

### Budget Consultation 2019/20 Summary

#### **Background**

The Police and Crime Commissioner launched his precept consultation on 17 December 2018. The consultation ended at midnight on 20 January 2018. A precept proposal and the *Draft Budget 2019/20 & Draft Medium Term Financial Plan 2019/20 – 2021/22* were published as part of the consultation process, along with a short online survey to enable people to comment on the proposals being put forward.

#### **Headline results**

The majority of respondents, **75%**, were in support of the precept proposal put forward by the Commissioner. **25%** did not agree with the proposal.

#### **Commissioner's response to the comments received**

217 respondents chose to comment on the proposal, the majority of whom supported the proposal. The comments have been grouped into themes, based on the predominant message in each comment, further detail is provided in the *Consultation Findings* section below. Rather than annotating each individual comment with the Commissioner's response, a response to each of the main themes is shown below.

#### **Officer numbers / police visibility / police presence** (all supported the proposal)

The many comments made by people around their own local experiences of crime and policing are consistent with feedback from our communities in West Mercia received before this consultation. That feedback, over an extended period of time, that our communities want more police officers, and they want to see them out on the streets, tackling crime and keeping us safe is the driving force behind these budget proposals. My draft budget gives a clear demonstration how that feedback has been listened to. The provision for a further increase of 115 police officers for West Mercia comes on top of. This is additional to the 100 posts I announced in September, and would take the force to 2,145 officers. The highest level seen since 2012.

**Rural crime** – The comments received regarding rural crime are consistent with feedback from our communities previous to the precept consultation. I have taken this feedback on board and worked to ensure these views are represented in my budget proposals. Our rural communities are a central consideration in my plans to increase officer numbers, improve police visibility, and add further dedicated resources specifically for tackling rural crime.

**Political comment** - I have consistently lobbied the Government both for increased resources for police, and a fairer formula that would give West Mercia a greater slice of the national police funding pot. I am grateful to the Home Secretary, who has clearly listened to those views on police funding and delivered a £2.3m increase in central funding for West Mercia in 2019/20. This is the first time an increase in

central grant funding has been possible since 2010 and takes West Mercia's central funding to £122.4m next year. I welcome the additional flexibility around the precept afforded to Commissioners by Government this year. It places local accountability with local Commissioners, which I believe is appropriate. Our police have traditionally been funded by a combination of central funding from Government and local taxation. It is still the case that around 57% of West Mercia's funding comes from central funding.

**Resources** - Demand on police forces nationally has increased significantly in recent years. This is due to a number of factors, including improved recording of crime, the emergence of complex types of crime such as cyber-crime and sexual violence, and the demand placed on policing by mental health issues within communities. I promised I would ensure our police force has the resources to respond effectively to changing demand and I am committed to continuing the necessary work to reform and modernise the police force to meet these demands. My budget proposals have been informed by input from West Mercia Police around the resources needed to not only respond positively to changing demand, but also to take more of a pro-active approach. This will help ensure more crimes are prevented and enable the force to more effectively manage its demand by working closely with the community and partners.

**Inefficiencies / alliance** – My budget proposals do not diminish my commitment to delivering further efficiencies and necessary reform within policing for our communities. Transformation within West Mercia Police is an ongoing process, and will remain a key focus in the coming year and beyond. This change includes exiting the current strategic alliance with Warwickshire Police which, in its current guise, is no longer in the best interests of West Mercia's communities nor its police force.

**Financial burden on households** – I am very conscious of increasing the precept and the fact that money is tight for many in our communities. This is not a decision I have taken lightly, but I believe is in line with the clear weight of community feedback I have heard, both during this consultation and beyond that period. My track record as Commissioner shows I have delivered the lowest increases to the police's share of council tax across England and Wales in each of the last two years. This year, my proposal remains one of the lowest increases nationally. I am not recommending the maximum possible council tax rise because I do not believe it is necessary and I am ensuring that all of the additional money raised through tax increases will go directly into delivering additional officer numbers in West Mercia.

### **Consultation summary**

Outlined below is a summary of publicity undertaken, details of the questions asked, findings from the survey and a copy of the comments received.

### **Publicity and media coverage**

A range of communication tools were used to promote the precept consultation to communities across West Mercia. These included:

Holding a Facebook Live public Holding Account Meeting on the budget immediately prior to the precept proposal being made. This provided the PCC with a more general understanding of public concerns around the police budget and also provided an opportunity to promote the launch of the precept proposals

Posting full details, including the draft budget and medium term financial plan report on the Commissioner's website

Social media: The advert ran on Facebook and Instagram from 9th Jan – 18th Jan. It was set for audiences aged 18+ right across West Mercia. Changes to Facebook rules prevented this advert from being run earlier. Statistics show that the total reach for the advert was 66,976, total impressions for the advert were 117,195 and total clicks on the advert were 1,551. These adverts supplemented this with numerous other social media posts throughout the consultation. The PCC's standard Facebook posts had a total reach of 17,463 during the consultation and Twitter posts had a total reach of 36,146.

Two media releases, resulting in the following coverage: BBC News (online). Radio interviews with the PCC on BBC Radio Shropshire, BBC Hereford & Worcester, Free Radio, Heart Radio, Gold, Capital West Midlands. Print and online coverage in Shropshire Star (3 x articles), Worcester News, Hereford Times, Whitchurch Herald, Malvern Gazette, Redditch Advertiser, Redditch Standard, Bromsgrove Advertiser, Ludlow Advertiser, Shropshire Live.

External promotion via: the PCCs newsletter, direct emails to the associations of local councils for distribution via their networks across West Mercia, the Police Community Messaging System.

Internal promotion via the police internal postmaster and an intranet article

### **The consultation survey**

An online survey was used to ascertain views on the Commissioner's precept proposals. In addition, the draft budget and medium term financial report was clearly signposted and available to read for anyone requiring more detailed information prior to completing the survey.

The online survey asked either 4 or 5 questions depending upon the answer given to question 1. The survey included one open question enabling respondents to comment on their reasons for either supporting or opposing the proposals. The questions asked were:

**Question 1** – Do you support the proposals to increase police numbers and visibility in West Mercia, in return for the increase in council tax?

**Question 2** – Only those respondents answering 'No' to question 1 then saw an additional question asking: For what reason do you not support the PCC's proposal? Respondents were asked to choose one of the following two answer option:

I would increase Council Tax more than is being proposed, in order to deliver the most possible funding for police officers.  
I think the increase in Council Tax it too much.

**Question 3** – Please state in which part of West Mercia you pay your Council Tax

**Question 4** – Are you responding on behalf of a business?

**Question 5** – Do you have any other comments?

### Consultation findings

#### Overall response

344 respondents partially or fully completed the survey.

#### Question 1

257 (75%) respondents supported the Commissioner's proposals.  
87 (25%) respondents were opposed to the Commissioner's proposals.

#### Question 2

This question was only seen by those respondents not supporting the PCC's proposal in question 1 and was answered by 86 of the respondents.

3 (3%) respondents answered by choosing *I would increase Council Tax more than is being proposed, in order to deliver the most possible funding for police officers.*  
83 (97%) respondents answered by choosing *I think the increase in Council Tax it too much*

#### Question 3

A breakdown of respondents by council tax area is shown below (for those that answered this question)

142 (41%) Worcestershire  
124 (36%) Shropshire  
42 (12%) Telford and Wrekin  
31 (9%) Herefordshire

#### Question 4

8 (2%) responses were received on behalf of a business.

#### Question 5

217 respondents chose to comment on their reasons for their answer to question one.

The word cloud below provides a visualisation of the predominant words from all the comments received.



157 respondents supporting the proposal commented as did 60 of those opposed to the proposal. A summary of all the comments is shown below, grouped by common theme or concern. It should be noted that a number of the comment referred to more than one theme and that there is a degree of subjectivity in the interpretation of each comment.

### **Main themes**

The main themes arising from the comments were:

**Officer numbers / police visibility / police presence** – all respondents mentioning these issues supported the proposals. Many respondents outlined very local concerns about the impact crime was having in their community.

**Rural crime** – comments from 12 people supporting the proposal were focused on rural crime, many considered this was an areas needing more attention. Two respondents opposed to the increase either because they didn't think it was a big problem or that it wouldn't make a difference.

**Political comment** – 22 respondents, 7 supporting the proposal and 15 opposed comments focused on the need for more central government funding for policing, criticised the government or thought the money should come centrally and not from local taxes.

**Resources** – a number of respondents supporting the proposals specifically mentioned the need for police resources to address issues such as safeguarding, mental health and road safety. One person opposed to the proposal said resources should be used for issues such as organised crime, not rural crime.

**Inefficiencies / Alliance** – 7 respondents supporting the proposals commented on the need for increase efficiency within the force. 12 respondents opposed, also commented on the efficiency of the force, a number were critical of force processes and systems. Two of those opposed made specific reference to the withdrawal from the alliance with Warwickshire Police

**Financial burden on households** – three respondents opposed to the proposals referred to the negative impact on household a council tax increase would have.

**Miscellaneous comments** – a number of respondents both for and against the proposals left a comment which does not directly fit into the above themes. The majority of those opposed the proposal simply don't want to pay any more council tax.

**General support** – a large number of those supporting the proposals just left a positive comment which did not align with any of the main themes.

### **Social media comments**

All social media platforms are monitored and where appropriate comments on the precept have been responded to, however the 'instant' nature of this media means it is not practical to include them in this report.

**Appendix to Budget Report**

<b>SUPPORT PROPOSAL</b>	<b>RESPONDENT COMMENT</b>
<b>Theme</b>	<b>Officer numbers /police visibility / police presence</b>
YES	Very supportive of paying additional tax if it goes towards additional frontline numbers
YES	Although we know that officers are in the area - there is no distinct visibility. We never see officers just patrolling at weekends - walking down the street, walking around the park engaging with the youngsters. Such a terrific opportunity to find out what's going on and engage with youths.
YES	Would be great to see more officers on the ground.
YES	I have answered yes on the basis that Rubery is gets its fair share of the additional increase of Police cover. This area is very poorly covered currently not helped by its location and cross over with West Mids. It's almost a Police no go area currently!
YES	I would like to see more officers out and about, talking to the public and checking out areas.
YES	More police should include more VISIBLE police.
YES	John Campion is to be congratulated in gripping this initiative in creating an extra 115 Police Officers for West Mercia. If the police and public require more officers to combat crime then quite rightly this cost has to met through local tax. £1.63 per month for a band D household is certainly not an unreasonable amount to pay. Given the number of officers who leave each year through retirement or seeking other opportunities is 115 enough?. How was this figure arrived at?.
YES	We most definitely do need more police and I don't mind if my council tax goes up in order for this to happen.....I welcome it.
YES	I wish it was a higher amount of police officers, I would pay even more a month to get a higher number. Im against single crewed, all police officerd should at least be in pairs.
YES	I am a former police officer with 30 years service. The public want to see a visible police presence, which is a primary crime deterrent.
YES	Agree that more money is needed to fund services such as police and fire,happy to pay more in my council tax.these services should be priority and a visible increase in police numbers is needed to help make public feel safe and that when crime is reported someone will turn up to help tackle it.
YES	There has been a huge increase in burglaries in Bayston Hill in recent weeks. We rarely see an officer at all in the village- it is clearly being targeted especially with such easy access to A5 to escape. I know many fellow villagers would feel much more safe and secure if there was to be an increased police presence in Bayston Hill.
YES	Increasing police officers 'on the beat' is very important but it is also important to have the same officers covering an area. This way they will know when something, or someone, is out of place. That was the power of a local/village bobby.
YES	As long as it will be for visual policing, actual police officers from all walks of life, not just graduates, I would support a council tax rise for this, I think any sensible person would support anything that will increase police numbers.
YES	These extra officers need to be visible, there are many petty criminals getting away with things who probably move on to more serious crimes, because they don't get caught. Even minor things like littering, graffiti and vandalism seem to have increased in recent years and it is years since I have seen an officer "on the beat" I am happy to pay more if the results are there.

**Appendix to Budget Report**

<b>SUPPORT PROPOSAL</b>	<b>RESPONDENT COMMENT</b>
YES	We need more visible policing on the streets. More response to home thefts and antisocial behaviour. We need to regain faith that a reported crime is taken seriously and dealt with.
YES	Lived in Blackwell (Bromsgrove) for 8 years and hardly ever see the police. I have never ever seen them on foot in my village or the town. I hope this could change. I respect and support the police keep up the good work but don't forget to look smart and easily identifiable.
YES	In our area we do not see a police presence even sometimes when a crime has been committed. We would welcome more available policemen and women visiting all rural areas but we would ask that they have the ability to help in a time of need. Trained officers would be most welcome.
YES	You need to look at policing in general, more police yes, but not queuing in Monkmoor fish bar for staff food in company cars, it looks bad. Drugs everywhere, business crime not dealt with correctly and blamed on shortage of staff by officers when questioned, I think your numbers need to treble, happy to pay for a safer community
YES	Brilliant that you will be increasing front line officers to fit crime in our region. My only comment and concerns would be that future increases in the number of police officers are again and continue to be part funded by community tax increases when surely this was covered by central government prior to the austerity cuts.
YES	Would like to see more police on the road dealing with poor and dangerous driving, also patrolling housing estates such as Beechwood Park and similar areas where gangs of children gather on their bikes and can be intimidating. It would be good to have a community police officer who makes themselves known to residents.
YES	I am concerned about the recent incidents of shoplifting in Church Stretton, allegedly committed by residents of Oak Bank. I believe Church Stretton should have its police strength returned to 1 Sergeant and 1 PC. Currently there is NO COVER because the sole PC is on firearms training and will only be replaced when he is substantively posted to somewhere else following successful completion of his training.
YES	We will pay anything for the more Police the better.
YES	A good cost effective proposal. Which will hopefully increase the number of officers on the beat in our towns and cites.
YES	The more officers the better. You do a great job under the most difficult circumstances.
YES	I am part of a neighbourhood watch scheme and wish to see a much more police presence around the areas. The police do a good job within the parameters given at the moment but it's not sufficient regarding the number of burglaries affecting our area at the present moment
YES	I have answered yes to the first question, however I would expect to see and increase in police officers in the area I live in for the money not in other areas of the Wrekin. I have only seen 2 police officer, once, walking the beat in Dothill area in the last 12 months. It don't feel this is very good value for the money the residents in the area contribute to your annual budget. They need to be visible to all residents not just a few in selected areas.
YES	Whilst I support investing in more police I think they should be shared fairly across the area, and should result in an increased presence- and visibility of 'bobbies on the beat'
YES	I support paying additional council tax so long as it all goes towards increasing Police Officer numbers.



**Appendix to Budget Report**

SUPPORT PROPOSAL	RESPONDENT COMMENT
YES	Ludlow policing is horrendous. Needs to be more visible
YES	As long as there are more visual patrols, more community engagement where possible, investigations that should be open and close cases are investigated in a more timely manner and the effect that the new officers have on the force crime statistics is reported, this is a positive action.
YES	A stronger police presence is needed and for the small amount of £1.63. it's definatly worth it.
YES	Extra police officers are desperately needed to help keep the force area as safe as possible
YES	Very pleased to hear that there will be an increase in Officer numbers. Happy to hear that more will be done to patrol the rural areas.
YES	Due to the increase of drug users, and burglaries and theft in Kidderminster I would definitely pay more in my council tax to see more police in our area.
YES	Can you share detail of where the extra police officers would be based? If all in eg Herefordshire, would be less happy as I'm paying in Shropshire. But if spread evenly - e.g. By county lines, good idea
YES	Only supportive if my home town of Newport gets extra police. I don't want to pay for other areas.
YES	More police ARE required..... to deal with REAL crime....
YES	It was the Conservative party since 2012 that cut the numbers so it's not an increase. I'd like to see the 100 or so officers to be working in uniform and be seen in the streets responding to 999 and higher level calls. Not to be based at a local level not working night shifts. A visible presence is needed, we want to see our Police out and about day and in the middle of the night.
YES	More traffic enforcement officers and greater visual presence in the local community. PLEASE
YES	Good to see more officers on the beat. Also, rural crime will be targeted more in the future.
YES	As a bookmakers with 3 sites across Evesham, we would hope that with an increase of officers would come an increase of visable patrols. There isn't much community engagement with ourselves, when we feel that this should be a place officers are engaging with, as the likelihood of crime can be substationally high. We have also had anti-social problems, and we believe this is down to a lack of visual patrols in and around town.
YES	Extra beat bobbies definitely needed in Telford we never see anyone and there is a lot of petty crime alongside the serious stuff
YES	we need more officers on the streets.As an ex officer myself I can see we need extra officers to combat the upsurge in crime.I accept there would be an increase in counciltax but its a small price to pay.
YES	I would be happy to pay even more than the small increase proposed to increase the numbers of police.
YES	Happy to pay for more officers if we get more out and about in local areas. We need a police presence in Newport, Shropshire, haven't seen many officers around since the station closed. .
YES	Why not increase the precept by the full £24 to increase police officer numbers more than planned Town's such as Shifnal where I live want to see more visible and accessible policing
YES	Ensure the extra officers are indeed extra and not just filling the holes already present from officers leaving/re training.

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<b>SUPPORT PROPOSAL</b>	<b>RESPONDENT COMMENT</b>
YES	I think we are all prepared to pay the modest increase in council tax when it means additional officers on our streets.
YES	As a member of the community I support your steps to add extra officers.
YES	I welcome the news about more funding for new officers. When i first read it, i thought it was instead of the original 100 officers. Now our PCC is going a step further and adding 115 on top of the 100. Keep up the good work.
YES	I think you should ask for double the amount and get the numbers up further to a figure that is in keeping with demand.
YES	It is important to increase police visibility as long as they are used effectively. In our local area we rarely see a police officer. We often invite them to our local parish council meetings so we can work collaboratively but they rarely, if ever, turn up. I appreciate they are busy people but collaborative working could be beneficial.
YES	Very rare I see a PO where I live, yet there are increased numbers of reports of crimes committed in our village so in return for another year of increased CT I would like to see more visible presence. We no longer have PACT meetings & the police updates at Parish Council meetings are often reports submitted to the meeting pack. We used to have a local officer & see them regularly their area is now SO big it's only when smthg happens they respond.
YES	More police presence is definitely welcome. Also any guidelines on what home security to install (types of camera etc) would be very much appreciated. Anything to let us know how we can help the police help us.
YES	I live in a rural area where my council tax includes money going towards police yet at the moment we never see police in this area even though unfortunately there is crime. If the increase in council tax means I would see more police presence in my area then I will happily support that increase. Not just for my area but for the other local towns where crime is also on the increase due to the lack of police.
YES	Bridgnorth needs a greater police presence, crime is on the up in our town due to the lack of policing.
YES	It. Is not much of a deterrent if the officers are seen in driving through in a police car. Need proper community policing. We need to know our designated officer on a personal basis. Facebook and Twitter are a good modern way to keep us informed. We need to know the face that goes with the name and number.
YES	Crime has risen in our area of Shropshire over the last few months. Burglaries have become weekly events in our small village. There are not enough resources to come Out to crimes or investigate any suspicious activity which has meant that crimes have then been comitted. Calling 111, we have been told that there is nothing that can be done. Police themselves have told us they cover such a wide area they cannot be everywhere. We fully support the raise in council tax and need more police.
YES	Crime is out of control in north shropshire. Please increase officer numbers
YES	Many burglaries in the north shropshire are not being investigated probably even though there is evidence available to police. Burglaries and thieving is happening weekly at present in the area and nothing appears to be getting done about it
YES	We are dangerously undermanned in rural Shropshire. There has been a huge increase in break - ins in and around Prees, near Whitchurch, but there is often nobody to respond when we report anything. We are sitting ducks, and there is nothing we can do about it. Only you can help.

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<b>SUPPORT PROPOSAL</b>	<b>RESPONDENT COMMENT</b>
YES	We support action to get more Police officers for the area.
YES	The area I live in has recently seen an increase in crime, particularly burglary. A higher police presence would deter this from happening as often. The village is home primarily to elderly people and families who are feeling more vulnerable in their homes because of this dplate in crime.
YES	There's just not enough police at the moment
YES	The police force seems to be really struggling and there seems to be an increase in crime. This has such a negative impact on my business and the price of my house! Not only the impact of theft but also people may think twice about coming to Market Drayton. There needs to be more police on the streets.
YES	It is hoped that any extra officers will be shared out around the whole area and not just added to the larger towns. There is a lack of a visible police presence in many of the market towns and villages.
YES	More police presence would deter a lot of the crime that seems to be happening in our town. We have a police station, which cost millions to build, standing empty, with the public not getting any or little response when they need it. The criminals know that it takes the police far too long to respond, and they take this to mean they can really get away with anything they do.
YES	What choice do I have other than to support the proposal? We definitely need more police and we need them through the night being visible. We are suffering a terrible surge in burglaries in Market Drayton currently, the perpetrators know there is zero chance of them being caught due to the lack of police presence. I fear that although your proposal sounds as though you are doing something productive it will not be nearly enough. We need a proper local police force with a 24 hour Police station.
YES	I have been a resident in Leominster for 30 years and have missed seeing the police walking around the town, building community relations. As a school bus driver, this is a concern to some of the parents. This should help to allieviate any concerns they may have.
YES	I am sick of the way taxis think they can go through red lights at the football end of regent street and how so many people do not have car seats or even use seatbelts for their children when picking them up from short wood primary school Why are the two takeaway places on the corner of watling street allowed openly pollute the street with fat and grease pouring down the drains If police are to be present will they be using their powers to stop cars going through red lights and provide safety
YES	Market Drayton is swamped with burglaries and blatant drug use, yet there is zero police visibility to deter them. It pretty much lawless here. Driving standards and parking issues too.
YES	I accept that policing is in dire need following years of governmental cuts. Despite a meagre increase from the gov grant, this is purely going to fund pension increases and not go into frontline policing. The public are, yet again, propping up public services out of necessity. I have accepted the increase on the basis that service protection and delivery is what is needed. Please use these funds to ensure that a patrol base exists again in Bromsgrove...an area neglected by visible presence
<b>Theme</b>	<b>General support</b>
YES	a better response to the increase in burglary in north Shropshire is required

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<b>SUPPORT PROPOSAL</b>	<b>RESPONDENT COMMENT</b>
YES	I would want to see it used in rural areas and response to crime calls
YES	The extra cost far outweighs the cost required to fund the Extra police re-source. A great idea
YES	The police need all the support we can give numbers are too low!
YES	The PCC is doing a great job - refreshing to see our community served so well.
YES	Police resources are stretched too thin, the more the better and the council tax increase is minimal
YES	Excellent idea at modest increase in precept.
YES	Funds recovered from the Proceeds of Crime Act should be used locally rather than going into a central pot to ensure that the cost of policing does not become an extra tax on the law abiding.
YES	No - fully supportive of these proposals.
YES	The failure to maximise the precept last year was a grave mistake A similar mistake this year is being made not to maximise precept 10 minus four please one is still a lot less than ten. There is little point in having the political capital of stating that precept increases have been constrained - if the day-day policing of West Mercia collapses
YES	Any worthwhile increase in policing is ok by me I seriously believe we have starved our police force for long enough. We need to back our force financially and with local intelligence as householders.
YES	Crime rates in our small town have risen drastically over the past few years. Don't feel safe on the streets in the dark after 8pm.
YES	The number of break ins in our town is getting ridiculous. Opportunists are aware of the reduced policing and are taking advantage of this. They need to be stopped and police need to be more visible. I honestly don't know the last time I saw any police personnel other than a rare sighting of a police car.
YES	We have had a lot of break ins in my area recently. Evidence has been left at the scene of one of the break ins but can not be tested due to the expense which is outrageous. More funding is definitely needed!
YES	I would be happy to contribute £5 per month if it went on policing
YES	£1.63 per month. What better value? Over a year, the total of £19.56 is less than the cost of a meal out for two. Daily, the cost is 5 and a half PENCE!! Cheap at twice the price. The PCC might do well to represent statistics to the public in this form to express what is frankly the miniscule cost of this proposal in relation to the huge potential benefits.
YES	The consequential increase in cost per household is minuscule when compared with the cost to a household that becomes a victim of crime. Investment in local policing solutions can only be a good thing
YES	A further increase in community policing will be necessary in order to combat increasing levels of burglaries, rural crime and anti-social behaviour. I would like to see plans for future policing increases over the next few years, which I will support, including the funding for it through council tax, reserves and cost recovery.
YES	I'm happy to pay more council tax if it means a safe town.
YES	I'm happy to pay more council tax if it means a safe town

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<b>SUPPORT PROPOSAL</b>	<b>RESPONDENT COMMENT</b>
YES	It is needed.
YES	I congratulate John Campion for getting a positive grip in recruiting more police officers. Yes, this will require additional funding through local taxes. This needs to be done and happy to pay to help reduce crime in West Mercia.
YES	Not even the price of a beer or packet of cigarettes and better value for all.
YES	Good news, well worth the £
YES	Worth every penny
YES	We need more officers and I am prepared to pay £20 more a year to pay for it.
YES	Happy to pay slightly more to support the work of West Mercia Police and ensure a safer operation throughout.
YES	Would happily pay more council tax if I knew the extra was going to the police and/or fire service.
YES	Keep up the good work
YES	If people moan about £1.60 increase but also moan about a lack of officers to deal with their issues then they're hypocrites.
YES	I believe the modest increase is both acceptable and essential.
YES	Would be money well spent , I live in a village called weobley dont very often see police here i have seen 2 police cars here since i moved here in march 2018, I would go as far to say ifyou asked for £3 a month extra would be well spent.
YES	This is a vital increase, for too long Chief officer and PCC have put too much pressure on officers and maintained that the budget cuts are fine. This honesty is long overdue
<b>Theme</b>	<b>Rural crime</b>
YES	Rural Crime needs additional support as this a rural county its sometimes overlooked .
YES	I live in a rural area which is poorly served by the police. Burglary is on the increase and is not being effectively tackled due to lack of resources.
YES	Police legitimacy requires working with communities. In rural Herefordshire maintaining neighbourhood policing is vital and we therefore support the increase in council tax. Local policing helps tackle local vulnerability and harm caused by crime and exploitation
YES	The rural communities lack police cover. Villages see an increase in crime yet no police doing regular checks in the area. More special constables as well as regulars need to be policing and more police time in villages rather than in offices. Local stations have closed meaning response is little to none due to distance to travel.
YES	We live in a rural community with lots of wildlife crime (deer coarsing especially and theft. We have started our own WhatsApp group along our 2.1/2 mile road to support each other. We are working very closely with West Mercia Police. I am now helping a councillor in Evesham to set up a similar group. This is the next step to Neighbourhood watch. We had a fantastic CPSO Phil Shoenrock who has recently retired. We don't know his replacement Communication is key between the Police and public.
YES	It is important to remember those of us in the rural communities who often do not have a loud voice as the population is so widely dispersed. Often people do not bother to report crime as they don't think anything will be done.

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<b>SUPPORT PROPOSAL</b>	<b>RESPONDENT COMMENT</b>
YES	Rural crime seems to be getting worse. I believe that residents are losing confidence in the ability of the police to tackle theft from dwellings. I suffered a break in & theft from our barn a few years ago which was reported & I got a crime number. The matter was passed onto our local community police officer who phoned me, he asked if I'd like a visit for security advice & despite accepting his offer, I never heard anything from him. He wastes time just chatting in the local shop & is useless.
YES	It is a well known fact that there are minimal patrolling PCs in the N. Shropshire area at night. This has led to a significant increase in break ins in rural areas. People feel that they can no longer rely on the police to do their job due to there being so few constables employed in this area and must take measures into their own hands to protect their livelihood. This is a very sad state of affairs which must be addressed.
YES	We are desperately short of response police officers in rural Shropshire with a significantly reduced number of officers covering several market towns. This threatens the safety of both the public and the officers patrolling the streets.
YES	We need to increase the number of police supporting rural areas. Currently resources are stretched thinly over large areas and whilst officers do the best job they can it means there is rarely any visible police presence to reassure communities and response times can often be lengthy. It is also very difficult to actually contact the police if required.
YES	We definitely need extra Police on the street in our rural village in North Shropshire. There has been a marked increase in the number of crimes recently. Additionally, having phoned 101 a couple of times recently, I was told that there was not enough resource for anyone to attend in the evening. When questioned, a local PCSO confirmed that the same resource would respond to both 101 and 999 calls, so in this instance, had my call been a 999 call, there would have been no resource to attend!
YES	I particularly note the additional budget for rural crime. I live only 4 miles outside shrewsbury but we never see a police officer and have a lot of issues with speeding in the village that would benefit from visible police presence on a regular basis
NO	We don't get any police presence in the rural areas , if you report any theft etc you don't want to know were given a crime number and that's it , Yiu don't care about those living in the sticks we're left out in the cold . No speed enforcement done , all we get are excuses , no enforcement over use if mobile phones whilst driving Holme kacy road , is a hot spot no enforcement of 1/2 tonne weight limit at Rotherwas railway bridge either , turn a blind eye to it all .
NO	Visibility of police is not necessarily a reflection of policing demand and I do not consider this justification for increasing council tax is valid. As a resident of a rural area I do not support an increase for addressing rural crime.
<b>Theme</b>	<b>Resources</b>
YES	I think it is really important to recognise the need for the increase in the police budget to allow them to have appropriate resources to safeguard the community.
YES	It isn't enough we are seeing an increase of officers leaving due to stress and complete lack of support from senior management and carrying too many crimes& expected to respond to calls. Diary appoint have been cut but now 3 dealing as opposed to 1, yet when someone comes in that needs to speak to someone the shift are still expected to do that. if the public knew just how few police are on shift they would have a fit. stand up to the gov. & tell them the truth don't sugar coat it

SUPPORT PROPOSAL	RESPONDENT COMMENT
YES	Obviously it would be far better for the government to commit central funding to vital services, but in the absence of any meaningful commitment, this feels like a reasonable stop-gap given how the force seems unable to respond to all but the most dangerous of call-outs. It would be good to know what kinds of officers the force intends to recruit, what training they will receive and how they will be designated to each area throughout the West Mercia catchment.
YES	Whilst a supporter of the Conservatives, more funding is required. Police numbers are too low. Focus should be on the crimes your electorate are most concerned with (Burglary, Car Theft and Anti-Social Quad Bike riders). Too much focus on softer issues, such as hurt feelings. More traffic Police and investigators to identify organised crime heads (I.e. prevention rather than just dealing with the actual crime).
YES	Ensure you staff the call centres adequately as the current frequent waiting means a high drop off rate which decreases the public's confidence in the police. This reduces our future willingness to report matters, so distorting the incident and crime statistics and reducing any valid claim you have for more funding!
YES	long over due increase to police resources
YES	I believe that to get value out of the budget focus should not just be about officer numbers, specialist areas should be supported by trained staff who do not need the power of arrest. I would be happy to increase the precept levy to the maximum recommended by government.
YES	Adding additional firearms officers to the force as there is currently a shortfall for the force.
YES	The use of the camera safety vans in West Mercia seems far higher than in other force areas compared to fixed location cameras, could this be a more long term saving solution for the frequently staffed black spots? Oswestry is also suffering far more in recent years from asb issues and violence is on the up. It's a large town and the staffing levels do not seem to reflect that, would the boost in funds and numbers address the issue?
YES	The police are so underfunded and under resourced in Shropshire. We used to have a local beat policeman. Interacting with the local community. Trouble and anti social behaviour plummeted. Now he and the station have gone, levels of anti social behaviour have increased.
YES	As police take on more and more mental health jobs it seems only fair to increase funding
NO	I feel extra resources should focus on organised crime targeting vulnerable children and adults, specifically county lines and CSE not on rural crime. That it my view should be the priority
<b>Theme</b>	<b>Political comment</b>
YES	Instead of raising Council Tax to fund additional Police officers, why doesn't the PCC lobby fellow Conservative Sajid Javid MP, Home Secretary? Why should "hard-working" people have to prop up the Tories failed austerity agenda?
YES	It sounds great but there are fewer police now than in the 1970s. The government needs to also put more money towards a stronger police presence in rural areas and market towns as we in these areas do not get a fair deal re the numbers of police etc. Yet we pay more council tax per household than those in Westminster who have far more benefits than us.
YES	This is not a proper consultation. It has a few simple questions and that is it. The Government should fund extra officers from our taxes, why should my council tax be raised. Wyre Forest Council can invest in a propert portfolio from our rates when it should fund public services.

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SUPPORT PROPOSAL	RESPONDENT COMMENT
	However, ToryJohn Campion obviously thinks differently. We council tax payers are being played for suckers.
YES	I however would also like to see you propose a real terms increase in the funding from central government as the one announced only means less cuts to the police not no cuts. As a conservative PPC can you do nothing to impress upon your fellow conservative government and the Home Secretary to ensure policing receives the money it needs.
YES	If your 'Conservative' Party had not made devastating cuts to the Police service & other public services we wouldn't be in this position. Now everyone had to pay more for a service that we enjoyed prior to 2020. You have politicised Policing which is shocking
YES	The cuts faced by the conservatives government have hit our public services enough. Try making business pay proper tax and remove loopholes for the upper class tax dodgers and use that money to pump our public services!
YES	Maintain pressure on Central Government, the Treasury and the Home Office to restore a viable policing budget.
NO	Increase in Police numbers is supported, the funds should come via central government not an increase in council tax, which for a Band E house is already in excess of £200 per month.
NO	I wholly support the concept of more police funding, however this must come from central government and not be raised locally. To do so results in disparity of investment between affluent and poor areas, and is an unreasonable burden on the PCC. For government to pass this funding deficit onto local areas is a wholly unacceptable abdication of responsibility.
NO	Why should I pay for our governments miss management of the nations financial affairs? I'm also not buying into this smoke and mirrors..... 5 divisions, 3 shifts on each the number is ridiculous and will not go anywhere into improving the service, a political play by the man Campion.
NO	The Government decided to cut back the Police Budget therefore it is the Government that should refund the councils in order to employ more Police, It should not be expected to raise taxation for the Governments failings in budgetary control.
NO	The government should be paying for it, as they caused the deficit, not the people. MP's are on three times the salary of a new police officer, plus expenses, for doing what exactly? And get ridiculous pay rises every year in one way or another. The bill stops squarely with them.
NO	I think there should be more police but they should be paid for by central government rather than council tax.
NO	Yes the extra funding for police officers and police staff should come from the government, an investment in public services, we pay enough tax as it is without you having to hike tax to pay for the police....also police officers are not the be all and end all of policing....where is your commitment to invest in police staff roles??
NO	the police funding should come from central government, not out of the pockets of local people.
NO	The extra money should come from central government. Council tax is expensive for what services we get. The police and fire services should not have extra funding added to council tax. Get rid for of all the uniformed community officers and replace them with warranted police officers, and then the laws of this country will be better enforced.
NO	As a local council tax payer, I believe that WMP needs the increase in officers but this should be funded by increases in central funding and the PCC should be petitioning the government more on this; especially when central funding has dropped so much. Local tax payers have already had to endure tax rises last year.



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SUPPORT PROPOSAL	RESPONDENT COMMENT
NO	I do not believe the commissioner will listen to me, this is just whitewash. The government should pay for this and the money should come from the fat cats all round the world who call themselves British and accept their gongs and honours and don't pay the tax they should.
NO	You should concentrate your efforts in pushing the government to properly fund the service. Cuts since 2010 have all but decimated the force. Public satisfaction and confidence in the police and crime prevention is at an all time low. Take to the media and tell it exactly as it is or the numpties will keep voting this awful government back in. The police are here to serve the public and to ensure officers are safe within the post. Cuts are working against us all, demand appropriate funding!
NO	I agree with increasing police numbers but it should come from central government funds. They find money when it suits them. Don't let them rip off the public even more than they already do. Please improve rural policing.
NO	While I fully support the PCC's intention to increase the number of Police Officers in West Mercia I believe increasing the council tax too much is not a fair way to go about it. The force should get a fairer increase from central government. I also believe there should be an open long term active recruitment campaign for Special Constables as there was a year or so ago.
NO	The Conservative Party caused this crisis in Policing and a Conservative PCC is now asking the public to stump up more money to recruit sufficient officers to replace the ones the Conservatives culled? Really? I'm quite sure that if the existing budget was utilised more effectively this would not be happening. I have seen signs of the PCC opposing the government cuts, just asking the public to pay for it. Council Tax payers already have, did Council Tax go down to pay for fewer officers? No
<b>Theme</b>	<b>Inefficiencies / alliance</b>
YES	Yes what technology improvements are being made to reduce police time on lesser issues such as speed cameras and smart water? Why aren't these being included in this program?
YES	after chatting with local and not so local police officers, I've been made aware of the time consuming activity of filling in paperwork instead of "getting on with the job expected of them" Is there any way of reducing this onerous task?
YES	Come up with a meaningful solution to serious organised crime and stop wasting resources on virtually non-existent rural crime. Please focus on greater efficiency of your office. The costs of it are staggering compared to your predecessor.
YES	The money should be spent on police officers and not gimmicks like laptops, increased bureaucracy or inefficient IT systems like Athena.
YES	An additional 115 officers is to be welcomed but how many existing officers will leave during the recruitment period. Why not remove the Chief Inspector and Chief Superintendent posts? How many extra constable posts could be funded with the removal of these positions at no extra cost. The public deserve more police on the streets, I have no problems paying the additional police precept on the council tax but I believe we could see additional posts by reviewing the number of senior office posts.
YES	I'm sure, if the money already coming into the police force was spent with more thought, there would be more left over for the things that are actually really needed. I'm still at a loss to see the reasoning for so many layers of management; why Chief Superintendents or Chief Inspectors? So much layering means that there is less accountability and problems just get moved on. I'm also shocked at the 'divorce' with Warwickshire. So many redundancies, so many projects seem such a waste of money

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SUPPORT PROPOSAL	RESPONDENT COMMENT
YES	It isn't just front line officers, additional back office staff if utilised in an efficient way would help to increase officer presence out on patrol rather than doing paperwork in the office. Trained typists can type far faster than you average police officer.
NO	I think enough money was wasted on ATHENA this is what has slowed down response to the public by patrol. Awful system not fit for purpose. To be asked to pay more when so much has been wasted on this is a joke
NO	The decision to dissolve your strategic alliance with Warwickshire demonstrates you can't make effective budgetary decisions as it is. No further funding should be granted until that decision is reviewed.
NO	The amalgamation with Warwickshire was abandoned for reasons that have not been justified or explained. If this was on grounds of cost savings then these savings should be applied if and I say if we need more officers. We pay more than enough tax already without being asked to constantly pay more. The Councils are asking for more money every year and we rarely see the benefits. So no more tax increases
NO	Policing in the area of Shropshire has become dangerously low, with only 8officers on duty for a large area. But an increase in council tax is not the answer. Look closer to home, for example, telematics in vehicles was Introduced at a cost of £1000000, it has failed to deliver any savings-why would you spend money on a system that analysis vehicle fuel usage, when Police need to drive fast to answer 999's and go after vehicles. Who signed this off? Save money at home first-then go to the public.
NO	Too much money has already been wasted on flawed technology within the force over the last couple of years. That month could have provided the requirement number of officers alluded to. Now, as a result of the current failures, more money will be needed to patch over or replace the current flawed systems. At the same time, moral is so low that officers are leaving in droves so who will replace them in your great master plan??!!
NO	Instead of wasting West Mercia' s budget surplus on costly IT systems that do not work (vehicle telematics), and others that have made things more difficult, (athena) spend the money on things the police need - vehicles, equipment and materials for school visits, security freebies for the vulnerable, turn west mercia counties into a smartwater region. Do something about the large numbers of officers who are transferring out to other forces? More efficient use of Pcsos and more equipment.
NO	I would support the increase, however after reviewing the spend the Commissioner has used and wasted during his time could have easily have been used to fund this. Further despite increases in funding in the past with the promise of extra officers, numbers have dropped, specialist operations are taking up numbers and back office support roles are areas to reduce to make funds available. If officers were channelled to front line now crime would reduce. Back to basics is required.
NO	If money was not being wasted such on the ill fated telematics scheme that cost over a £1 million I believe that that money could have paid for these extra officers.
NO	The funding the police already get should be better utilised instead of taking more.
NO	I would like to see the proactive use of underspends and reserves before seeking further public money .
NO	In this period the lack of police officers is no excuse to raise cash staying that more officers would be appointed. It is about time a proper review of the work an officer does and how this is supervised and managed. Such a review would clearly show that deployment is haphazard,

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<b>SUPPORT PROPOSAL</b>	<b>RESPONDENT COMMENT</b>
	proper supervision is almost non existent and deployment of resources relying on what has always been and not targeted to what the general public desire or need.
NO	Yes my council tax is already half a state pension for a modest house in Worcester, it's ok to say it's only this much but if the West Mercia were a little efficient when spending currently they wouldn't need any more. A friend of my has recently retired from the HQ in Fernhill Heath and he informed me in no uncertain terms it was the most wasteful organisation he had ever worked for. Over staffed with unnecessary layers of ineffective management and undeserving promotions .
NO	Any monies will be badly spent.
<b>Theme</b>	<b>Financial burden on households</b>
NO	Funding for essential services such as the police should not consistently fall to the tax payer, who are struggling financially.
NO	While I think it's excellent that West Mercia are looking to recruit more officers, I do have concern about the said plan to raise your council tax precept by 10%. As someone who works in taxation and benefits and hears first hand how families are struggling; I fear that hard working families in the low income bracket will suffer from increases this size while the families that can afford it will hardly notice. I don't think a 10% rise is justified when workers get barely 3% in the private sector
NO	poll tax is a very blunt tool to use when raising tax. and In itself it needs reform . Thus I cannot agree that this proposal is acceptable as the method of collection does not discriminate at all on the ability to pay. One has to understand the legacy of the austerity that has been visited on people and the anger frustration that many feel as a result. I sincerely doubt my concern will alter any decision you make.
<b>Theme</b>	<b>Miscellaneous comments</b>
YES	Recruit and retain Special Constables.
YES	I would propose a council tax reduction for special constables in west mercia.
YES	Can you start stop and search we over run with drug dealers with knives and shut down the lion street hotel as it's a no go area.
YES	After being ill at the cancer hospital,not going out in my car ,a few weeks later I noticed some person had bumped my car twice, car is parked end of row I'm unable to see it,I phoned the non urgent police no. It was answer phone,4 weeks later a PCSO phoned me,said she'd been on leave, ,she had no idea where I lived, I thought every pcso would make a map of their area. told me to claim on my insurance,when my coal and logs went missing I never phoned , what's the point.
YES	Small hold farmers need more assistance in securing their livestock, why not create a small farmers crime prevention day to inform them of the support on offer and understand their woes as they differ somewhat compared to large farms.
YES	Are these 115 in addition to existing numbers or are they merely replacing the 115 plus that will be leaving during the new officers probationary/training period
YES	I served for 32 years and retired in 2009. I enjoyed my time in the job but I'm so glad I'm not in it now! I feel sorry for the officers now.
YES	This is smoke and mirrors. John Campion is a conservative. The conservatives have systematically brought each public service to the point of unsustainability with a view to sell, piecemeal to the highest bidder. Probably G4S. One must ask why the police levels are so low. One doubts

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SUPPORT PROPOSAL	RESPONDENT COMMENT
	that would be answered. Are the public now reassured by visibility or are they concerned something has happened?
YES	police commissioner post not needed just a extra expense
YES	Recent spate of burglaries and serious misdemeanours such as an acid attack have left Market Drayton feeling close to lawless.
YES	The level of crime has gone up so much and it seems every night, boys/men are seen on cctv trying door handles. Young teenagers weaving in and out of traffic on New Road, it's a miracle none have been killed! Shoplifters in New Road Rubery. Nothing is ever done these people just carry on disrupting good peoples lives.
YES	investigate burglaries at households
YES	I would support. It would be nice to know what the police will offer us with these extra police on the streets. Instead of just stating that you want extra money from us to fund more police. Give us more information as to what we will get from paying this extra money. It's good having the police but if the justice system doesn't change then what's the point
NO	Policing cannot be improved by adding officers, the improvement comes from interacting with the public and ensuring that children and young people are educated and have morals and respect. If you are going to spend money the use it to retrain the ferals who seem to hold sway
NO	Please help young people and prevent crime in the longer term, they have no services left
NO	I refuse to pay any more money to an institution which is corrupt and inept. I don't trust the police to actually do what they are paid to do. Given that we have serious issues with Grooming in the West Mercia region and next to no arrests in the last 10 years , i refuse to give the police any more money when political correctness is more important than actual policing. !
NO	There would be enough money if you got rid of all the police commissioners and all those quangos on extremely high wages
NO	Scrap the PCC posts and bring back the police authority.
NO	Perhaps the PCC's office staff group could be reduced, this would free up funding for police officers. WFDC are already increasing the Council tax, another rise is unfair.
NO	There appears to be unlimited numbers of police officers whenever a "terrorist" incident is reported. Is there an over-reaction to such incidents to the detriment of routine police work?
NO	Unless it specifically guarantees that I will see an increase in officers I doubt the money will be used as described. It will be used to absorb the black hole of debt rather than add more officers.
NO	Why pay more,when we don't get the service we pay for now, we pay £ 2,300 per year now.
NO	We pay over £2,500 in council tax. We have to put up with speeding cars racing past our home even though it is a 30 mph limit. Litter/underwear/used condoms/nitrous oxide canisters strewn everywhere. Thefts and property damaged.
	We get taxed on everything. I am not willing to allow more public sector waste.
NO	Council tax is already high enough, perhaps the council should take a look at how they spend it. There must be other areas that they can make cuts in to help the police force. As I do agree we need more police, I just think people struggle with the cost of living as it is.

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<b>SUPPORT PROPOSAL</b>	<b>RESPONDENT COMMENT</b>
NO	The existing police force should spend more time on crime etc and less time collecting taxes for the government or persecuting motorist ' cash cows'
NO	I don't understand why you are increasing the council tax when adding officers? Yet when you took police off the streets you didn't reduce my council tax!
NO	There are other ways to achieve the objective rather than by significantly increasing Council Tax. I believe the starting point, with all the public services, is they should remember that if the private sector were in their position e.g. with a contract for a public service, could they turn to the taxpayer and ask for financial assistance, over & above what is agreed in the contract. The answer would of course be no.
NO	The public chose austerity. I didn't. But I am not willing to pay for the consequences. The whole Policing model is flawed. THRIVE equals who can we blame.
NO	Council tax in bewdley is high for the very limited services we already get. General tax hike from income yes. But not council tax. It's already a rip off.
NO	9.94% you've got to be joking!!!!
NO	Still waiting for a call out from August- Arson attack on house and a car, police are clearly not doing their job properly and not because of cuts, because they can't be bothered
NO	As a serving officer, I have publically said to the PCC that more officers are required for several years. Only in the last 12 months has anything been done but it's being claimed that it is because the PCC has listened to the public. He obviously hasn't listened to the officers on the ground who know better than anyone else. I am also against the raise in council tax precept as Police Officer wages are increasing at less than inflation and the precept decreases the money left for a PC monthly.
NO	A biased survey with leading questions clearly designed to get the answer you want to achieve.
NO	It's not just police officers, it's funding generally. A complete reluctance to fully investigate crime if it's not deemed sufficiently serious is the current policy. Disgraceful.
NO	Hard working police, Ive never heard such rubbish.