancashire.
- Local policing teams will continue to cover every inch of Lancashire. The public will know how to get in touch with their local teams and local teams will know their local area.
- Partnership working will continue to be enhanced where possible to reduce harm and to protect the most vulnerable.
- Citizens in Policing and the Specials will involve more people in community safety and improving their local areas.
- Resources will be allocated to serious crimes such as child protection, counter-terrorism, CSE and organised crime, which sometimes can be perceived as the unseen aspects of policing.



Budget Analysis

BUDGET ANALYSIS	£m
2014/15 Budget requirement	266.024
Add: Provision for Inflation	2.997
Add: Additional Demand Pressures	2.775
Add: Provision for strategic investment reserve	1.638
Less: Savings	-13.399
Less: Additional specific grant funding	-1.164
2015/16 Budget requirement	258.871



£80m savings
by 2017/18

Expenditure and Income

EXPENDITURE AND INCOME	2014/15 £m	2015/16 £m	2015/16 per head £m
Gross Revenue Expenditure	285.26	279.85	190.52
Less: Income	-19.24	-20.98	-14.28
Net Budget requirement	266.02	258.87	176.24
Less: Central Government funding	203.30	193.57	131.78
Council Tax Requirement	62.72	65.30	44.46
Band D equivalent (£)	155.96	159.06	

Visibility

As we have fewer officers it becomes vital we invest in technology to help them maintain the high level of services and visibility in local areas. The way we police areas has not changed and is being enhanced through investments in technology to enable our officers to work more efficiently this year. We will be rolling out mobile handheld devices that will enable police to stay in their areas for longer and provide them with instant access to investigations and information to enable them to their job effectively.

In addition your neighbourhood policing teams will be keeping in touch with you through the In the Know bulletins and we will be launching a new police website that will enable you the members of the public, to contact officers and report non-urgent crimes online, reducing pressure on other areas of the force.

New Police Station

This year we will open a brand new police station in Accrington. The neighbourhood team will relocate to converted premises in Broadway in the town centre from the outdated building at Spring Gardens. The move will make significant savings to the cost of running a station in Accrington and should be complete by the end of 2015.

I also expect work to begin on the new divisional headquarters in the West of the county and more details will follow soon.



Victims' Services

From April I become responsible for providing victims' services for Lancashire following a decision by the Ministry of Justice to transfer responsibilities to Police and Crime Commissioners. My team is working to ensure the services delivered are tailored to the needs of local communities, to ensure victims of all crimes and anti-social behaviour get the level of support they need.

These services are vital and provides me with a unique opportunity to get things right and improve services for Lancashire's residents – and I am determined to do both of those things.

Services will include a Lancashire-based hub which victims can contact for direct support, or to be referred on to a specialist organisation; support for victims of rape and sexual assault; support for victims of hate crime incidents; a service for under-18s and a restorative justice service.

